

HIGHER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT IN PREŠEVO AND BUJANOVAC

**Feasibility Study on the Opportunities for Higher Education
Development in South Serbia**

Centre for Non-Violent Resistance and
Centre for Education Policies
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SADRŽAJ

SUMMARY	5
INTRODUCTION	17
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	23
The Role of Education in Development	23
Integration versus Assimilation and Segregation	27
DESCRIPTION AND BRIEF HISTORY OF PREŠEVO, BUJANOVAC AND MEDVEĐA	31
ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN BUJANOVAC AND PREŠEVO	37
Key Economic Indicators	37
Economic resources	39
Population	39
Educational structure of population	41
Able-bodied population	44
Employment and Unemployment	44
Conclusion	49
DESCRIPTION OF THE SERBIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK	53
Description of the Education System in the Republic of Serbia	53
Establishment of a Higher-Education Institution and Higher-Education Units	57
Financing Higher-Education Institutions Established by the Republic	58
Education of National Minorities	59
DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AND THE THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK	61
Study Description	62
ANALYSIS	67
Problems	67
Solutions	74
Standpoints	78
Analysis of the Results	85
Possible Solutions for the Development of Higher Education	87
CASE STUDIES	99
Introduction	99
AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF VOJVODINA: ORGANIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR MINORITIES ON THE TERRITORY OF THE AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF VOJVODINA	101
Introduction	101
Methodology	102
The Description of Vojvodina	102
Legislative Framework Relating to the Rights of Minorities	106
Official Languages and Minority Education	108
The System of Higher Education in Vojvodina	113
The Ethnic Structure of Students	116
Legal Framework Relating to the Higher Education of National Minorities in Vojvodina	118
The Use of National Minority Languages in Higher Education	120
Languages of Instruction at Colleges for Professional Career Studies	122
Languages of Instruction at Faculties	123
Conclusion	125

MONTENEGRO	127
Introduction	127
Methodology	127
Context	128
The Republic of Montenegro	128
A Brief Overview of Ethnic Relations in the Republic of Montenegro	132
Legal Framework and Treatment of Minorities	133
Minority Education	136
Provisions of the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms Relating to Education	136
Book of Changes and the Laws Relating to Education	138
Higher Education for Minorities	141
Teacher Studies at the University of Montenegro in the Albanian Language	142
Analysis of Higher Education for Minorities in Montenegro Based on the Interview Analysis	145
Conclusion	149
MACEDONIA	153
Introduction	153
Methodology	153
Background	153
The Republic of Macedonia	153
Legal Framework and Relations with Minorities	157
Education of Minorities	165
Primary and Secondary Education	165
Organization of Higher Education in the Republic of Macedonia	167
Higher Education for Minorities	169
The Process of Establishing a Higher Education Facility – Experiences and Advice	176
Conclusion	177
CONCLUSIONS	179
ANNEX: SCENARIOS	185
Institutional framework for the development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac	186
Scenario A. University Founded by the Republic	186
Scenario B. University founded by a legal entity or a natural person	195
Scenario C. Higher Education Unit with Legal Personality (Faculty)	197
Scenario D. Higher Education Unit without Legal Personality	199
THE AUTHORS	203
ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS	209
CENTRE FOR NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE (CNR)	209
BIBLIOGRAPHY	212

SUMMARY

The text hereof is based on the feasibility study of opportunities for the development of higher education in the territory of the Preševo and Bujanovac municipalities, located in South Serbia. The aim of the study is not only to present an analysis and recommendations relating to creating opportunities for higher education in the minority language in the municipalities of Preševo and Bujanovac. The primary goal of the study is to provide a practical and theoretical framework for resolving the issue of national minority education, in the context of successful integration, exercise of human and minority rights and a joint contribution to economic, social and political development of the country and the region.

The development of higher education in these municipalities is driven by the need to provide education for the Albanian community in their mother tongue, as well as the intention to increase the overall level of education among the population as a precondition for economic development of the region and successful cooperation and integration among ethnic groups - the Albanian, Romani and Serbian communities. A higher education institution was opened in Medveđa in the 2009/10 academic year, providing teaching in Serbian and Albanian. The establishment of bilingual higher education programmes (law and economy) in Medveđa indicated a series of open issues relating to higher education of members of the Albanian national minority in South Serbia. The Coordination Body of the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa (hereinafter: the Coordination Body), which facilitated the opening of higher education institutions in Medveđa in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, decided to implement a different approach to tackling the issue of higher education in the municipalities of Bujanovac and Medveđa. In consultations with the representatives of the Ministry of Education, it was concluded that the analysis of stakeholders and/or partners-to-be should be conducted, as well as an analysis of higher education in the region. Having in mind that the Coordination Body does not have the capacities to conduct such demanding and comprehensive research, it was decided that non-government organizations with many years of experience in these areas should be entrusted with the preparation of the analysis.

The Study is a result of joint work of the Centre for Non-violent Resistance (hereinafter: CNR), a non-government organization from Belgrade which has implemented projects in South Serbia, and the Centre for Education Policy (hereinafter: CEP), also from Belgrade, as a principal author of the expert segment of the Study. The CEP Research Team was established in August 2009 gathering Jana Bačević (Coordinator of the Research Team), Ivana Božić, Tajana Brkanović, Vanja Ivošević, Marija Mitrović, Ivan Rajković and Jasmina Selmanović. Mihajlo Babin and Iskra Maksimović from the Faculty of Economy, Finance and Administration of the Singidunum University of Belgrade (hereinafter: FEFA), took part in

the development of economic and financial aspects of the analysis. The case studies were conducted by Tajana Brkanović and Ivana Stanojev (Montenegro), Tanja Ivošević (Macedonija) and Norbert Šabić (Vojvodina). Slobodan Bošković was the Project Coordinator, with Ivana Stanojev as Assistant. Unimpeded and quality research activities in the Preševo and Bujanovac municipalities were facilitated by Local Coordinators Rahim Salihu and Predrag Belej, as well as Gazmend Selmani. The coordination of field research, as well as the analysis of the constitutional framework of minority rights in Macedonia was facilitated by Marija Stambolieva. Danijela Nenadić took part in the preparation of the study as a representative of the Coordination Body. Putting together a team that would involve all partners most effectively, the CNR, the CEP and the Coordination Body turned to the OSCE in Serbia and the Office of the High Representative for National Minorities seated in Hague for help. The OSCE High Representative for National Minorities Knut Vollebaek supported the development of the study by providing expertise (professional input) and engaging the consultant Sebastian Dworack to assist the Research Team. The Study was reviewed by Paola Petrić and Vanja Ivošević. The Study was proofread by Ana Luković, with assistance of Romana Radulović and Dragana Prodanović. The Study was edited by Vanja Ivošević and Ana Luković.

6

The Study was supported financially by the Fond for an Open Society, the Department for International Development – DfID of the United Kingdom, the Balkan Trust for Democracy – BTd and the Coordination Body for the Municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. This study is a result of close cooperation and partnership between the non-government sector, state authorities and international community representatives.

The Study contains nine chapters. The Introduction outlines the framework of the Study.

The theoretical framework describes a scientific and theoretical background of the topics that the Study tackles, namely: the significance of education (in particular higher education) for economic, social and political development; the role of education in post-conflict societies; the significance of education for the members of minority communities, as well as the transformation of paradigms in minority education from assimilation, through segregation to integration.

The description and history of the situation in Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa outlines the social and political context of the immediate history and contemporary times, as well as the relationships between the national communities in the municipalities (Serbian, Albanian, Romani), of relevance for understanding the situation in South Serbia.

The economic effects of higher education development in Preševo and Bujanovac analyze the contemporary economic situation in these municipalities, taking into account the development level in large (state-owned or privatized) enterprises, as well as small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as the level of education of the population and the data on employment, unemployment and the labour market needs. This chapter indicates the relevance of the impact of well-planned higher education on the economic development of Preševo and Bujanovac.

The description of the system and the legal analysis provide a legislative framework for delivering elementary, secondary and higher education for the Serbian population, including a brief overview of the legislative framework for exercising the rights of minority communities in terms of education in minority languages. This chapter represents the legal framework and the regulation of opening and accrediting new study programs and higher education institutions.

The methodology describes the research approach, questions and methods for arriving at the conclusions. The Research Team decided in favour of a qualitative approach implying a form of ethnography and/or extended visits to the field and in-depth interviews with various local community representatives and other key stakeholders. This type of methodology was selected because the Research Team did not want the study to result in a single solution which would subsequently be „imposed“. On the contrary, the aim was to collect and analyse the issues, opinions and standpoints of stakeholders and then, based on the results, to describe various models of higher education development in South Serbia.

The field research in Preševo, Bujanovac, Medveđa, as well as the segments conducted in Niš, were conducted in October and November 2009. The second segment of the research included the case studies in Vojvodina, Montenegro and Macedonia. The case studies provide an overview of the minority language education framework and analyze the impact of the implemented solutions to resolving the issue of minority education and integration and building of relations between the selected education systems. The case studies are based on the analysis of the collected data, legal frameworks, relevant reports and research, as well as the interviews with key stakeholders conducted in January and February 2010.

The research segment which focused on Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa included in-depth interviews with key stakeholders in the process of higher education development for minorities in South Serbia: representatives of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Ministry of Education and the Coordination Body; representatives of local communities; representatives of the non-government (civil) sector; representations of international organizations and the representatives of the academic community (higher

education institutions). In addition to interview, focus groups were conducted with secondary school students in the territory of Preševo and Bujanovac, their parents, and entrepreneurs. The bulk of the research was conducted in October and November 2009 during field visits to Preševo, Bujanovac, Medveđa and Niš. The total number of field visits, including the preliminary visit, was six, over a period of 20 days. More than 100 interviews were conducted, applying two techniques: interviews and focus groups. Most participants were interviewed, while focus groups were used when it was important to interview as many persons from a certain group as possible – i.e. secondary school and gymnasium students, parents, students in departments in Medveđa and entrepreneurs. Interviewing relied on the in-depth interview technique. Interviewing was conducted based on a framework questionnaire, aiming to have the respondents feel free to express their attitudes, opinions and beliefs, enabling a more “natural” course of the interviews. Three groups of respondent answers were defined: issues, solutions and standpoints.

8 | The Analysis sums and compares these responses. Almost all respondents agree that the main issues in the municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa are of economic nature. One of the most prominent issues is low economic development and the related high unemployment rate. These two issues cause “brain-drain”, i.e. what has been perceived as a high level of migration from the municipalities towards more developed regions in Serbia and neighbouring countries. A lack of higher education in the Albanian language was also identified as integral to this issue. Namely, the lack of opportunities for higher education in their mother tongue means that some members of the Albanian community shall attain lower qualifications (resulting in reduced employment opportunities), while many youths pursue higher education in University centres where instruction is delivered in Albanian (Tetovo, Priština or Tirana). The respondents indicated that a number of youths remained in these study centres because of increased employment opportunities and because of the problems with recognizing their diplomas in Serbia, in particular those issued in Kosovo.

Many respondents mentioned issues relating to inter-ethnic relations, in particular those between members of the Serbian and Albanian community. Agreeing that there is no conflict, the respondents often indicate that this is the result of segregated life and education in particular. Therefore, separated education is pointed out as one the main issues.

In line with the subject of the study and the identified problems, respondents mostly agree that the development of higher education in the Albanian language in the municipalities of Preševo and Bujanovac represents the most important solution. They often underline that it is important to ensure support by the state to finance this form of education (low living standards and the high unemployment rate, etc). One assumption is that the development of higher education in the Albanian language shall financially

enable the members of this community to study, and shall facilitate their integration into the labour market of the Republic of Serbia and help them with finding employment.

Many respondents indicated the relevance of investments into economic development, underlining that education alone may not boost the economy. The respondents highlighted the relevance of the state in the development of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa, through the development of higher education and a comprehensive strategy to improve the living conditions of the inhabitants of this region of Serbia.

Regarding the attitudes of the respondents, most were related to their perception of inter-ethnic relations, as well as their position in relation to the socio-economic context. It should be mentioned that most respondents said that there is no conflict between ethnic communities (Albanian, Romani and Serbian), but there is no particularly developed communication either. Irrespective of their affiliations or the declared ethnic distance and/or whether they ascribe segregation among communities to their “innate” characteristics, almost all respondents believe that a higher level of integration should be attained, and that higher education development involving all members of all communities would be a good step to this end. This draws our attention to the relevance that respondents ascribe to public policies in the context of the economic and social map of the region, both today and in the future. However, it should be mentioned that the perception of respondents linked to their position in the socio-economic context is mostly negative. To put it simply, the respondents perceive Preševo and Bujanovac as regions with little prospect for development and a number of youths indicate that they are planning to leave. This confirms the need for higher education development – as a direct opportunity to attain qualifications and to find employment and income, but just as importantly to develop an understanding of their own capacities, both for young and older people. Furthermore, this aspect is important for improving economic and general living conditions, as well as for the opportunities available for the citizens of Preševo and Bujanovac to participate fully in social life and decision-making at the local, national and regional levels.

As regards the solutions to the development of higher education based on the respondents’ suggestions, few respondents proposed complete concepts of higher education development. The attitude predominant among institutions and respondents is that the level of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac should be delivered primarily on the level of first level studies, as well as academic studies, instead of professional career studies. From the perspective of long-term education development, social integration and economy, including the reform of education within the Bologna process, one should take into account further development of students. This primarily implies second level studies, either

by long-term development in these municipalities or by facilitating the continuation of studies for talented students in university centres in the country and abroad.

As regards the institutional framework, the respondents mentioned all three possibilities of study establishment as envisaged in the Law on Higher Education: the possibility that a higher education institution be founded by the Republic (i.e. an existing institution founded by the Republic), a legal entity or a natural person. In this context, the development of higher education within institutions founded by the Republic enables budget-funded material and other costs of higher education delivery, as well as the costs of studies for a limited number of students (budget-funded openings), which is not the case with institutions founded by a legal entity or a natural person. Taking into account the standard in Prešovo and Bujanovac, the development of higher education with the possibility of budget-funded openings would enable access for a higher number of the population to higher education. This includes the coverage with the student standards system (scholarships, loans and cafeteria).

10 | When it comes to the institutional framework for the development of higher education in Prešovo and Bujanovac, the Law on Higher Education (Article 32) envisages that higher education activities may be delivered by the following higher education institutions: universities, faculties or academies of arts within universities, academies of professional career studies, colleges and colleges of professional career studies. The interviews with respondents made it clear that they prefer general (academic) education instead of professional career studies (although this may be ascribed to social perception and/or prestige). Different institutional frameworks include various “steps” and/or procedures within the development of higher education, later described in the Annex (“Scenarios”). The more complex and autonomous an institution is, the more demanding is the opening procedure (assuming more “steps”). However, irrespective of the type opted by the stakeholders, the development of higher education entails the process of issuing operating licence and accreditation, in line with the procedures and standards prescribed by the law and by-laws. These processes require careful preparation of the required documentation, which also entails a specific period of time.

Based on the arguments provided by the respondents, the proposed study programmes may be divided into three groups: general, applicable and developmental programmes. The first group (“general”) includes study programmes in fields perceived by the respondents as programmes which shall provide the widest range of employment. These programmes include law, economy, banking and finance, management and, to an extent, computer science. The respondents believe that these programmes shall provide for easiest employment, probably because they provide the most general knowledge and competencies. These profiles may become “usable” if economy in the region picks up, but should be

applicable in other parts of the country as well. The successful development of a study programme in the field of law may contribute to multilingualism in public administration and facilitate communication in legal processes. Another group of study programmes was referred to as “applicable” since these are occupations, knowledge and competencies which may be applied directly and/or used on the labour market in Preševo and Bujanovac. This group of programmes includes medical studies, teacher training programmes and study programmes which would enable knowledge or translation between the Albanian and Serbian languages. The perception of respondents and the available data indicate the need for educated staff in these areas. The last group of study programmes was referred to as development programmes. These programmes include technical, mechanical engineering, civil engineering, agricultural, technological (food technology), catering and tourism programmes. These areas are recognized to have the potential to develop the economy of the region, focusing either on generic competencies (technical sciences, mechanical engineering, civil engineering), or on the development of potentials recognized as differential advantages of Preševo and Bujanovac (tourism, catering, economy, food technology). These programmes are significant because the respondents recognized them as a driving force for generating economic development in the region, which may contribute to an increase in employment and overall living standards. However, these programmes require careful planning and strong partnership with the business sector: all these programmes require practice and should result in obtaining applicable skills. Therefore, such profiles should be developed, yet in strong partnership with the business sector from the region, both large and small and medium-sized enterprises. It may be concluded that the selection of fields wherefrom the study programmes in Preševo and Bujanovac shall be developed should be guided by the wishes of future students, as well as the employment opportunities offered by specific professions regarding their deficit in the labour market and their potential to initiate economic development. Therefore, the most important profiles are those in the field of law, economy, teacher training and technology (food) or mechanical engineering. Furthermore, it was indicated that there is a need in all areas for qualified professionals who are fluent in Serbian and Albanian, as well as English or another foreign language.

When it comes to the target groups, it is important to underline that the predominant social perception of the respondents during field research, in particular in initial stages, was that the project of opening a higher education institution within the territory of Preševo and Bujanovac was intended primarily for members of the Albanian community. However, it is obvious that education programmes intended exclusively for members of specific groups do not contribute to social cohesion and integration. Higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac should target all the population irrespective of their ethnic or other affiliation and efforts should be invested into making it accessible. However, the main challenge in this sense represents the organization of teaching and/or language, teaching staff and textbooks.

When it comes to the language of instruction, multilingual instruction may be organized in more than one way: the most frequently mentioned solutions are separate classes with instruction in each language or with simultaneous interpretation (from one language to the other). The second solution implies a number of issues, in particular those relating the quality of translation and examination. The first solution, in particular in combination with joint lectures (including joint lectures in English) is more favourable and could, in combination with mandatory or elective learning of one other (or two more) community language, lead to longer-term integration. However, it is of key importance to provide an opportunity for each community to attend at least a segment of the programme in their mother tongue, as well as to develop language competencies in languages of other communities and in English. This may be achieved through the organization of joint activities – academic (e.g. lectures by guest professors, “study groups”), as well as other activities (sports associations, clubs, student organizations, etc).

12 | However, all these solutions require careful planning and engagement of teaching staff who may deliver instruction in one or, ideally, several languages. The field research indicated that lectures in Serbian may be delivered by lecturers from the existing higher education institutions in Serbia, while lecturers for teaching in Albanian may come from Preševo and Bujanovac or from a university in the region. It is important to engage teaching staff who may maintain permanent contact with students and this should be taken into account when engaging new staff, in particular teaching assistants. When it comes to multilingual teaching, teaching plans, programs and contexts, as well as textbooks, should be harmonized. Finally, when it comes to infrastructural support, it is necessary to ensure a location and facilities to contribute most favourably to the development of local communities and, at the same time, meet the conditions prescribed by accreditation standards and necessary for quality performance of teaching and other activities. An important part of the process are administrative and information capacities (student services, access to Internet) which must be multilingual and accessible for all students.

The case studies provide a description and an analysis of higher education for minorities conducted in Vojvodina, Montenegro and Macedonia. Each study contains an overview of the legislative framework and/or legal solutions of higher education in minority languages, as well as an overview of the respective institutional framework.

The conclusions and recommendations provide a summary of the study findings. The development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac represents a challenging and demanding undertaking. Fast and excluding conclusions are not favourable, or feasible, taking into account the specific characteristics of the region, different desires of the stakeholders and a consensus on the need to develop higher education in all areas results in great expectations. The aim of this study was not to identify a single so-

lution excluding all others, but to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of all potential solutions, both regarding objective capabilities and limitations, as well as the desires of those to be (directly or indirectly) involved in this process. The conclusion thus provides certain general recommendations and proposes certain “steps” and/or ways to implement them, in the respective “Scenarios”.

The most important conclusions are:

- The higher education development process in Preševo and Bujanovac is only starting. This case study aimed to outline potential development directions, but the greatest share of further planning will depend on the stakeholders – the Ministry of Education, the Coordination Body, academic community, municipal authorities, representatives of local communities, civil society and others. The cooperation of all stakeholders in this process will be vital for its success. The following may be proposed to this end: that the stakeholders establish a task force (as part of the Ministry of Education or the Coordination Body) with a primary task to plan further and implement the development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac. In addition to already mentioned stakeholders (the Ministry of Education, the Coordination Body, academic community, municipal authorities, representatives of local communities, civil society), the inclusion of the representatives of the international community, as well as international and local experts from the domain of higher education development is desirable. A constant dialogue should be instituted between the working group, the bodies it comprises and the members of the Albanian and Serbian community at the local level (through meetings, forums, discussions), in order to ensure a continued involvement and activities of all stakeholders in the process.

- The process of higher education development in Preševo and Bujanovac should take place within the institutional framework of the Republic of Serbia. This framework has many advantages: in addition to providing for easier and faster integration, both in society and the labour market, it envisages greater potential for support to students in the process of obtaining higher education, making it more accessible. Potential solutions are that the development of higher education within the territory of Preševo and Bujanovac be part of an existing higher education institution founded by the Republic of Serbia. In addition to the University of Niš, options include the State University of Novi Pazar, the University of Kragujevac, but also universities in Belgrade or Novi Sad and/or faculties of these universities. The legal requirements and limits should be observed in this process. Even though the development of higher education within an existing institution somewhat reduces the duration of the establishment process, the current legislative framework prescribes obtaining an operating licence and the process of accreditation. Therefore, expert input by the legal and academic community should be integrated (particularly regarding accreditation experiences) in order to arrive at the fastest and simplest solution for implementing specific initiatives, once they are developed.

- The development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac should be sustainable; study programmes developed in these municipalities should meet the demands of the labour market, but also carry a potential to initiate economic development. This means that the choice of areas wherefrom study programmes will be implemented in Preševo and Bujanovac should not be based solely on the express wishes of potential beneficiaries, but also on objective capacities and needs. Likewise, due attention should be paid to the potential for labour market “saturation”. Constant provision of information on needs, lifelong learning and other forms of education should be developed in a way that would prevent this possibility. To this end, the development of study programmes for teachers, including teachers for the Serbian, Albanian and Romani languages. These occupations are in deficit in the region, being of significance both for the development of general and linguistic competencies (knowledge, skills and capacities), representing a prerequisite for successful interethnic communication. The development is possible of study programmes in law, economy and computer science, i.e. areas developing general competencies subsequently applicable in a wide range of professions. Particular need was expressed for legal experts speaking Albanian and Serbian, who could work in public administration and the judiciary. Likewise, fields such as economy (particularly banking and management) and computer science offer competencies potentially applicable in various environments, from financial institutions to small and medium-sized enterprises. The latter two programmes have the advantage of being relatively “universal”, therefore teaching materials do not have to be tailored specifically to the environment, as is the case with law. Another option is the development of study programmes that would assist in the development of existing potentials in Bujanovac and Preševo, such as food technology, mechanical engineering, tourism and catering, etc. It is important to remember that the development of these types of programmes can only be undertaken in strong partnership with the business sector: to develop study programmes in industry-relevant areas before there is a strategy for economic development would not provide positive results in terms of employment. At the same time, all programmes should take into consideration the development of human and infrastructural capacities for new study programmes.

- Higher education development in Preševo and Bujanovac must be integrative in terms of development of knowledge and competencies of the members of all communities. This entails developing study programmes both in the Serbian and Albanian languages and, ideally, in the Romani language as well. However, parallel instruction in multiple languages is not a solution in itself. Therefore, it is vital to develop joint activities, with some undertaken in the English language, in order to enable socialization and mutual communication between members of different communities. These activities should aim at developing knowledge of second (and third) languages used in Bujanovac and Preševo. One important point is to ensure good knowledge of the Serbian language as the official language among members of

all communities, but also to have the members of the Serbian community to learn in Albanian, as well as the Romani language. This would facilitate mutual communication and also increase employment opportunities. Furthermore, knowledge of the English language should be fostered through potential joint academic and non-academic activities. However, the development of “parallel” programmes in each language should be avoided: higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac should be as integrated as possible, aiming to develop a common culture for the students and awareness of belonging to the same society. Thus integration should not only involve openness for members of all communities, but also the possibility for everyone to partake in decision making and shaping the future of Preševo and Bujanovac together. An important role in this process plays the development of human resources: professors, teaching assistants and administrative personnel. This issue is of particular importance since the existing teaching staff is overworked. In an ideal situation, the staff should speak at least two of the three languages of the communities in Preševo and Bujanovac. Indications that these types of resources exist in the region arose in the course of the study, therefore the issue should be examined properly. It is important to invest efforts into the integration of students through mandatory or elective learning of the second and third language and the development of joint student activities, regardless of whether they are academic (e.g. guest professor lectures) or non-academic (sports, student organizations and clubs, parties).

- The development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac must take into account the social dimension of education. On the one hand, this would mean paying special attention to access to education for members of various marginalized and vulnerable groups (women/girls, the Roma, persons with special needs). On the other hand, it should be made clear that the goal of higher education is not only personal and regional economic development but that it, along with other levels of education, serves to stimulate the potential for active participation in the social life and decision making in the community. Therefore, the development of higher education should contribute not only to enabling employment, but also a wider range of social competencies such as the capacity for critical thought and problem analysis, care for oneself and others and participation in decision making. To this end, it is important to develop promote higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac targeting vulnerable groups directly. These programs should, predominantly, enable adequate information sharing for vulnerable groups (info-days, etc), provide support (scholarships, loans, counselling) and the presentation of study programmes. At the same time, the teaching process and extra-curricular activities should contain components aimed at developing critical thinking, student participation, voluntary or charity work, better care of oneself and others, etc. This can be achieved through workshops, debates, discussions, student organizations and clubs, actions, etc. These types of activities, in addition to stimulating the integration of students, would contribute to an active contribution to their environment and their

community, since these activities could target a community wider than the academic community. This could make higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac an integral part of the community contributing and developing along with it.

The general conclusion that can be drawn is that higher education development in Preševo and Bujanovac carries a lot of potential for economic development of the region but also – and perhaps more importantly – for developing social integration and better quality of life. Therefore this process should be approached with great care and consideration for the needs and capacities of the region, as well as the stakeholders. Only thus will higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac be able to fulfil its goal – a common and better future for all citizens.

The Annex of the Study (Scenarios) outline the specific procedures and a list of costs to be taken into account when planning potential solutions. This part of the study is primarily intended for persons implementing the policies.

INTRODUCTION

Jana Baćević

The text hereof is based on the feasibility study of the opportunities for higher education development on the territory of the Preševo and Bujanovac municipalities, in South Serbia. The development of higher education in these municipalities is driven by the need to provide education for the Albanian community in their mother tongue. Furthermore, it is driven by the intention to increase the overall level of education among the population, as a precondition for economic development of the region and successful cooperation and integration among ethnic groups - the Albanian, Roma and Serbian communities. A higher education unit of the University of Niš was opened in Medveđa in the 2009/10 academic year, providing teaching in Serbian and Albanian. However, the need to consider the opportunities for further higher education development targeting minority communities in this part of Serbia did not end there. It became clear that the process required a sharing of knowledge on similar models in multiethnic environments of the bordering countries (Macedonia, Montenegro), as well as in the territory of Serbia (Vojvodina).

The goal of this study is not only to provide an analysis and recommendations for creating opportunities for higher education in minority languages in the municipalities of Preševo and Bujanovac. The primary goal of the study is to provide a practical and theoretical framework for resolving the issue of education for minorities, in the context of successful integration, exercise of human and minority rights and joint contribution to economic, social and political development of the country and the region.

The establishment of bilingual programs of basic academic studies (in law and economy) in Medveđa indicated a series of open issues relating to higher education of members of the Albanian national minority in South Serbia. The Coordination Body of the Government of the Republic of Serbia for the Municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa (hereinafter: the Coordination Body), which facilitated the opening of higher education institutions in Medveđa in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, decided to implement a different approach to tackling the issue of higher education in the municipalities of Bujanovac and Medveđa. The priority of the Coordination Body is to enhance the quality of education for the three communities living in South Serbia. The goal calls for a novel approach

to dealing with the issue, based on the analysis of the communities' needs, as well as on the analysis of opportunities and effective legal and other institutional frameworks of the Republic of Serbia. In consultations with the representatives of the Ministry of Education, whose support for the implementation of this project is very important, it was concluded that the analysis should include stakeholders¹, partners-to-be and the positive examples in the region relating to higher education of national minorities. Having in mind that the Coordination Body did not have the capacities for such demanding and comprehensive research, it was decided that non-government organizations with many years of experience in these areas should be entrusted with the preparation of the analysis. Furthermore, the project involved experienced international experts, whose support and assistance is vital for successful implementation of the recommendations of the study and for opening higher education institutions in minority languages. The study is a result of close cooperation between the non-government sector, state authorities and international community representatives. The project was supported by the Government of the Republic of Serbia and Prime Minister Cvetković, as well as the leaders of the Albanian community from Preševo and Bujanovac. We believe that such an approach is the best foundation for developing higher education in South Serbia.

18

The project entitled "Education Policy Reform in South Serbia", in cooperation with the Coordination Body, was drafted by the representatives of the Center for Non-violent Resistance (hereinafter: CNR), a non-government organization from Belgrade which has implemented projects in South Serbia and conducted a number of analyses over the previous years. The project aimed to conduct an analysis of opportunities to establish first degree studies (basic academic studies), and the main task was to provide different scenarios for establishing studies and delivering instruction. Four relevant segments were identified in the first stage:

1. Define the issue and conduct an analysis of needs and opportunities for founding higher education institutions in the municipalities of Preševo and Bujanovac, taking into account in particular the issues of the Albanian community (legal, political, social and economic framework);
2. Conduct an analysis of solutions relating to the education of national minorities in the Republic of Serbia, as well a comparative analysis of regional experiences, in particular in the field of higher education, with emphasis on Montenegro and Macedonia where the Albanian community exercise their right to education in their mother tongue;
3. Conduct an analysis of the legislative framework of the Republic of Serbia and opportunities to enhance the education system in the municipalities of Preševo and Bujanovac;

1. Civil servants in positions relevant to the research (Ministry of Education, the Coordination Body), 2. municipal officials, 3. local representatives of the Coordination Body, 4. local representatives of political parties, 5. representatives of public services (Social Work Center, National Employment Service), 6. representatives of non-government organizations, 7. representatives of international organizations (OSCE, USAID), 8. other representatives of the local community (school principals, media), 9. students of secondary schools and gymnasiums, 10. parents of students of secondary schools and gymnasiums, 11. entrepreneurs, 12. staff of the University of Niš involved in higher education in Medveđa (development or delivery of teaching) and 13. students in Medveđa

4. Provide practical policy proposals, recommendations for creating education opportunities in Preševo and Bujanovac, set a map of measures, key stakeholders, an implementation timeframe and necessary financial resources for opening higher education institutions.

The Fund for an Open Society (hereinafter: FOS) supported the project and financed the research with RSD 2,070,000, enabling the launch of the feasibility study. The Research Team, as well as the organizations and institutions involved in the preparation of the Study, would like to express their gratitude to the Fund for an Open Society and the Executive Director Jadranka Jelinčić for their understanding and support for this significant and ambitious project. The Coordination Body contributed to the development of the Study by donating RSD 500,000, supporting the implementation of specific research segments and indicating strong interest of public administration bodies in opening higher education institutions in South Serbia and conducting an analysis which had not been conducted before. Conducting case studies, which is a particularly important research method, would not have been possible without the Department for International Development – DfID, who provided assistance totalling RSD 1,080,000. The Balkan Trust for Democracy joined the team of donors granting the amount of RSD 1,209,948, for which we would like to express our gratitude to the Belgrade Office.

Taking into consideration that the envisaged Study entailed an analysis of opportunities for higher education development, subject to complex legal regulations and procedures specific for the system of education, there was a need to involve an organization with experience and expertise in the education system in Serbia. Based on the recommendation of the Fund for an Open Society, the CNR engaged the Centre for Education Policy (hereinafter: CEP) as a principal author of the expert segment of the Study. The Memorandum of Cooperation, signed by the CNR and CEP, specified that the CNR would provide technical and logistical support for the Study development, while the CEP was tasked to design, develop and coordinate the research and the drafting of the study. In the course of consultative meetings, the dynamics of the research was agreed and the roles in the team were distributed, and the Research Team was established in August 2009.

The Research Team gathers: Jana Bačević (Coordinator of the Research Team), Ivana Božić, Tajana Brkanović, Vanja Ivošević, Marija Mitrović, Ivan Rajković and Jasmina Selmanović. Mihajlo Babin and Iskra Maksimović from the Faculty of Economy, Finance and Administration of the Singidunum University of Belgrade (hereinafter: FEFA), took part in the development of economic and financial aspects of the analysis. The case studies were conducted by Tajana Brkanović and Ivana Stanojev (Montenegro), Tanja Ivošević (Macedonia) and Norbert Šabić (Vojvodina). Slobodan Bošković was the Project Coordinator, with Ivana Stanojev as Assistant. The unimpeded and quality research activities in the Preševo and Bujanovac municipalities were facilitated by Local Coordinators Rahim Salihu and Predrag Belej, as well

as Gazmend Selmani, whose help made the project realization possible. The coordination of the field research, as well as the analysis of the constitutional framework regarding minority rights in Macedonia was contributed to by Marija Stambolieva. Professional review was conducted by Paola Petrić and Vanja Ivošević. The proofreading was managed by Luković, with assistance of Romana Radulović and Dragana Prodanović. The Study was edited by Vanja Ivošević and Ana Luković.

Putting together a team that would involve all partners most effectively, the CNR, the CEP and the Coordination Body turned for help to the OSCE in Serbia and the Office of the High Representative for National Minorities seated in Hague.

The High Commissioner on National Minorities represents a vital OSCE instrument to “prevent conflict in the earliest possible stage”. The High Commissioner identifies issues and recommends solutions for ethnic tensions which could impair peace and stability or friendly relations among OSCE member countries. Mr. Knut Vollebaek has been the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities since 2007. Although the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities does not hold a function of ombudsman for national minorities within the OSCE, the core mandate includes adequate protection of the rights of members of national minorities, on which he has issued a number of recommendations. Among these issues, the right to education has been identified as a key issue to resolve conflict and build social ties and tolerance. Furthermore, the right to education is important for understanding and striking a balance between the rights of all communities to maintain and develop their own identity and the legitimate needs of countries to establish integrated society.

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The two members of the Research Team, representatives of the Center for Non-violent Resistance and the OSCE made a preliminary visit to the municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa in September 2009. Field research in these municipalities, as well as the research segments conducted in Belgrade, was performed in October and November. The field research included in-depth interviews² (discussions) with the key stakeholders in the higher education development process targeting national minorities in South Serbia: representatives of the Government of Serbia, the Ministry of Education and the Coordination body; representatives of local communities; representatives of civil society; representatives of international organizations; representatives of the academic community (higher education institutions). In addition to the interviews, focus groups with high school students, parents and groups of entrepreneurs in the territory of Preševo and Bujanovac were conducted.

The second part of the research includes case studies in Vojvodina, Montenegro and Macedonia. The case studies provide an overview of the framework of education in national minority languages and an analysis of how the implemented solutions have contributed to resolving the issues of education, integration and building relations within ethnically diverse society. The case studies are based on the collection of existing information and analyses, as well as interviews with the key stakeholders conducted on the ground in January and February 2010.

The field research results are presented through an analysis and classification of perceptions, opinions and attitudes of stakeholders involved in the process. Different models (“scenarios”) for opening higher education institutions in the territory of Preševo and Bujanovac have been developed based on the analysis and classification, on the one hand, and possible modalities of education for minority communities, on the other. These scenarios are evaluated from the legal, educational, economic, social and integration aspects. The aim of the evaluation, therefore, was not to provide final solutions identifying the “best” scenario. The aim was rather to analyze comparative advantages and disadvantages of potential solutions, in particular those proposed by the stakeholders themselves. Such an approach is motivated by the attempt that the design of practical policies should take into account the wishes, perception and attitudes of all stakeholders, in order to enable a constructive dialogue and contribute to the future development of higher education for minorities in Serbia.

In addition to the Introduction, the Study contains eight additional chapters. The second chapter outlines the theoretical and comparative framework of the research, with emphasis on the theoretical background of the minority education issue (the relation between integration, assimilation and segregation). The third chapter provides a brief history and description of the situation in the municipalities

² The field research relied on the technique of in-depth interview. The interviews were conducted against a framework questionnaire, with an aim to lead the respondents to express their attitudes, opinions and thoughts freely, so that the interviews may have a “natural” course.

of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa, in order to enable a better understanding of the specific characteristics and needs of this region. The fourth chapter provides an analysis of economy and economic development needs of this region. The fifth chapter outlines the overview and description of the system of education in the Republic of Serbia aims to provide insight into the systemic and institutional framework. The sixth chapter outlines the methodological and analytical approach of the study, which includes the structure of field research, the selection of respondents and the principles of analysis and classification. The seventh chapter provides an overview of attitudes and perception of respondents based on the findings of the field research. This chapter contains suggested solutions that were systematized and complemented when needed, and then were analyzed from the perspective of law, education, social aspect and integration. The eighth chapter covers case studies of education in minority languages in Vojvodina, Macedonia and Montenegro. The closing chapter sums up the results of the research and provides potential directions for further activity. The Annex of the Study further develops these solutions in “scenarios”, by mapping the “steps” necessary for their execution in Preševo and Bujanovac. In addition to procedural and preparatory activities, this chapter provides an overview of costs to be taken into consideration during the execution of specific solutions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Jana Baćević and Sebastian Dworak

The Role of Education in Development

Education is a fundamental human and civic right. It also represents a means to overcome poverty, inequity and inequality in society, since it provides for higher chances of success in life for individuals³. The recognition of these effects of education represents the foundation of vital global development initiatives, such as the Millennium Development Goals – MDGs⁴ and Education for All – EFA⁵. Although predominantly focused on elementary education, these initiatives are a significant indicator of consensus of the international community in relation to the relevance of education in general.

However, inasmuch as it is an instrument of development, education may also be an instrument for maintaining social inequality by various social groups. Therefore, it is important to consider varied means in which education may contribute to development, in order to identify those that are of key importance for the study hereof.

The most prominent link is the one between education and economic development⁶. Different research indicate that there are multiple correlations between the two areas: economically more developed countries have a higher share of highly educated population; higher investments into education are directly linked to economic growth; the development of vocational and higher education contributes to the development of technologies, which in turn stimulate the development of economy⁷. With the development of economies and knowledge-based societies (systems based on owning information rather than on material resources), knowledge and skills have become a key advantage in the contemporary globalized world⁸. In this context, higher education plays a key role in the development of competencies, necessary for participation in modern economies and knowledge-based societies.

This role of higher education in economic development is based on the idea that it generates human capital. The concept of human capital is somewhat debatable and is used with varied meanings.

3 Sen, A, *Razvoj kao sloboda*, Beograd: Filip Višnjić, 2002.

4 <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>.

5 <http://www.unesco.org/en/efa-international-coordination/the-efa-movement>.

6 In the context of the study hereof, the link is analyzed in detail in the previous chapter.

7 See Sen, 2002; Robertson et al., *Globalisation, Education and Development: Ideas, Actors and Dynamics*, Bristol:DfID, 2007.

8 See e.g. Jelinčić, J. *Evropeizacija Srbije: Društvo znanja, Intelktualna svojina*, Beograd: fond za otvoreno društvo, 2007.

“Knowledge, skills, competences and characteristics of individuals conducive to creating their personal, social and economic welfare”⁹ is one of the universally accepted definitions describing human capital. In this sense, capital is something possessed by every individual. However, the measurement of human capital is conducted predominantly on the level of states, wherefore human capital is considered as something “possessed” by nations, as an attribute of national states¹⁰. This is in line with the still dominant focus of the discourse on the development of national states. However, being embodied in individuals, human capital does not always remain in the boundaries of national states.

A major issue, characteristic in particular for developing economies, is the loss of human capital, i.e. “brain drain”. The trend implies highly qualified labour force leaving one country for another. Although the mobility and migrations of highly qualified individuals have a number of advantages, the issue emerges when brain drain is one-sided, i.e. human resources which could contribute to economic development of a country are exhausted systematically. Furthermore, brain drain is most commonly an indicator of unfavourable labour conditions and unsatisfactory status of human and civic rights in the country of origin¹¹.

This leads us to another aspect of development. The role of education cannot be limited to economic development. Although important, education plays an equally important role in social development and/or development of components which cannot necessarily be reduced to economic growth. These elements are called social outputs of education.

In addition to increasing the income of individuals, education develops their social capital. The concept of social capital was first developed by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in the 60s and 70s of the previous century, writing of the reproduction of inequalities through education institutions¹². In contemporary literature on development, the concept is somewhat modified and implies “networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups”¹³. The purpose of social capital as an analytical tool is that it draws attention to less evident aspects of inequality (less evident than, for example, income inequality). The opportunities of individuals in life are not set only by their financial power, but also by social connections, ancestry, class, sex/gender, etc. The correlation between social capital and education is one of the most direct correlations: the more educated an individual is, the more opportunities there are for social networking and access

9 B. Keeley, *Human Capital: How What You Know Shapes Your Life*. Paris: OECD, 2007

10 Markl, H. Brain drain: a non-political perspective, *European review* 14 (1), 23, 2006; Kelo, M. and Wachter, B. *Brain Drain and Brain Gain: Migration in the European Union after Enlargement*. The Hague, 2004.

11 Docquier, F., Lohest, O. and A. Marfouk. *Brain Drain in Developing Countries*. *The World Bank Economic Review*, 21 (2), 2007, 193–218.

12 See P. Bourdieu, *Distinction*. London : Sage, 1999; P. Bourdieu et J-P. Passeron, *La Reproduction: Elements pour une théorie du système d'enseignement*. Paris : Minuit, 1970.

13 OECD, *The Well-being of Nations: The Role of Human and Social Capital*. Paris: OECD, 2001.

to a higher number of (not necessarily material) resources which facilitate a better quality of life. This correlation is premised on the idea that education, in addition to simple vertical mobility (progress on the social ladder), contributes to the development of individual capacities to utilize concepts, artefacts and social relations more effectively and creatively. The development of social capital is considered particularly important in contemporary multicultural or multiethnic societies. Similar levels of social capital guarantee better cohesion and cooperation among communities, while large discrepancies in this domain, including economy, represent a likely source of dissatisfaction and conflict. Although the causes of conflict in communities should not be sought only in terms of access to education, it is evident that education reflects the level of development and opportunities to provide for basic needs, in particular in terms of members of minority communities. Various research indicate that conflicts and education correlate differently: from the fact that national investments into military equipment and armament usually imply reduced investments into education, to direct destruction and devastation of education systems and elementary infrastructure (in territories stricken by conflict). On the other hand, it is proven that access to inclusive education, with emphasis on the development of democratic values and human rights, plays a significant role in the reconstruction of post-conflict societies and the prevention of further conflicts¹⁴.

The role of education in social development manifests in two other important aspects: health (of individuals and communities) and civil and social engagement¹⁵.

The positive correlation of education and health has received multiple confirmations. On the one hand, education correlates with elementary aspects such as life expectancy and the probability of serious ailments. Furthermore, education plays a significant and often vital role in birth rate control, disease prevention and development of healthy life habits, which influence the quality of life. To put it simply, the more educated the individuals, the higher the chances that they shall take better care of their health, be better informed and, therefore, healthier.

The role of education in developing civic and critical awareness and engagement is at least equally important. The participation of citizens in decision-making processes is a key component of democratic societies. Participation in decision-making does not consist merely of voting in elections, it also includes active participation in the life of the community. At the same time, the development of the civic component of pedagogy and education is all the more important in the context of multiethnic or post-conflict societies. In those situations, education in terms of civic participation may contribute

14 See e.g. Robertson et. al, Globalisation, Education and Development: Ideas, Actors and Dynamics, Bristol: Dfid , 2007; Salmi, J. 'Violence, democracy and education: an analytic framework', LCSHD Paper Series 56, 2000; Pigozzi, M. Education in Emergencies and for Reconstruction: A Developmental Approach, New York: UNICEF, 1999.

15 OECD, Društveni ishodi učenja. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2009.

significantly to the elimination of stereotypes, the development of the culture of tolerance and, finally, to desegregation and successful integration of communities.

The means in which education may contribute to the process differ and operate on multiple levels. In summary, they could be described as follows:

- Equal access to education for all members of post-conflict communities. The phenomenon is common in conflict-stricken areas that children, in particular girls, miss or drop out of school, since parents believe that they are unsafe. This leads to direct disproportions, both gender and ethnical, in access to education. The lack of access to education also limits access to other social resources, decreases employment opportunities and increases likelihood of poverty. Not less important is that individuals outside of the school system are more prone to various violent actions and purposes.
- Paying particular attention to the access of minorities and marginalized groups to education. Equality in terms of access, i.e. accessibility of education, is one of the major indicators of democratic societies, while the post-conflict situation and lack of security decrease the education opportunities, in particular for minorities and marginalized groups. Access equality is enabled by means of multilingual education, development of education in minority languages, as well as education programs for marginalized groups (women and girls, persons with disabilities).
- Development of democratic and civic values through education. The goal is to empower the population to take active part in the development of civic society. This includes the development of values of openness, tolerance and dialogue within education programmes, not only in the subject of civics, rather on all education levels - from elementary to higher education. In this domain, it is important to ensure that education programmes do not stimulate inequalities or intolerance, which is a potential danger. Namely, the language in which teaching is delivered, access to teaching and dominant discourses in schoolbooks, particularly for such subjects as history, may reproduce stereotypes and represent sources of discrimination against minority and marginalized groups. Therefore, the development of education must include and reflect the diversity of populations in a specific region or a country¹⁶.

Of course, such a classification is merely a framework supposed to outline potential ways to consider the role of education. The ways in which education affects the aspects of specific importance for the study hereof, such as the integration of minorities, are given further in the text.

Integration versus Assimilation and Segregation

“A pluralist and genuinely democratic society should not only respect the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of each person belonging to a national minority, but also create appropriate conditions enabling them to express, preserve and develop this identity”, as defined in the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe.¹⁷

States are obliged to adequately deal with diversity, stimulate tolerance and mutual respect, as well as understanding and cooperation among communities living on their territory, irrespective of ethnic, religious, cultural or linguistic origins of the communities. As opposed to discrimination and assimilation, respect for diversity is considered a major protective measure of cohesive and stable states. The key component of this process is to enable an effective participation of minorities in decision-making processes. The most important precondition for such an approach is to develop and implement policies tackling the issue of education of minorities. International law, in addition to the universal right to education, acknowledges educational rights of national minorities¹⁸, since they contribute to the protection and preservation of individual identities and facilitate diversity, and may contribute to empowering societies and mitigating tensions. Therefore, states have the obligation to provide adequate education for its citizens, since education serves as the most adequate tool to achieve the balance between the preservation of diversity and the achievement of integration. Forced assimilation may be prevented by the acknowledgement of diverse identities and preservation of different national, ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious communities within legal frameworks and through education.

Multiethnic states face the challenge of: striking a balance between the rights of all communities to protection and development of own identities and the legitimate need of the states to build integrated societies¹⁹. In some cases, diversity is considered a potentially destabilizing factor and it is believed that cohesion may be achieved through assimilation (when minorities are stimulated or even forced to relinquish their cultural values and traditions or language to the benefit of the majority community). Such an approach often leads to tensions and conflicts and, due to the failure to recognize minority rights, prevents the establishment and preservation of cohesive and secure societies.

17 Source: Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe, preamble

18 A number of international legal documents tackle the issue of minority education. These include: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, the Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference of the Human Dimension of the OSCE, the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities of the United Nations, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe and the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages.

19 Recommendations from The Hague on Educational Rights of National Minorities, the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities, The Hague, 1996

In many countries as was the case in former Yugoslavia, separation and segregation in education are part of the concept of granting the rights to national minorities to protect and preserve their identities. However, this concept in former Yugoslavia was conducted within a system parallel to the system of the majority population in each republic. Efforts to enable the protection of minority rights and preservation of their respective identities are commendable. However, separation and segregation based on ethnicity and language have proven to be wrong approaches. These approaches intensify ethnic divisions, solidify stereotypes and create fertile ground for intolerance and prejudices, since they do not provide sufficient opportunities for interactions among people, common education and work. Separation therefore often leads to exclusion. Failing to resolve this issue appropriately, isolation and alienation may overpower the advantages of belonging to a particular state. This in turn leads to an increase in denial of rights or poverty and failure to identify with the state. Such a development is best counteracted by the policy of integration, which aims at establishing a society in which all individuals have equal opportunity of participation and development of relationships, at the same time respecting and protecting their own identities. “At the heart of this approach lies the notion that states need to encourage minority participation in the political, social, economic and cultural life of mainstream society with a view to developing a sense of belonging and having a stake in society at large, while at the same time protecting the right of minorities to maintain their own identity including their culture, language and religion”.²⁰ Education is the key instrument to achieve appropriate participation. On the one hand, education enables children belonging to minority communities to learn and preserve their cultural identity and traditions. On the other, education provides them with the necessary tools and skills to participate in the life of the state as a whole. Although it is a significant and universally acknowledged right²¹ to enable access to education for minorities in their respective mother tongues, it is equally important to provide for accessibility of education in the national language. It is a precondition for their participation in public life, employment and other opportunities for socialization. The failure to gain proper command of the official language is detrimental with regard to the rights of the members of national minorities and often leads to disintegration and tensions or social unrest. “The national language (editor’s note: the official language of a country) may represent a basis for promoting communication among all persons, irrespective of their ethnic affiliation. [...] It is necessary therefore that the measures for stimulating national languages are in balance with giving the opportunity to persons belonging to national minorities to learn and develop their own language.”²²

20 Address of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Rolf Ekéus: “The Role of Education in Building a Pluralist and Genuinely Democratic Society”, at the University of South-East Europe, in Tetovo on May 8, 2007.

21 See the respective articles and provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, the Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference of the Human Dimension of the OSCE, the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities of the United Nations, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe and the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages.

22 Opening Remarks by Knut Vollebaek, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities at the Launching Event for the Policy Paper “Steps Towards an Integrated Education System”, Skopje 08 October 2009.

Education is, therefore, a powerful means for building a common and cohesive society and for achieving integration. This is achieved best by an integrative approach to education, i.e. multilingual education which may facilitate the preservation of the identity of minorities, as well as a sufficient level of integration through learning the official, “national” language. At the same time, multilingual education provides a multitude of opportunities for youth from all communities to learn together, nurture mutual interactions and overcome national barriers and stereotypes. Multilingual education is therefore a key factor to achieve stability and social cohesion within multiethnic societies and states. It creates opportunities for integration or education in the entire state (region) , not only within the minority community. Multilingual education stimulates tolerance, respect for diversity and understanding that differences may enhance and contribute to development and stability. Furthermore, it facilitates identification with the state. Therefore, integrated multilingual education represents a key component necessary to strike balance between the rights of all communities to preserve and develop their identities and the legitimate need of the state to build an integrated society.

DESCRIPTION AND BRIEF HISTORY OF PREŠEVO, BUJANOVAC AND MEDVEĐA

Danijela Nenadić

The municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa are located in South Serbia. They are heterogeneous communities in terms of religion, language, ethnicity and culture, since representatives of the three most populous national groups reside therein – members of the Serbian, Albanian and Roma communities. The majority members of the Albanian national minority in the territory of Central Serbia reside in Preševo and Bujanovac. Even though relationships between the Serbian and Albanian communities have a complex past, characterized by armed conflicts, a general conclusion is that interethnic relations in this part of Serbia are stable, showing a tendency of improvement.

Democratic societies are characterized by understanding and establishment of relations between the majority population and national minorities, wherein a successful model is one where the issue of mutual relations is resolved by cooperation. Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa do not represent an exception in the sense of ethnic diversity in Serbia. Therefore, much like in other parts of the state, it is important to understand the relations among national communities living in the territory of these municipalities. Thus, in two of the three municipalities in South Serbia, the Albanian community represents a majority in relation to other communities. However, in the overall territory of Serbia, this community is regarded as a national minority. Apart from Serbs and Albanians, the Roma constitute a significant percentage of the population in South Serbia, most prominently in the Bujanovac municipality. In order to understand the situation in South Serbia and attempt to define policies in the three municipalities, both at the local and national level, it is vital to analyze the relations between the Albanian and Serbian communities at the local level, as well as the attitude of the Albanian community towards political and social processes in the country. In other words, integration processes under consideration since 2000 can be analysed on two parallel levels: 1) integration and representation of all communities at the local level and 2) integration of the Albanian community into the social and economic environment at the level of the Republic of Serbia.

Having in mind integration processes, the municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa are in the focus of attention of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. This attention aimed at mitigating interethnic tensions, halting armed conflicts in 2000 and 2001 and normalizing the lives of all the citizens residing in these municipalities. On the other hand, in order to provide for the stability and

development of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa, the state has in the long run focused on building their capacities, economic empowerment and political and social integration, in order to provide for their stability and development. A first crisis resolved by the institutions of the Republic of Serbia by diplomatic means led to the creation of the Coordination Body for the Municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa in December 2000. The Coordination Body was established as a special body of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Government of the Republic of Serbia. Thus Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa were awarded a special position and a state body with the sole aim of long-term stabilization and empowerment. In the first stage, the Coordination Body focused on ending armed conflicts and reducing ethnic tensions, providing for the overall stabilization of the situation in South Serbia. During the second stage, the Coordination Body, with support and assistance of other state institutions and international organizations, allocated considerable funds to improve the economic status of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa. The investments were mostly aimed at building and rebuilding the infrastructure, empowering local self-governments and improving the social situation in the three municipalities. The third stage is characterized by integrative processes aiming to involve representatives of the Albanian community into social and political life, initially at the local level and subsequently in the institutions of the Republic of Serbia. The third stage also includes drafting policies aiming to improve the status of education, healthcare, justice, culture and information, the development of civil society and civic initiatives, along with other segments important for the life of local communities. The international community also underlines that these municipalities are a priority of their work in Serbia. A number of significant projects have been implemented since 2001, and assistance has included financial aid and assistance for education and diverse improvement of the situation of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa.

The three municipalities share a number of similarities and differences. The municipality of Medveđa located in the Jablanica County, while the municipalities of Preševo and Bujanovac are located in the Pčinj County. It should be underlined, for the purpose of the study and to understand the situation in Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa, that all three municipalities are characterized by a high percentage of the Albanian population, the proximity of the administrative line with Kosovo, a high poverty rate and economic lag. With 43.3 thousand persons residing in Bujanovac, the Albanian community represents the ethnic majority (23.7 thousand or 54.7%), followed by the Serbian (14.8 thousand or 34.1%) and Roma (3.9 thousand or 8.9%) communities, while others participate with a marginal fraction. Preševo, with 34.9 thousand persons, is highly homogeneous ethnically, since there are 31.1 thousand Albanians (89.1%) and 3 thousand Serbs (8.5%). Within the ethnic structure of Medveđa, with a population of 10.8 thousand, two thirds are Serbs, approximately one fourth Albanians (26.2%), with a somewhat significant fraction of Montenegrins (3.5%)²³. The census data indicate that Albanians are almost predominantly concentrated

in the Bujanovac, Preševo and Medveđa municipalities, wherein resides 96.1% of their total number in the region of Central Serbia.

These municipalities are considered underdeveloped, according to indicators such as high unemployment and poverty rates, underdeveloped infrastructure, negative migration trends and/or emigration of the population, lack of human resources and a number of other social problems. Due to unfavourable economic trends, political and security issues, a significant number of the population from all ethnic groups leave the municipalities, predominantly the youth. Most often the population moves into towns in Serbia where opportunities for employment and safe life are greater, but also to other European Union states, mostly to relatives and friends. Members of the Albanian community migrate to Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania, where most young Albanians pursue their studies.

At the same time, all three municipalities indicate a number of improvements after having received a special status - in the field of infrastructure, economy and other social and economic areas.

Activities after 2001 needed to be directed towards establishing trust among the ethnic communities in the municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa, as well as infrastructure development and economic empowerment of the municipalities. Thus, until recently, the focus was exclusively on providing peace and political stability, supported by continuous investments for, predominantly, infrastructural development of the municipalities. The Coordination Body invested approximately 70 million Euros in the three municipalities by the end of 2009. The international community has also financed various projects aiming to improve living conditions in Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa since 2001. Even though they are still in the group of underdeveloped municipalities, Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa today differ significantly in comparison to 2001 due to the said investments.

Investments into infrastructure development, though necessary, cannot resolve all problems in the three municipalities. Thus the focus of the local communities, the Coordination Body of the Government of Serbia and international community, has changed considerably since 2008. The issue of the integration of communities, both at the local level, along with the integration of Albanians in the social, political and economic life in the Republic of Serbia, became more relevant. The gradual shift towards involving the communities in projects aiming to improve the quality of social protection, healthcare, cultural policies and education have brought new challenges, as well as evident significant results. The priority is to work with youth aiming to empower them and provide stable development and prosperity of the municipalities. Education, both formal and informal, as a primary and irreplaceable pillar of development and integration has become the focus of interest of national and international organizations. Thus the foundations are

set for designing policies based on thorough situation analysis and recommendations for future activities. The study hereof is an example of an analysis of programs and projects to be implemented in Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa.

An understanding of the educational landscape in South Serbia is of utmost importance for the study of opportunities to open higher education institutions in Preševo and Bujanovac. Though ethnically mixed, these municipalities are characterized by mono-ethnic or segregated schools, save for the municipality of Medveđa where teaching is provided in both Serbian in Albanian within the same schools. In Bujanovac and Preševo, Serbs and Albanians attend different schools and have no opportunity to meet, make friends and exchange experiences, because teaching is delivered in Serbian in a number of schools (most frequently also attended by the Roma), while in others it is delivered in Albanian, with rare examples of multiethnic schools in the villages of Reljan and Biljača. Numerous other problems burden educational institutions of these municipalities. First of all, with the exception of the “Sezai Suroi” secondary school in Bujanovac, most schools require infrastructural investments and modernization. Teachers often indicate a lack of adequate teaching aids, as well as a lack of space for delivering quality instruction. Education in Albanian is additionally hindered by the issue of textbooks and educational plans and programs, which should be resolved in the coming years. Education for Roma children represents another problem, calling for a separate analysis. In the municipality of Preševo, there are 11 educational institutions, one pre-school institution, eight elementary schools (one delivers instruction in Serbian), the Secondary Technical School and the “Skenderbeg” gymnasium, which have classes in Serbian. There are 14 educational institutions in the Bujanovac municipality, one pre-school institution, 10 elementary schools (six with instruction in Albanian, four with instruction in Serbian), the “Sveti Sava” Vocational School, the “Sezai Suroi” gymnasium with instruction in Albanian and the School for Elementary Education in Music. There are 8 educational institutions in the territory of the Medveđa municipality: a pre-school institution, six elementary schools (three with instruction in Serbian and Albanian, three only in Serbian) and the “Nikola Tesla” Secondary Technical School (fifteen classes with instruction in Serbian, four in Albanian).

This is, in short, a brief overview of elementary and secondary education in Preševo and Bujanovac. However, the subject of this study is the potential to open higher education institutions in Preševo and Bujanovac, since higher education is particularly important for further development of the municipalities, as well as for the integration of all communities living in South Serbia. Since there are no opportunities to study in their respective municipalities, the youth of Serbian nationality from Bujanovac and Preševo continue their education in Niš, Belgrade or other towns in Serbia, while young Albanians leave for faculties in Priština, Macedonia or Albania. The economic situation prevents many from pursuing

further education outside of their municipalities. At the same time, few students return to the municipalities of Preševo and Bujanovac upon completing their studies, which affects the standard of living in the municipality and the number of persons qualified to deliver quality work. There is a further issue of recognition of diplomas obtained by Albanian students in the mentioned faculties. Another issue, seldom mentioned, is the fact that young Albanians who acquire university education do not speak Serbian well, which hinders their integration and employment upon their return to Bujanovac and Preševo.

A first step in overcoming these issues has been made in Medveđa. Two faculties have been opened in this municipality attended by Serbian and Albanian students. These are the Faculty of Economy and the Faculty of Law of the University in Niš, where teaching is delivered in Serbian and Albanian. The initiative to open these faculties originated with the Coordination Body, who opened the departments of the two faculties, with full understanding and professional assistance of the Ministry of Education, on October 12, 2009. The local self-government contributed significantly to opening the institutions, understanding that improving the educational structure of the population is vital for reviving the municipality.

First year students have textbooks translated into Albanian and teaching is delivered in Serbian with simultaneous interpretation in Albanian. The process of opening the faculties was lengthy and often paced down by resolving issues that needed tackling along the way. This led to the decision to undertake a special analysis that would delineate not only the educational system of the Republic of Serbia, but also the potential to establish higher educational institutions in Preševo and Bujanovac, and provide potential scenarios for future multiethnic higher education institutions in these municipalities.

The brief overview of the situation in Preševo and Bujanovac aims to provide insight into the general situation in these municipalities, and to briefly outline the components important for establishing a theoretical and practical framework for future education policies, with emphasis on higher education institutions for members of all communities. Therefore, this chapter is followed by an analysis of the economic needs of the municipalities of Preševo and Bujanovac regarding the opening of higher education institutions.

Table 1. Ethnic Structure of the Population 2002²⁴

Ethnic Group (%)	Preševo	Bujanovac	Medveđa
Serbian	8.55	34.14	66.57
Roma	0.92	8.93	1.00
Albanian	89.10	54.69	26.17
Bulgarian	0.00	0.08	0.05
Other	1.43	2.17	6.21

Table 2. Age Structure of the Population 2002²⁵

Age Bracket (%)	Preševo	Bujanovac	Medveđa
0-19	40.87	35.20	26.75
20-39	28.77	29.22	23.92
40-59	17.25	19.31	22.65
60-79	10.10	12.92	23.57
80-	0.96	1.26	2.30
Unregistered	2.05	2.09	0.82

Table 3. Population by Religion 2002²⁶

%	Orthodox	Muslim	Catholic	Protestant	Other
Preševo	8.69	87.40	0.04	0.04	3.83
Bujanovac	34.40	59.11	0.02	0.07	6.40
Medveđa	69.85	26.03	0.02	0.01	4.09

Table 4. Population by Mother Tongue 2002²⁷

%	Serbian	Albanian	Bulgarian	Roma	Other
Preševo	8.59	89.21	0.00	0.92	1.28
Bujanovac	34.27	54.92	0.03	9.03	1.75
Medveđa	72.11	26.18	0.03	1.00	0.68

Table 5. Number of Employed/Unemployed in the Municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa 2005/2006²⁸

Municipality	Employed 2005/06	Unemployed 2005/06
Preševo	3.620	5.418
Bujanovac	7.395	5.449
Medveđa	1.521	1.265

24 Census of the Population, Households and Apartments in 2002, Republic Statistical Office, Belgrade, 2003

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 Long-term Economic Development Strategy for South Serbia, Municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa, January 2007

ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN BUJANOVAC AND PREŠEVO

Iskra Maksimović

Key Economic Indicators

According to the level of economic development, the municipalities of Bujanovac and Preševo are both considered under-developed municipalities in the Republic of Serbia. In addition the municipality of Preševo is one of the least developed regions in the Republic of Serbia with the slowest growth of national income, employment, social standards and all other per capita categories. This municipality considerably lags behind the Republic average measured by all key indicators of the level of economic activity.

In the municipality of Bujanovac, a 63% decrease of social product was recorded in the period 1990 – 2002. In comparison to the neighbouring municipalities, the recovery of Bujanovac is slower than that of Preševo and Surdulica, but faster relative to a considerably more developed municipality of Vranje. One of the key reasons for this situation is the intensity of international assistance. As social product, the national product of the municipality nears the medium of that of the Republic (lower by 48.5%), which is somewhat less favourable than at the level of the county- lower by 35.7%.

In the municipality of Preševo, the social product grew and so in 2002 it amounted to EUR 307.7 in the period 2000 – 2002. However, this is only nominal growth. The national income amounted to USD 154.4, which is lower than in other parts of the Republic and a consequence of a very slow economic development.

Taking into account economic growth over the past 5 to 7 years, these two municipalities have several elements in common. One of them is the trend of development of entrepreneurship and opening of registered shops and enterprises. Thus in Bujanovac, growth was recorded in all forms of ownership, with the exception of social ownership where it is decreasing primarily due to privatization. Almost 50% of enterprises and shops are registered in the trade sector, slightly over 10% in industry. However, only some 30% of enterprises are active and functioning. Small and medium sized enterprises constitute more than 90% of all active companies, and the number of registered shops is also on the increase but

with feeble influence on the increase of the number of employed persons. There are 795 registered enterprises and 574 registered shops in the municipality of Bujanovac.²⁹

Industry as an economic sector generates considerable income on the territory of the municipality although it employs considerably fewer inhabitants than other economic sectors and agriculture. Food processing industry is dominant, followed by metal industry, wood processing and furniture industry. There are also individual plants of tobacco industry, hide and footwear, plastics, non-ferrous metals, chemical and textile industry as well as ore processing.

Over the past 15 years, small social companies prevailed in the industry of Preševo. However, they did not survive the pressures of capital and assets erosion, and of the poor management. The result is decrease of the number of able bodied inhabitants, reduction of the scope of work and economic activity. After the collapse of the majority of enterprises, economic development decreased in the municipality of Preševo, resulting in high unemployment rate and increase of “gray economy”, which gravely affects the development of the municipality as it remains outside the mainstream legal system.

38

Table 6. Number of registered companies per sector and activity in Preševo, 2005

Total	Trade	Restaurants	Transport, warehousing and communications	Civil engineering and public utility	Health	Processing industry	Money exchange
229	164	2	40	6	2	9	2

Table 7. Number of registered entrepreneurs, 2005

Total	Retail trade	Wholesale trade	Civil engineering	Processing industry and restaurants	Financial mediation and lawyers	Transport, warehousing and communications	Health
389	306	10	3	36	15	12	7

Economic resources

The municipality of Bujanovac has significant natural resources and it is most renowned for its mineral water springs, tobacco and plastics processing. These information indicate that the future drivers of economic development need to be identified in the industry of mineral water bottling and agriculture. Also, in view of the natural environment, there is a significant potential in tourism. There is no doubt that resources and capacities of ground waters in Bujanovac are attractive for investments into production of high quality bottled water. These resources could be very interesting to domestic and foreign investors alike.

The municipality of Preševo has significant agricultural resources, but though this may be one of the main sources of income of the population, agriculture is extensive and traditional resulting in low productivity. In the structure of generated agricultural production, traditional production of tobacco, wheat and corn dominates. The municipality of Preševo has several thousands of acres of land suitable for fruit growing. Growing fruit on this land would ensure increase of employment, and with future development, a freezer for fruit processing could be built. This suggests development of fruit growing as one of the potential priorities in implementation of the Preševo economic development strategy.

The population in rural areas is relatively young, but without sufficient knowledge and skills to take a modern approach to agricultural production. The farmers are ill informed of the latest technological advancement and production methods, they are neither taught nor trained to compete for funds with the Government institutions and funds or international organisations. Despite certain potential for tourism and services development, Preševo is not specialized in any particular form of tourism. This impedes development of an adequate touristic offer and disturbs an image of Preševo as a touristic destination. Preševo has no tourist capacities, so it is necessary to promote tourism in order for the entrepreneurs and the municipality to start investing into building modern tourist facilities.

Population

The number of inhabitants in the two municipalities exhibits differing trends. According to the 2002 Census, the number of inhabitants in the municipality of Bujanovac dropped by 12% relative to the 1991 Census. Preševo recorded an exceptional increase in the number of inhabitants in the period 1948 – 1991 - as high as 66.6%. However, in the period 1991 – 2002, certain decrease of the number of inhabitants is noted (Table 3), although the municipality of Preševo is characterised by a high natural growth that amounted up to 15% per decade in the past 40 years.

A common feature of both municipalities is a high number of inhabitants temporarily working abroad. Of 43,302 inhabitants in the municipality of Bujanovac, 10,936 are temporarily working abroad. The situation is similar in the municipality of Preševo, with this number constituting some 30% of the total population. In other words of the total of 35,118 inhabitants, 10,171 work abroad.

Table 8. Number of inhabitants³⁰

Municipality	Population, total		Increase or decrease in population 1991-2002		
	1991	2002	Total	Average per annum	Average per annum at 1000 inhabitants
Bujanovac	47,122	43,302	-3,820	-347	-7.7
Preševo	36,459	34,904	-1,555	-141	-4.0

According to the 2002 Census data³¹, the municipality of Preševo is the youngest municipality in Serbia – with the highest percentage of young inhabitants aged 29 on the average, with the exception of villages Pečeno (43), Svinjište (45) and Slavujevac (37). This presents an opportunity of future development of the municipality, and linked to that, expansion of educational system and network of educational institutions is of particular relevance.

Table 9. Number of inhabitants per age structure 0 to 44

Municipality	Total	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44
Bujanovac	43,302	3,583	4,250	3,920	3,488	2,990	3,194	3,445	3,025	2,542
Preševo	34,904	3,366	3,955	3,710	3,233	2,506	2,496	2,684	2,356	2,013

Comparisons of the number of inhabitants of these municipalities on the basis of age, indicate that both municipalities have a higher number of young people aged 5 - 30. In the municipality of Bujanovac, 35% of the population are children and minors (under 18), and 12% of the population is elderly – aged 65 and over.

³⁰ Municipalities in Serbia, Republic Statistics Office, 2007.

³¹ Project: Development of the Strategic Plan of the Municipality of Bujanovac, Belgrade – Preševo, 2005/2006.

Educational structure of population

Another common characteristic of these municipalities from the aspect of population is educational structure thereof.

Table 10. Educational structure of inhabitants in Bujanovac

Nr.	Category of population	Nr. of population aged over 10	Nr. of illiterate population	% of illiterate population
1	Total	35469	3586	10.11
1.1	Men	17672	828	4.69
1.2	Women	177797	2758	15.50
2	Urban	9885	1184	11.98
2.1	Men	4845	283	5.84
2.2	Women	5040	901	17.88
3	Rural	25584	2402	9.39
3.1	Men	12827	545	4.25
3.2	Women	12757	1857	14.56

As shown in the above Table, the number of illiterate inhabitants is high. One of the reasons is certainly that the municipality of Bujanovac is a rural area for the most part, as per distribution of population. However, such a high percentage of illiterate persons – amounting to 10.11% as according to the 2002 Census, calls for analysis of educational conditions and opportunities, even more so as 15.5% of all the illiterate persons are women.

If comparisons are made about the level of education as per 2002 Census data, it becomes evident (see Table below) that the majority of inhabitants has acquired primary education in both municipalities. In the municipality of Bujanovac, slightly over 38% have completed primary schools, while in Preševo this percentage is 42%. However, in both municipalities a high number of inhabitants without education is noted i.e. inhabitants who have not completed primary education. The major difference between the represented categories of population is in the number of persons who acquired college and higher education. In Bujanovac there are almost ten times fewer inhabitants with higher education than with the secondary education, and the number of university graduates is eight times lower than the number of secondary school graduates.

Table 11. Structure of inhabitants per acquired level of education, 2002 Census³²

Municipality	Total	Women	No educ.	1-3 years of primary school	4-7 years of primary school	Primary educ.	Secondary Educ.	College	Higher	Unknown
Bujanovac	31,549	1,5916	4,622	542	4,896	12,015	5,659	558	700	2.557
Preševo	23,873	12,204	2,866	310	3,243	10,138	4,335	542	652	1.787

More than 8,000 young people attend primary and secondary schools in Bujanovac that has a developed network of primary schools. There are ten primary, two secondary and one school of music on the territory of the municipality. Primary schools have a total of 261 classes with 6,139 pupils. According to the data obtained from primary schools³³, 70 to 161 pupils complete primary schools per year. In the period of school years 2005/06 - 2008/09, a total of 2,635 pupils completed primary schools.

There are two secondary schools in Bujanovac:

- Vocational school „Sveti Sava” with teaching in the Serbian language and with the curricula for economy, mechanical engineering, metal processing, trade, services and tourism;
- Secondary school „Sezai Surroi” with teaching in the Albanian language and with the following orientations: general grammar school, medical nurse - teacher, economy, mechanical engineering, metal processing and electrical and technical engineering.

The total number of pupils who enrolled into the first year of secondary school in school years 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09 is 2.507. In the school years 2008/09 and 2009/10 there were 521 and 438 enrolled pupils respectively. The number of 1,816 pupils completed secondary schools, i.e. third or fourth year (depending on the orientation) in the school years 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09.

In view of the interest of pupils for education in music, the Municipal Assembly of Bujanovac founded a School for Basic Music Education in the school year 1988/89. In 2003/04, a total of 135 pupils enrolled in the forms one to six of this school (piano, accordion, violin, flute, solfège and music theory). The music school won numerous awards at the Republic competition of music schools.

There are seven primary schools and two secondary schools with almost 7,500 pupils in Preševo. The grammar school in Preševo is a general school and the secondary technical school has educational profiles in: transport, electrical and technical engineering, wood processing and metals processing. An overview of educational institutions in Preševo in the school year 2005/06 is presented in the Table below.

32 Municipalities in Serbia, 2007

33 Data collected from primary and secondary schools in Bujanovac

Table 12. Educational system in Preševo school year 2005/06

Location	Elementary	Secondary	Nr. of students	Nr. of employees	Nr. of teachers	Displaced classes	Sports facilities
The Town of Preševo	November 15		2700	171	133	(Žujince, Žel. stanica, Norča, Kurbalija, Trnava)	Yes
Oraovica	Seljami Hilači		762	58	51	(Bukovac, Gospođince i G. Sošaja)	No
Rajince	Zeinel Ajdini		352	34	21		No
Crnotince	December 22		492	52	44	(Bukurevac)	Yes
Miratovac	Abdulah Krasnići		688	50	41		No
Reljan	May 9		780 (621 in Albanian and 159 in Serbian)	69	48	Buštranje, Svinjište, Aliđerci, Strezovce, Ašane, Mamince, Slavujevac, Čukarka	No-yes
The Town of Preševo		May 25	864	110	92	Bujanovac (210)	No
Železnička stanica	Vuk Karadžić		226	36	27	Cakanovac	Yes
The Town of Preševo			930	93	83	-	Yes

If analysing the data for the past five years, it becomes evident that a similar number of students completes primary schools - 699 to 781 pupils/annum. In the period school years 2006/07 to 2009/10, primary education was acquired by a total of 3,022 pupils³⁴. During the same period a total 2,642 pupils enrolled into secondary schools. 310 pupils completed three-year secondary education, and 1,185 pupils a four-year secondary education. 987 pupils completed the grammar school. This means that three and four-year secondary education was completed by a total of 2,482 pupils in the school years 2006/07 to 2009/10.³⁵

34 Data collected from educational institutions in Preševo

35 Including all graduates in school year 2009/10

Able-bodied population

There are 25,000 able-bodied inhabitants in the municipality of Bujanovac, 7,000 of whom are unemployed (according to the 2005 data). With respect to the employment structure, it is evident that the processing industry represents a driver of economic activity in this municipality. Of the total number of employed, 56% are employed in the processing industry.

In the municipality of Preševo there is a high share of agricultural population in total population (39.8%). One in three employees is employed outside economy (37.3%), and 45.6% of those who are employed in economy work in industry. The coefficient of the unemployed is extremely high (64.2% higher than the average in the Republic), and economic power of population is weak (active basic assets per capita are only 11.6% of the average of the Republic in 1995; retail trade per capita is 65.3%, and the source budget income per capita 49.6% of the average of the Republic). Also, economy is under-developed and the transportation and water supply network are run down. The information that one in 15 inhabitants has a telephone and that there is one doctor for 1,274 speak for themselves. The other indicators are at 50% of the average for the Republic.

44

Table 13. Population per activity in Preševo school year 2005/06

Population per activities	Active population		Population with personal income	Supported population	Living abroad for less than a year
	Total	Percentage (%)			
Preševo	11600	33.23	2232	20838	234

Employment and Unemployment

In January 2010, there were 751,590 persons on the records of the National Employment Service (hereinafter: NES) in Serbia. Relative to December 2009, unemployment increased by 2.9% or by 21,218 persons. Since October 2008 (when there were 717,408 unemployed and when the global financial crisis hit), the number of unemployed persons at the NES register increased by 34,182. Unemployment decreased in the period May - November 2009. Unemployment is again exhibiting an upward trend on the NES registers since December 2009.

According to the data of the Republic Statistic Office, from the Labour Force Survey of October 2009 (real unemployment), the unemployment rate is 16.6% (population aged 15 and over), and the number of the unemployed is 517,000.

In the municipality of Bujanovac there were 5,639 employed persons in 2003 – a mere 11% of the total number of the employed in the Pčinj county. Relative to the average in the Republic, the municipality of Bujanovac has two times fewer number of the employed per 1,000 inhabitants. However, in the course of 2004 an upward trend in the employment figures was noted: the number of employed persons rose to 6,522 that year. The incomplete privatization and insufficient development of entrepreneurship and SME sector resulted in 47.3% of all the employed to be working in the socially owned companies, while only 19.7% employees worked in the private sector in 2003. The number of the employed over the past 15 years dropped by 16%, while the number of the unemployed doubled in the same period. The decrease of national income is significantly higher than the decrease of the number of the employed suggesting a dramatic decrease of productivity.

According to the statistical indicators in 2007, there were 7,442 employees in the municipality of Bujanovac – 33.4% of them women. In economic and social institutions and organisations 4,943 persons were employed and in the group of entrepreneurs and self-employed there were 2,500 employees. The number of the employed per 1,000 inhabitants amounted to 165. In the municipality of Preševo, there were 3,702 employed persons, of whom 29.4% were women. 2,484 persons were employed in economic and social institutions and organisations and 1,218 by the group of entrepreneurs. There were 95 employed persons per 1,000 inhabitants.

In both municipalities, the majority of persons worked in two sectors – in the processing industry and in education. In the municipality of Bujanovac, 2,508 persons worked in the processing industry and 681 in education. In the municipality of Preševo, 638 persons worked in the processing industry and 764 in education.

According to the data of late 2009³⁶, a high number of unemployed persons was recorded in both municipalities, which dramatically increased relative to the number of the unemployed in the previous decade. In Bujanovac, there was a higher number of the newly registered unemployed persons while the registered demand for employees was minimum.

Table 14. Number of the unemployed in both municipalities

Municipality	Period			
	As at the end of the month	During the month		
	Unemployed	Newly-registered	Registered need for employment	Employment
Bujanovac	4,796	351	6	109
Preševo	6,778	194	3	16

Analysing the structure of the unemployed and their profiles, a conclusion may be drawn that the majority of the unemployed (see below tables) in both municipalities are persons with a very low level of education (I and II level of education). Similarly, there is a high percentage of the unemployed whose level of education is III to VIII, and unemployment is particularly significant with persons aged 31 to 40 and 41 to 50, or the population that should be in their prime and who would be the most efficient workers. The analysis also renders a very significant information: some 66% of all the unemployed are women and that promotion of active job search among female population, self-employment and entrepreneurship development will be very important in implementation of development strategies.

Table 15. Report on demand and offer in the municipality of Prešovo (professions with the highest number of the unemployed), August 2009

Rank	Code of profess.	Title of profession Prešovo	No. of unemployed at the start of reporting period	Newly-registered during reporting period	Total no. of unemployed	No. of registered needs
1	301813	Locksmith	163	2	165	0
2	302220	Car mechanic	113	1	114	0
3	109900	Persons without profession and education (unqualified)	4712	48	4760	60
4	409900	Graduate of grammar school (IV SSS*)	518	16	534	7
5	301000	Wood processor and treater (III SSS and KV*)	76	0	76	0
6	301035	Carpenter for fitting, repair and maintenance	62	1	63	0
7	301835	Electrowelder	59	0	59	0
8	301801	Metal lathe operator	58	0	58	0
9	406700	Economic technician (IV SSS)	42	2	44	0
10	406453	Commercial technician	41	1	42	0
11	408330	Biolaboratory technician	42	0	42	0
12	403121	Chemical laboratory technician	34	0	34	0
13	304621	Upholsterer	33	0	33	0
14	302431	Electrofitter	31	1	32	0
15	408310	Physics laboratory technician	32	0	32	0
16	306411	Salesperson – general store	31	0	31	0
17	401800	Engineering technician – quality controller (IV SSS)	171	5	176	6
18	303421	Glass cutter	29	0	29	0
19	306400	Salesperson (III SSS and KV)	27	0	27	0
20	405600	Road traffic technician (IV SSS)	22	3	25	0
21	408843	Foreign language clerk	25	0	25	0
22	403100	Chemical and technological technician (IV SSS)	24	0	24	0
23	716800	B.A. Law (VII - 1 SSS)	22	1	23	1
24	302400	Electrofitter - assembler (III SSS and KV)	21	0	21	0
25	402000	Engineering technician - developer (IV SSS)	20	0	20	0
26	303211	Polymer processing machine and tools operator	18	0	18	0
27	401820	Toolmaker	17	0	17	0

Rank	Code of profess.	Title of profession Preševo	No. of unemployed at the start of reporting period	Newly-registered during reporting period	Total no. of unemployed	No. of registered needs
28	408301	Mathematics and technical assistant	17	0	17	0
29	302200	Mechanic, machinist, engine fitter (III SSS and KV)	16	0	16	0
30	305600	Road vehicle driver (III SSS and KV)	15	0	15	0
31	408800	Technician in culture (IV SSS)	15	0	15	0
32	302564	Car-electrician	14	0	14	0
33	301005	Producer of primary wood products	12	1	13	0
34	301815	Tinsmith	13	0	13	0
35	303661	Bookbinder	12	0	12	0
36	303121	Operator in chemical laboratory	11	0	11	0

*SSS (srednja stručna sprema) - degree of vocational education

*KV (kvalifikovani radnik) – qualified professional

48

Data from the above Table suggest that unemployment is evidently the major problem of Preševo, requiring implementation of the Strategy of Development of the Municipality of Preševo. The previous Table suggest the highest number of unemployed with very low level of education (I level, as many as 68%), and that there are fewest unemployed among the inhabitants with high level of education (VII –1,VII –2). A grave problem of Preševo is also the lack of highly educated persons.

Table 16. Report on offer and demand in the municipality of Bujanovac (professions with the highest number of the unemployed), August 2009

Title of profession	No. of unemployed at the start of reporting period	Newly-registered during reporting period	Total no. of unemployed	No. of registered needs
Persons without profession and education (unqualified)	2,740	75	2.815	76
Economic technician (IV SSS)	164	8	172	2
Engineering technician - developer (IV SSS)	127	11	138	3
Car mechanic	114	2	116	2
Salesperson – general store	107	2	109	1
Graduate of grammar school (IV SSS)	83	1	84	1
Mechanic for machine tools	80	4	84	0
Electrical engineering technician in production of machines and equipment	72	3	75	1
Textile tailor	69	0	69	0
Upholsterer	55	2	57	1
Graduate of grammar school – languages and social sciences (IV SSS)	45	0	45	4
Electrofitter	44	1	45	1
Upper shoe manufacturer	41	1	42	0
Medical technician (IV SSS)	25	2	27	11
Financing, accounting and banking clerk (VI - 1 SSS)	19	0	19	5
Waiter	18	0	18	3
B.A Economy (general economy, banking and finances) (VII - 1 SSS)	14	1	15	9

Both tables prove human resources development in the two municipalities to be a very significant factor, and without knowledge and people there will be no economic prosperity.

Conclusion

A realistic main objective of the overall development of Bujanovac would be attainment of social gross product of USD 2,000 per capita by 2020. This level of social gross product should be attained through a higher level of employment, so that projections deal with some 200 employed persons per 1,000 inhabitants in the

town and some 170 employees on the rest of the territory of the municipality as follows: 45% of the total number of the employed in the secondary sectors, 28% in the quarter sector, 25% in the tertiary and 2% in the primary sector.

The operational drivers of business should be enterprises capable of adjusting to the global mainstream and of embracing the new logic of the global market. The focus should be on founding small and medium sized enterprises as the drivers of production. The production programmes of such private companies are more flexible and enable relatively painless migration of capital from one sector to another as well as adapting to new conditions on the market and in the environment. In order to achieve development objectives and raise the standards of the municipality and its inhabitants, new investments into development and advancement of the tertiary sector as the future axes of development, are required.

50 | The vision of the municipality of Preševo over the next decade (2005–2015) is to become a sustainable, environmentally clean municipality which is economically and touristically developed, equipped with infrastructure and transportation by the end of 2015 and to become a leader in South Serbia and the region. Quality is the only inexhaustible resource to be exploited in realising this vision and it represents the key starting point and orientation. The vision of the municipality of Preševo is to offer its inhabitants improved economic, social, cultural and educational conditions for work and life, and entrepreneurs a perspective for dynamic growth. The defined vision of the municipality is based on realistic opportunities for development and projections for the next decade. However, this will materialize only if strategic steps to the vision are actively taken.

The key prerequisites on which these presumptions are based for both municipalities also include:

The municipality of Bujanovac has significant natural resources and it is most renowned for the mineral water springs, tobacco processing, and plastics processing. These data suggest that the future drivers of economic development are the mineral water bottling industry and agriculture as well as tourism in view of the natural environment. The potential and capacities of ground waters in Bujanovac is no doubt attractive to investments in production of high quality bottled water. These resources are very interesting for domestic and foreign investors alike.

The municipality of Preševo has abundant natural and economic preconditions for development of certain areas of agriculture, fruit growing in particular. The population in rural areas is relatively young, but without sufficient knowledge and skills to take a modern approach to agricultural production.

The farmers are ill informed of the latest technological advancement and production methods, they are neither taught nor trained to compete for funds with the Government institutions and funds or international organisations. Despite certain potential for tourism and services development, Preševo is not specialized in any particular form of tourism.

In view of the fact that small and medium sized enterprises predominate in both municipalities and that this trend is likely to increase, emphasis should be placed on development of institutions and other preconditions for successful development of these enterprises. Investments should be increased into technology so as to make the products of small and medium sized enterprises competitive on the market. Since lack of education of managers in small and medium sized enterprises represents a significant problem, opportunities for education of managers and entrepreneurs should be created.

These key elements of future development of both municipalities and their demographic development gives rise to the question as to adequacy of the existing educational network in Preševo and Bujanovac. Analysing the current level of development of the two municipalities, their natural and demographic potential, level of development of education, educational network in particular, the situation on the labour market as well as the vision of development thereof, we can conclude that investments into expansion of educational network and higher education in particular, is the one key prerequisite of development of these municipalities.

The development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac would ensure direct fulfilment of basic needs of the inhabitants (e.g. one doctor per 1,304 inhabitants in Preševo), the increase of the number of highly educated individuals and increase of the overall level of education of the population. This would mean creating better investment opportunities for donors or investors and directly result in decreasing the number of unemployed persons. Since both municipalities are mostly „young“, development of higher education would have multiple effects on social development of the two municipalities.

From the aspect of individuals and their personal development, development of higher education would provide for an easier and cheaper education of young people in Preševo and Bujanovac, a certain remaining in this area and would decrease a pronounced migration, particularly of young people thus contributing to ensuring demographic and economic rights to all the citizens of Serbia.

The planned and projected development of both municipalities requires highly educated human resources capable of heading implementation of strategic documents and managing development processes. The overall economic development of both municipalities is based on the development of small

and medium-sized enterprises, processing industry and services. This means that there is a dire need for high education of managers, economists, technologists, health care staff, doctors in particular, pharmacists, agronomists, etc. Capacity building of entrepreneurs and their advancement is also indispensable.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERBIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Vanja Ivošević and Marija Mitrović

Description of the Education System in the Republic of Serbia

The structure of the education system in Serbia consists of the following:

- Pre-school and elementary education;
- Secondary education;
- Higher education.

Mandatory and free-of-charge elementary education is guaranteed to all citizens under equal conditions by the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 83/06) and is regulated by the Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 72/09) and Law on Elementary Education of the Republic of Serbia (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 50/92). Until the school 2006/7 year, only elementary education was mandatory. The Law on Amendments to the Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 58/04) introduces the obligation of attending pre-school education, hence extending obligatory education to 9 years.

Obligatory pre-school education (preparatory school program) starts one year prior to enrolment to elementary school and lasts for nine months minimum. The organization of preparatory school programs is envisaged to be implemented in kindergartens and elementary schools, the founders of which are units of the local self-government. The Law does not envisage organization of the preparatory school program in private kindergartens.

The first grade of elementary school is enrolled by children who are between six and a half and seven and a half years old at the moment of beginning of the school year. The Law also envisages elementary education for adults and it is intended for adults aged over 16. According to the new Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System, the obligatory elementary education lasts for eight years and is split into two stages:

- The first stage covers first four grades, where class teaching is organized. By way of an exception, during this stage, foreign language courses, elective and optional courses can be organized in conformity with the separate laws and school curricula.
- The second stage covers fifth to eighth grades, whereas the class teaching is organized in accordance with the school curricula.

The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 83/06) guarantees to all citizens the right to free secondary education, under equal conditions. Unlike pre-school and elementary education, secondary education is not compulsory. It is regulated by the Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No. 72/09) and the Law on Secondary Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, Nos. 50/92, 53/93, 67/93, 48/94, 24/96, 23/02, 62/03, 64/03).

Children who graduate from elementary school are entitled to enrolment in the first grade of secondary school. Those wishing to enrol grammar school or a four-year vocational school shall pass the entrance exam with the exception of candidates who finished the elementary school or one of two final grades abroad as well as those who are enrolling into schools for children with special needs. Students who wish to enrol into art schools, schools for children with special talents, schools wherein a part of teaching is performed in a foreign language shall take the entrance exam. The student wishing to enroll is entitled to have the entrance test in the language in which he/she graduated from the elementary school. Only applicants who pass the entrance exam shall be qualified to be ranked on the rank list, while the ranking will be based on performances accomplished at the entrance exam and on the attainments during the previous schooling. Applicants for enrolment into three-year secondary schools shall be ranked according to their attainments in the elementary school.

In line with the new Law on Fundamentals of the Education System, secondary education can last three or four years. The four-year general secondary education program is acquired in grammar schools having natural-science, socio-linguistic or general courses. There are also specialized grammar schools where programs for students with special talents are organized or where the language of instruction is a foreign language (for example, linguistic, sports or mathematics grammar schools). Vocational three-year or four-year education is acquired in secondary vocational schools. Education in four-year vocational schools encompasses general-education and vocational courses, i.e. it may lead to further education or employment, while the three-year education is focused mainly on employment, i.e. acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for employment.

After the completed fourth grade of secondary general education in grammar school, the student takes the general school-leaving examination, in compliance with the special law. The general school-leaving examination may also be taken by a student who completed the fourth grade of vocational or art education at a vocational or art school. Based on the passed general school-leaving examination, the student may enroll at an adequate higher-education institution without taking entrance exam, with the exception of testing special abilities and aptitudes, as stipulated by the special law. Students who completed the fourth grade of secondary vocational (or art) education in a vocational (art) school, may also take a vocational (art) school-leaving examination, in compliance with the special law. Based on the passed vocational (art) school-leaving examination, the student may enrol at an adequate higher-education institution, in a manner and according to the procedure stipulated by the special law. Vocational (art) school-leaving examination may also be taken by adults upon completion of the three-year vocational (art) education.

Higher education is regulated by the Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 76/05). The right to higher education is given to all persons who previously completed secondary education, with the exception of art faculties which may also be enrolled by the persons who have not previously completed secondary school. Higher education may be acquired through academic and vocational studies. Academic studies are oriented towards implementation and development of scientific, professional and artistic achievements, while vocational studies are oriented towards employment.

When enrolling at a higher-education institution, candidates take an entrance exam or an exam for testing abilities and aptitudes. The candidate who passed the general school-leaving examination shall not take an entrance exam unless it is necessary to pass the exam for testing abilities and aptitudes. If it is not necessary, results of general school-leaving examination shall be evaluated for this candidate, in compliance with the general instrument of the autonomous higher-education institution. Instead of the entrance exam, the institution may direct candidates who passed the vocational (art) school-leaving examination to take exams in specific subjects included in the general school-leaving examination. The rank list of applicants is made on the basis of criteria prescribed by the higher-education institution for the competition for enrolment of students in the first year of studies.

An autonomous higher-education institution shall determine the number of students to enrol in the study programs, in conformity with its working licence. Higher-education institutions established by the Republic, i.e. the Government of the Republic of Serbia, upon acquiring an opinion of higher-education institutions and the National Council for Higher Education, shall make decision on the number of students financed from the budget to be enrolled in the first year of study programs. Higher-education

institutions have to make their decisions on the issue not later than two months prior to announcing the competition. The rest of the enrolled students shall be self-financed.

Higher education may be obtained in the following higher education institutions:

- Universities;
- Faculties or academies of arts within universities;
- Academies of professional career studies;
- Colleges;
- Colleges of professional career studies.

The higher-education institution shall carry out its higher education activities where its seat is located, while study programs may also be performed in a higher-education unit with no status of a legal entity, and situated outside the institution seat, in compliance with its licence.

Higher education in Serbia has three levels. The first level consists of basic academic studies (180 to 240 ECTS³⁷) and basic professional career studies (180 ECTS). The second level consists of diploma academic studies – master’s degree (a minimum of 60 or 120 ECTS , depending on whether the volume of 240 or 180 ECTS was achieved at the previous level of studies), specialist professional career studies (a minimum of 60 ECTS) and specialist academic studies (a minimum of 60 ECTS). The third-level studies are doctoral academic studies, in the course of which a minimum of 180 ECTS may be acquired, with a previously achieved volume of studies of a minimum of 300 ECTS on basic academic and diploma academic studies.

All kinds and all levels of studies may be acquired only at university, i.e. faculty or academy of art as constitutional parts of university. Universities, i.e. faculties or academies of art are free to determine whether the ratio between basic and diploma academic studies will be regulated after the model of 180+120 ECTS (3+2) or 240+60 ECTS (4+1). The latter model is implemented at the majority of universities, i.e. faculties and academies of art established by the Republic. At academies of professional career studies and colleges of professional career studies, students may achieve basic professional career and specialist professional career courses. A college is a higher-education institution in which basic academic, diploma academic studies and specialist studies may be achieved. In colleges, basic academic studies last for three years (180 ECTS), which makes it rather difficult for graduate students of these institutions to enrol at diploma academic studies effected at universities, or faculties, in par-

ticular because enrolment is subject to discretionary decisions of universities, or faculties. Candidates are usually required to take entrance exams and a large number of differential exams, which makes a vertical mobility between the two types of institutions almost impossible.

With some study programs of basic and specialist studies, as well as diploma academic and doctoral studies, students are required to provide a final paper. The procedure of preparation and defence of final papers are defined by a higher-education institution instrument.

Establishment of a Higher-Education Institution and Higher-Education Units

An autonomous higher-education institution may be established by the Republic, a legal entity and a natural person, in compliance with the law. When the founder is the Republic, the decision on establishment is made by the Government of the Republic of Serbia.

Prior to the beginning of activities, all higher-education institutions must obtain a licence issued by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education issues the licence at the request of the higher-education institution. The higher-education institution shall submit its Articles of Association and evidence of meeting requirements for obtaining the licence and accreditation for study programmes³⁸.

The Ministry shall forward the application with documentation to the Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance, for the purpose of giving an opinion. The accreditation determines that the higher-education institution and study programmes meet the standards stipulated by the Law on Higher Education, and that the higher-education institution has the right to issue public documents, in compliance with the Law. The accreditation procedure is conducted at the request by the Ministry of Education, the founder or the higher-education institution itself. During the accreditation procedure, the Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (hereinafter referred to as the Commission) shall:

- Issue a certificate of accreditation of the higher-education institution, or the study programme, provided that the institution has met the standards;
- Forward an act of warning to the higher-education institution, pointing to the shortcomings related to meeting requirements, quality of work of the higher-education institution, or the study programme; the Commission shall give a deadline for eliminating the specified shortcomings, and make decision on the application after the deadline;
- Issue a decision on rejecting the application for accreditation³⁹.

38 A detailed procedure, as well as time limits are described in Article 41 of the Law on Higher Education, Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No. 76/05.

39 The grievance process is defined in Article 10 of the Law on Higher Education, Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 76/05.

The Ministry of Education shall issue a licence to the higher-education institution if the Commission gives a positive opinion on the:

- Contents, quality and volume of study programmes for academic or professional career studies;
- Necessary number of teaching and other staff with adequate scientific and professional qualifications⁴⁰;
- Provided adequate premises and equipment, in conformity with the number of students that the higher-education institution intends to enrol and the necessary quality of studying.

The licence shall specify the approved study programmes, the number of students for which the programme has been approved, the number of fulltime employed teachers, as well as premises in which the activities are to be carried out. It shall specify whether the higher-education institution got an approval to carry out its activities outside the seat.

A higher-education institution having a licence may submit an application for amendment to the licence for a new study programme. The procedure for amendment to the licence shall presuppose the procedure of accreditation and issuance of the amendment to the licence under the same procedure as described in the text. The higher-education institution may establish a higher-education unit outside its seat, without the capacity of a legal entity. The procedure shall presuppose the accreditation process described in the text, as well as amendment to the licence, if the licence fails to contain the approval for conducting activities outside the seat.

Faculty, academy of arts, as well as higher-education units with the capacity of a legal entity shall regulate their internal organization and management by their statute, in compliance with the statute of university. University shall give consent to the statute of the higher-education unit which forms its integral part.

Financing Higher-Education Institutions Established by the Republic

A higher-education institution established by the Republic shall acquire funds for the implementation of the accredited programmes within its activities on the basis of the contract concluded with the Government, according to the previously obtained opinion of the Ministry of Education. Funds for conducting activities in the course of one school year shall be provided in conformity with the curriculum of the higher-education institution.

⁴⁰ The necessary number of teachers for getting a licence for a specific study programme implies that a minimum of 70% of teachers are employed fulltime on the programme that the licence is required for. The exception are art study programmes, where the number may not be less than 50%.

An autonomous higher-education institution shall determine the number of students enrolling the study programmes it organizes; however, the number may not exceed the one defined in the licence. Determining the number of students shall be carried out at the proposal of higher-education units which form an integral part of the autonomous higher-education institution, in compliance with the statute of the institution.

In the case of a higher-education institution established by the Republic, the number of students to be enrolled in the first year of the study programme at the expense of the budget shall be decided by the Government, upon the opinion acquired from higher-education institutions and the National Council for Higher Education.

In subsequent years of studies, the higher-education institution may increase the number of students financed from the budget at the most by 20% as compared to the previous year. The higher-education institution may enrol an additional number of self-financing students, up to the number approved in the licence. Tuition fee shall be determined by the higher-education institution, in compliance with the general instrument of the higher-education institution.

Education of National Minorities⁴¹

Minority rights represent one of the principles of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia and are guaranteed by the Constitution. Representatives of national minorities, inter alia, have their constitutionally guaranteed right to education in their own language in state-owned facilities and usage of their language and alphabet.

These rights are guaranteed and protected also by the Law on Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 11/2002). In line with this Law, the representatives of national minorities are entitled to instruction and education in their own language in pre-school, elementary and secondary institutions, which does not exclude the obligatory courses/ learning the Serbian language. By the way of an exception, the education and care activities may also be carried out in Serbian language. The curriculum should be accommodated to the concrete national minority and contain topics related to its history, art and culture. National Councils of national minorities shall unfailingly take part in preparation of the curriculum. When the education and care activities are carried out in the language of the national minority, textbooks and teaching material shall be used in conformity with the special law. Members of a national minority may also use textbooks from their parent country but only based on the approval by the Minister of Education.

⁴¹ A detailed review of the legal framework for minorities, as well as implementation of minority right to education in the territory of the AP Vojvodina is given in the case study.

Regarding higher education, the Law on Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities only stipulates forming of departments and faculties where, in languages of minorities or bilingually, pre-school teachers, teachers and teachers of languages of national minorities will be educated. However, the Law on Higher Education expands this right. A higher-education institution may conduct any study programme in the national minority language if the programme is accredited. When the teaching is performed in the language of a national minority, public documents and records (Register of Students, records of issued diplomas and diploma annexes, as well as minutes of exams) shall also be kept in the language and script of the national minority.

The Law on Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities stipulates the right of members of national minorities to establish and maintain private education institutions, schools or universities, where the teaching is organized in languages of national minorities or bilingually. In financing education in languages of national minorities may take both domestic and foreign organizations, foundations and private persons, with specific facilities or exemption from dues, rates and taxes, in compliance with the law.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AND THE THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Jana Baćević

Feasibility studies usually imply an idea or a draft of a project. Research to this end involves the identification of resources and capacities, as well as recommendations (a list of “steps”) for implementing the project. The Research Team, however, faced a somewhat different situation while conducting the study. There was no predetermined or drafted project or an idea on how to organize the higher education process. To the contrary, the goal of this project was reverse – to examine the needs, capacities and resources and, based on the findings, to provide recommendations for future policy planning in the domain of higher education in South Serbia.

Such a context represents a great challenge to research. The development of public policies, including those related to education, is a process that demands not only excellent knowledge of decision-making systems, processes and mechanisms, but also a level of understanding of relationships among stakeholders involved in the process. When it comes to multiethnic societies, particularly those that experienced some conflict in the past, this task becomes increasingly complex due to the likelihood of varied political goals among different parties, as well as the lack of trust between the communities. Therefore, public policies in such a context have to rely on empirical and theoretical knowledge of the field in which an activity is developed (in this case, education), and their formulation should be based on consultations with as many stakeholders as possible – institutions, groups and individuals who have a stake in the process.

From a theoretical standpoint, this approach represents a shift in decision-making away from the traditional “top-down” approach which implies that ministries or other state authorities decide on policies and the development of individual sectors, which are then implemented in local communities who, in this case, represent passive recipients of the policies. The success of such policies is often assessed based on the degree to which these policies are accepted or resisted on the level of local communities. The failure to implement these policies is usually justified by insufficient (economic or political) development of local communities or their refusal to cooperate. However, different approaches have emerged lately that take into account civil initiatives during policy making processes. Such an approach implies the formulation of public policies is based on the opinion and needs of local communities who are to implement the policies⁴².

42 Levinson, B., Sutton, M. and T. Winstead. Education Policy as a Practice of Power: Theoretical Tools, Ethnographic Methods, Democratic Options.

The described approach relies on “public polls” gauging the reactions of individuals and social groups to certain policy directions, primarily including social dialogue directly involving the local community into policy planning and implementation. This dialogue is based on the analysis of practices reflecting different perspectives of stakeholders, which are mutually linked and overlap.

This approach represented a baseline for selecting the research methodology. Namely, instead of surveying local community representatives on the existing higher education institution models, the Research Team opted for a “softer”, more qualitative approach.

The methodology included a form of ethnography and/or extended visits of the Research Team to the field and in-depth interviews with various local community representatives and other key stakeholders. Such a methodology was selected because the Research Team did not want the study to result in a single and irrevocable solution which would subsequently be “imposed”. On the contrary, the aim was to collect and analyse the issues, opinions and standpoints of stakeholders and then, based on the results, to describe various models of higher education development in South Serbia. Of course, this is not the only focus and analysis of the study. This type of research may represent an important knowledge base on the attitudes and issues faced by the population in this region, but it cannot provide recommendations on the direction of higher education development. Therefore, the models were supplemented by various systemic solutions from the legislative and practical higher education framework, both in Serbia and in neighbouring countries. These models were then analyzed from multiple aspects: legal, economic, educational, social and integration aspects. The idea was to obtain a sort of impartial assessment of the proposed models (solutions). This process implies the description of advantages and disadvantages, as well as the positive and negative sides of each model. Finally, the positive and negative sides of the proposed solutions were compared, and more favourable solutions were underlined.

Study Description

The first stage of research fieldwork was to select the respondents. The goal was to define all social groups who may be considered stakeholders of the study. The following groups were identified:

- Civil servants in positions relevant to the research (Ministry of Education, Coordination Body),
- Municipal officials,
- Local representatives of the Coordination Body,
- Local representatives of political parties,

- Civil service representatives (Social Work Centres, National Employment Service),
- Representatives of non-government organizations,
- International organizations representatives (OSCE, USAID),
- Other local community representatives (school principals, media),
- Secondary school and gymnasium students,
- Parents of secondary school and gymnasium students,
- Entrepreneurs,
- Employees of the Niš University involved in higher education in Medveđa (development or teaching),
- Students in departments in Medveđa.

The representatives of these groups were then selected in consultations with the CNR and the Coordination Body. Contact with initial respondents was arranged from Belgrade or through local coordinators, followed by the “snowballing” technique of expanding the sample based on recommendations and suggestions of the respondents.

A larger bulk of the research was conducted in October and November 2009, during field visits to Preševo, Bujanovac, Medveđa and Niš. The total number of field visits, including the preliminary visit, was six, over the period of the total of 20 days. More than 100 interviews were conducted, applying two techniques: interviews and focus groups. Most participants were interviewed, while focus groups were used when it was important to interview as many persons from a certain group as possible – i.e. secondary school and gymnasium students, parents, students in departments in Medveđa and entrepreneurs. Focus groups provide insight into the dynamics of social interaction among participants. This enables interpretation of the ways in which the respondents make decisions, who also belong to specific groups⁴³ (an important issue when, for example, dealing with the decision-making process on the choice of further education among secondary school students or their parents).

Interviewing relied on the in-depth interview technique. Interviewing was conducted based on a framework questionnaire, aiming to have the respondents feel free to express their attitudes, opinions and beliefs, enabling a more “natural” course of the interviews. Even though this approach sometimes makes analysis difficult due to the abundance of data obtained, and is also often time-consuming, it had obvious advantages in this specific case. Namely, when dealing with an issue of public significance, such as the issue of the development of higher education for minorities in South Serbia, respondents frequently conform their responses to what they presume (or know) to be the official and/or dominant attitude of the group they identify with. In such cases, “politically correct” answers or attitudes aligned

⁴³ See e.g: Đurić, S. Fokus-grupni intervju. Službeni glasnik, Beograd, 2007; Berg, B.L. Qualitative Research Methods for Social Sciences. (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2001.

with general attitudes of the group are obtained. However, this hinders an insight into their personal opinions (other than that it is important to identify with the group).

Although such an “open” and weakly structured approach to interviews might appear from the layperson’s perspective to be broaching the subject in a “circumspect” manner, it provides for a more systematic overview and better insight into the, so to speak, “cognitive universe” of the respondent. This aspect could appear to go beyond the framework and goals of the research. However, it is vital for understanding how respondents form their opinions, influence decision-making, react to them and, in general, conceptualise their own participation in the life of the community. This is an issue of key importance for the development of policies directed at local development, particularly in mixed communities⁴⁴.

Naturally, the importance of interviewer techniques is not to be overestimated. A certain level of distrust among communities persists in mixed environments, further exacerbated when dealing with individuals coming “from outside”. In this sense, expecting complete trust between the researcher and the respondent would not be a realistic idea. Indeed, the Research Team faced a number of erroneous perceptions on the nature and goal of the research. These perceptions somewhat influenced the quality of the data. In spite of this, the main bulk of the data reflect the opinions and standpoints of the respondents. Wherever possible, the opinions of the respondents were compared or supplemented with official data.

The interviews conducted during field visits may be divided into three groups: interviews conducted in Belgrade - with representatives of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and other decision-making participants; interviews held with the staff of the University of Niš (in Niš and Medveđa) and students in Medveđa; and interviews conducted in the field and/or during research visits to Preševo and Bujanovac.

The first and second group of interviews do not comprise the key segment of the analysis. Their goal was to facilitate understanding of the project implementation framework – on the one hand the political will or affinity for certain solutions and, on the other, technical capacities of the University of Niš to support certain solutions. The findings of the research conducted in Belgrade, Niš and Medveđa were processed separately and treated as a supplement to the core segment of the study.

The core segment of the study involved interviews held during field visits to Preševo and Bujanovac.

44 See Geva-May, I. Cultural theory: the neglected variable in the craft of policy analysis. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice*, 2002, 4, 243-265.

The interviews were conducted by one or two researchers. When necessary, the interviews were conducted with the help of interpreters. The respondents were informed in advance of the subject and goal of the research and the fact that they would not be quoted literally. In most cases the interviews were recorded (audio recordings) and noted down. The interviews lasted around 90 minutes on average. The conversation was focused on the four groups of questions:

- What do the subjects perceive to be the main problems related to the development of Preševó and Bujanovac? What problems do they face in their own lives?
- What do respondents perceive to be the solutions? How do they see and describe these solutions?
- When the solutions involve the development of higher education for minorities, how do they envisage this process? When dealing with the opening of a higher education institution, how do they envisage this institution (where should it be located, what type of educational profiles should it include, what should be the language of the lectures, etc)?
- What is the opinion of the respondents on the relationships between the ethnic communities in Preševó and Bujanovac? Are there problems, which problems, and why? Have they experienced problems or discomfort due to their ethnic affiliation? Do they have relationships (professional, neighbourly, friendly) with members of other communities? How do they perceive successful integration? How (if at all) do they perceive the role of education in economic development? How do they perceive the role of research in their own future?

The questions represented a framework for conversations with the respondents and were additionally expanded or adapted to the interview technique (e.g. focus groups) and the target group wherefrom the respondents belonged.

The first two sets of questions were formulated aiming to obtain answers from the respondents on their perception of the social, political and economic context of life in Preševó and Bujanovac. It was necessary to identify the problems in order to gain insight into issues that presented current and potential obstacles in their lives and in the life of the community. Subsequently, the respondents spoke – sometimes on their own, sometimes with guidance on the part of the interviewer – on what they identified as solutions to these problems. Thus they were introduced into the conversation focused on their ideas on the models of higher education development.

Finally, the fourth set of questions was the most “diffuse” one. The purpose of this set of questions was not to provide insight into the attitudes, opinions and ideas directly related to the project of higher education development in South Serbia. The set of questions was rather focused on investigating the attitudes relating to a wider context of interethnic relations, the development of the region and the role of education in regional development and the lives of the respondents. In this sense, the answers to these questions provided for a better understanding of the social and political relations in Preševo and Bujanovac and, therefore, the sociological aspects of the analyses of individual scenarios.

ANALYSIS

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The analysis of data collected during the field work aims to provide realistic standpoints and opinions of respondents on the basis of which to establish whether certain initiatives are feasible and desirable. Therefore the respondents' answers are divided into three categories: problems, solutions and standpoints. It is important to emphasize that these categories are broadly conceived, so those called "problems" and "solutions" contain the respondents' viewpoints about different issues. The issue of higher education runs in the same manner through all categories as well.

The content analysis is a scientific methodology applied within each category. This method implies the analysis of respondents' answers (by listening through audio recordings and closely examining interview notes), in order to identify the prevailing elements in respondents' responses (those appearing several times). Thus the review of prevailing elements within each category was developed and possible connections between these elements and respondents' characteristics were examined. The respondents were classified with regard to three main parameters: the group of stakeholders, ethnic affiliation and locality (Preševo/Bujanovac). The analysis also includes sex/gender and age of respondents as secondary parameters. In accordance with these parameters the connections were established with the respondents' standpoints. Where the connections were found the interpretation of possible causality was offered.

Problems

Taking into account the characteristics of this area/region, it is not surprising that respondents consider economic problems as the most important. Almost all respondents pointed out the problem of economic underdevelopment of this region, poverty and low living standards as well as the lack of industry and an economic growth strategy. One of the respondents, a member of the Albanian community, specified that "the state-run sector is collapsing"⁴⁵; that privatization of socially-owned enterprises was carried out in a very wrong way producing ill effects that only aggravated the economic situation of inhabitants of the region. Poor conditions of economy and undeveloped private sector caused the lack of workplaces and minimum opportunities for employment.

Another respondent, a member of the Serbian community, claims that Preševo and Bujanovac currently have no capacity to employ existing highly educated manpower, which reduces the chances of young people to find a job in these towns and leads to the “brain drain”. Young people tend to leave the region under the pressure of poverty and unemployment. A certain number of respondents, members of the Albanian community, emphasize that they would feel unsafe and discriminated in other parts of Serbia, therefore they do not consider that there is an opportunity to get employed in their country, outside this region. The discrimination problem is mentioned also by members of the Roma community who point to the fact that only some 0.1% of the Roma people are employed in Bujanovac. Members of all communities point out another problem regarding employment in the public administration, such as the customs administration, for example. Although, according to respondents’ opinion, it would make sense for the customs administration to employ residents of these municipalities, the positions are usually occupied by residents of other areas of the Pčinj Region. Members of specific international organizations have the same standpoint and believe that the government would help these municipalities to a great extent by giving the opportunity to citizens of Bujanovac and Preševo to occupy such and similar positions.

The representatives of the National Employment Service (NES) point out the problem of the lack of personnel with excellent command of both languages (Serbian and Albanian) required for work in the education system or administration. The National Employment Service has been trying to stimulate entrepreneurship. However, its staff point to the problem of training and handouts being exclusively in Serbian, making this activity potentially useless or less attractive for the members of the Albanian and Roma communities.

All respondents believe the investments in economy and particularly in agriculture are the precondition for economic development of the region. According to the representatives of the Albanian community and local institutions and media, the reasons why investors feel insecure to invest in this region would be as follows: “this region has been militarized for a longer period of time” and “an irresponsible impression is made that it is still unstable and inclined to potential ethnic conflicts”. All respondents confirm that the government has been investing in this region and that in the past few years its care for the region has visibly improved as compared to the previous period (which the respondents identify as “the period of the government of Koštunica”). Nevertheless, some representatives of the Albanian community and civil society believe that investments do not target the current priorities (economic revival of the region); instead they are mainly focused on the improvement of infrastructure, whereby the respondents express disagreement with the priorities being set regarding investments in infrastructure (for example, paving of sidewalks and arranging of squares are not priorities).

Several respondents, members of the Albanian and Serbian communities, point out that the Government is taking better care of the region, however, despite its willingness to help, the State has no clear strategy for economic revival of the region and improvement of living standard of citizens. Representatives of the Serbian community point out that the Development Plan for this region was adopted but has not been implemented adequately and systematically because of frequent change of the Government and, as they put it, “the reduced budget for South Serbia when Koštunica was the Prime Minister”. The respondents emphasize that the problems of this region need “direct action as at the time of the Government of Đinđić”, not through numerous commissions whose work they perceive as usually ineffective.

At the end of this segment, members of the Albanian community – from representatives of municipalities to representatives of media and civil sector – commented on new circumstances created after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence of Kosovo. They believe that residents of this region feel limited to a small space and not integrated into broader society because, as they put it, “the closing of the crossing point toward Kosovo” has jeopardized their social and family connections as well as the economy and entrepreneurship, which additionally aggravated economic situation in Bujanovac and Preševo.

This leads us toward the next group of problems – the political problems. A first aspect of political problems concerns relations between citizens of Preševo and Bujanovac, on the one hand, and the Government on the other. The efficient political environment implies good relations and cooperation between local residents, local representatives of ethnic communities, representatives of local authorities and higher authorities of the state administration. Such cooperation is essential for political stability and long-term development of the region, as well as for any project planning regarding the development of higher education. The majority of respondents expect the state to initiate the development of higher education in these municipalities, to provide financial resources and at least a portion of human resources. The local population’s perception of its relation with representatives of the state administration on both the local and central level has direct impact on the sustainability of development projects considering that such projects require consensus and active cooperation of all stakeholders.

The majority of respondents from each of the three communities agree that there is cooperation between the central and local governments and that the state makes investments into this region. All of them, however, point out that large-scale projects and investments are necessary as well as better strategy for economic development. The members of the Serbian community believe that the Coordination Body is willing to contribute to the development of the region including the development of higher education, but this is not feasible without a strong support from relevant ministries and the President of the Republic. From their point of view, this support is almost nonexistent at the moment.

Representatives of the Albanian community and non-government organizations hold a view that Albanian people are not sufficiently integrated into the state institutions. On the other hand, representatives of the Serbian community point out the supremacy of the Albanians in the local political institutions and problem of monoethnic governments in both municipalities. Representatives of the Serbian community state that for quite a while the Serbs cannot get a job in local institutions which, at the same time, have employed a considerable number of Albanians and, according to the respondents, without adequate skills and work experience. Members of international organizations confirm that the Serbs have not recently been employed in the local self-government but they claim that it has nothing to do with interethnic relations.

Representatives of the Serbian community state also that the local self-government has no active role in the privatization process and does not take enough care of potential investments. They, as some representatives of non-governmental organizations, among which there were Albanians too, criticized the local self-government of Preševo, judging it as “dominated by personal interests and insufficiently qualified” to solve the problems of the inhabitants of Preševo. Some representatives of both Serbian and Albanian communities say that there is a rivalry between Bujanovac and Preševo which certainly does not bring any benefit to these municipalities.

Representatives of the Roma community state that a few of them are employed in the local administration but that Roma people are not included into the local institutions. They took Preševo as an example, where there are no Roma representatives among councilmen because the electoral threshold is set considerably higher as compared to the total number of Roma voters (according to their statement there are 250 voters, and to pass the electoral threshold 450 votes are required). So they believe that Roma people are not in the position to represent adequately their interests which leads to their further marginalization and economic decline.

Finally, a few respondents, members of both Albanian and Serbian communities, commented on the militarization of the region. They believe that the presence of gendarmerie creates tension and makes impression that the situation in these municipalities is strained and unstable, which has a negative impact on potential investments. One respondent, a representative of the Albanian community, states that the government uses South Serbia as a “modality to avoid problems with former elite units which took active part in the war”. According to his statement, the presence of these units can only jeopardize the safety of the region. Another respondent says that the presence of gendarmerie units strikes fear with Albanians and for this reason 200 Albanian families left for Kosovo between December 2008 and January 2009.

Having in mind the type of the study, the respondents took particular notice of educational problems. These issues are generally relevant to the status and problems that members of different communities have primarily because of their national affiliation but also for other reasons (sex/gender, for example).

Albanian respondents claim the lack of textbooks for elementary and secondary schools in Albanian language as one of the main problems. According to them, the Government was supposed to provide adequate textbooks but it failed to do so. The respondents say that they have addressed repeatedly the Government but in spite of the answer that “the Ministry of Education has a plan to resolve the problem”, that plan has never been realized. According to the statement of respondents, they have sought the official approval to use some textbooks from Kosovo but the Ministry for Education has not yet responded. The respondents state that so far the Ministry of Education has provided the translation of some textbooks for the first grade of elementary school, so some textbooks from Kosovo are being utilized even without an official approval of the Government. According to the statements of respondents, another problem is the obsolete curriculum that is not harmonized with the textbooks being used in teaching; they also point to a small quantity of information about the Albanian history and culture in the teaching material.

Representatives of the Albanian community, as well as parents of Albanian students, state that Albanians would feel unsafe to study in other places in Serbia, so the only solution would be to open the institutions of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac, which would allow them to study in the country where they are citizens.

Representatives of the Albanian community talked about the disputable process of academic recognition of diplomas obtained at universities of Albania and Macedonia. First of all, the respondents mentioned the lack of clear and coordinated guidelines for the recognition of these diplomas by universities in Serbia; sometimes this procedure lasts for several years, which additionally reduces the possibility of graduates to continue their studies or to find a job. The respondents mentioned also the problem of academic recognition of diplomas with the seal of the Republic of Kosovo. Besides, they perceive as a problem the young Albanians going to Priština, Tetovo and Tirana for studying and large expenditures thereof borne by their families. According to the respondents, studying abroad means that students have no access to scholarships or student loans, which additionally aggravates their position putting more distance between them and the Government and giving them a motive to emigrate to neighboring and other countries.

Representatives of the Serbian community, as well as parents of Serbian students, perceive as the main problem the poor quality of teaching and unskilled and uninvolved personnel holding classes in the Serbian language. On the other hand, parents and students are generally satisfied with teachers, especially those belonging to younger generation; they consider some teachers who pay attention only to the best students or to the children of their friends and relatives as uninvolved staff. Students and their parents, members of the Serbian community, mentioned also the corruption of some teachers expecting “gifts and dinners at restaurants” as a favour in return to higher grades (one student said: “They are damaging the reputation of our school”). Among other problems pertinent only to members of the Serbian community it was mentioned that Serbian children have no equal opportunity as compared with the Albanians regarding the access to scholarships delivered by the municipality. Members of the Serbian community raise doubts about authenticity of diplomas that members of the Albanian community obtain in Kosovo and which give them “unfair advantage at the time of employment”. Respondents point to forged diplomas claiming that there are diplomas issued in the early 1990s but bearing the UNMIK’s seal.

72 | Representatives of all three communities point to the problem of limited school space and short supply of teaching material. The school principals generally point to the transportation problem related to teachers living in neighbouring places, in Kosovo, Macedonia or other localities of the Pčinj Region.

All respondents mentioned the lack of higher education in Bujanovac and Preševo, saying that studying is too expensive for generally poor inhabitants of the region which deter most young people from studying. When it comes to the existing institutions of higher education some respondents mentioned the departments of two private higher schools in Bujanovac and Preševo (departments of the Teachers Training College from Gnjilane and High Business School from Čačak), raising doubts about the quality of teaching and considering these departments opened for one purpose only - to issue the diplomas.

Representative of all communities in Bujanovac mentioned the fact that there are no mixed ethnic schools in this municipality. This leads to the segregation of young people with no possibility to socialize and mix with others and to overcome prejudices and language barrier which only deepens the existing differences.

Representatives of all communities (Albanians, Roma and Serbs) agree that the education of the Roma is one of the major problems of the region considering that only a small number of Roma children manage to complete elementary school because of the poor economic situation and poverty. The respondents say that Roma people have no money to send their children to school and with the exception

of one Roma organization that occasionally provides textbooks for free there is no much support for them to proceed with their education and go to secondary school or university. The respondents said that passing to the fifth grade is critical considering that the primary teachers who usually are too benevolent toward the Roma children are substituted by specialized teachers for every single subject. At this point all “gaps” in their education come to light and therefore they repeat the grade or drop out of school. Representatives of the Roma community added that they are dissatisfied with teachers working with Roma children who do not take seriously their job convinced that the Roma need no education at all. So the teachers, according to the statements, reduce assignments, do their job without enthusiasm, devote more attention to Serbian students etc. For all these reasons it is difficult for Roma to pass from the fourth to the fifth grade or to proceed with education. One respondent stated that the attitude toward the Roma children would be different if members of the Roma community entered the school boards. At this point only one Roma parent entered the Parent Council thanks to the intervention of the Roma community, but it is not sufficient for the integration of Roma in larger society or better school results of their children. They further argue that the teaching matter does not offer much information about Roma history and culture, that there is no much possibility to organize the instruction in Roma language; Roma students cannot learn about Islam attending the religious instruction classes so they are forced to attend civic education. Romani teaching assistants said that the share of Roma completing elementary education is slowly rising as well as the number of those who manage to complete secondary school, but they need stronger support for further improvement.

Similarly to problems relative to the education system or those concerning relations with the Government institutions, respondents usually perceive from the perspective of their ethnic community. Therefore, we are dealing here with problems concerning interethnic relations.

All respondents stress that ethnic relations are satisfactory, but then explain it by almost total lack of communication between different communities. Respondents said that there are no more incidents and strained relations between different ethnic groups. Representatives of the Albanian community, as well as those from civil society, state that there have never been ethnic tensions between ordinary people and that such tensions were created between the citizens and the police. The people here are used to live together and if they work together they cooperate and get along with each other (in the local self-government or in the police, for example). Members of international organizations confirm that in these municipalities “there have been no ethnic conflicts, or even the bar-room brawls for quite some time”.

Representatives of the Serbian community agree that there are no major problems in ethnic relations, no risk of conflicts and no need for special surveillance by the police and military forces. There is no

much communication between different ethnic communities because of “traditional lack of confidence and suspiciousness”, but no hatred at all. However, one respondent said that former conflicts are being denied in the post-war period and that “some people wish to forget and believe there is no problem anymore but the problems still exist and require continuing attention”. Representatives of all the three communities speak about social separation of young people and express fear that the distance between ethnic groups might become even deeper in future.

Representatives of the Roma community also said that there is no major problem in relations between various ethnic groups. But they confirm the poor communication between different ethnic communities which they perceive as lack of confidence because of former conflicts and language barrier (especially among the youngsters). They mentioned prejudice still burdening the ethnic relations, especially toward the Roma people. All respondents agree that no one tries to protect the rights of the Roma which get no support to improve their position. In Bujanovac the Roma are concentrated in four large settlements and according to the statements of the respondents they are victims of continuing segregation, prejudice and discrimination. Roma children traditionally go to Serbian schools. They get along with their Serbian peers but Albanian children provoke them, they say. A considerable number of respondents point to the prejudices among young people and poor communication between them that may result in even deeper ethnic distance; a large number of respondents agreed that the development of higher education would improve social situation of youngsters and bring them closer to members of different ethnic groups. The respondents believe that over time students would strike up friendships, especially if studying under the same roof, even if attending separate lectures in Albanian or Serbian language.

Solutions

Respondents from Preševo and Bujanovac offered their perception of possible solutions to problems they considered essential. These problems can be divided into four groups: the first relates to economy, the second to political issues, the third to the education system and the fourth to ethnic relations. The solutions proposed by respondents were mostly relevant to unemployment, poverty, migration, education and integration of the three communities, and would be furthermore elaborated in accordance with the classification of the problems.

Speaking of economic problems (unemployment, poverty, underdevelopment of the region and economy), all respondents state the economic revival should rely on favourable geo-strategic position of Preševo and Bujanovac (proximity to the Corridor 10 and to Macedonian and Kosovo markets) and propose the opening of a duty-free zone and industrial zone. Respondents state that it is necessary to

rebuild old factories and create opportunities for investors to open new ones. Local officials believe that the region has to be firstly demilitarized stating that “no one is willing to invest the capital if the place is teeming with policemen and soldiers, it would be considered unstable”. Respondents believe that support by certain ministries and the Government of Serbia is of great importance for Preševo and Bujanovac, especially in making contacts with investors and in creating conditions to attract foreign capital. On the other hand, representatives of Serbian political parties in these municipalities, as well as representatives of the Coordination Body, think that the local self-government should be more active in the matter.

Speaking of unemployment of the local population, the respondents mentioned the subsidies for small and medium-sized enterprises in these municipalities. According to the statements, the Government of Serbia should approve such subsidies considering that it would be strategic investments in development of entrepreneurship in Bujanovac and Preševo. They believe that the development of economy will avert young people from leaving Preševo and Bujanovac. Representatives of the Roma community feel that subsidies for economic development of the region would stimulate members of the Roma community to open small shops with handicraft and other products since the Roma people are, as they put it, “artisans and tradesmen by tradition, so they should be encouraged to open their own shops”.

When it comes to the political problems, respondents take the view that the unobstructed work of local and central authorities will be possible only if both Albanian and Serbian communities have representatives in local and central bodies of the Government; next, full and equal access to the labour market as well as equal use of both languages in local and Republic institutions (reference to the fact that only a few employees speak both languages, so the Serbs do not understand Albanian speaking staff and vice versa). Almost all respondents state that only qualified people should be employed in the Republic institutions i.e. in their branch offices in Preševo and Bujanovac, which has not been the case so far. This problem is emphasized by members of both Albanian and Serbian communities. “People coming from Vladičin Han, Leskovac, Vranje, Surdulica and Niš have been employed while our own qualified people still wait for a job”, said one respondent. On the other hand, representatives of the Roma community say it is necessary for Roma people to be integrated in local and Republic institutions. According to their statements, the Roma with completed secondary school should be employed in the local administration in order to make easier the integration of the Roma community into larger society (helping them to obtain personal documents or to exercise their rights to social care and health insurance).

For all respondents it is of utmost importance to resolve the problem of migration, i.e. emigration, especially of young population leaving these municipalities. Nevertheless, this problem was classified

as the economic one, the respondents proposed different solutions but most frequently they talked about new workplaces. They think it is a precondition for young educated people to stay in Preševo and Bujanovac but at this point there is no job not even for a few of them willing to return to these municipalities after finishing school.

Almost all respondents believe that the development of higher education in Preševo and/or Bujanovac would solve the problem. The respondents discussed it in detail which is understandable considering that they were familiar with the purpose of this research and that the subject was of great importance to them.

Members of the Albanian community stated also that the possibility of higher education in Albanian language in Preševo and/or Bujanovac would considerably reduce the number of young Albanians leaving for Macedonia, Albania or Kosovo to study and never to return. Members of all communities stated that it would certainly increase the number of potential students since studying in Preševo and Bujanovac does not imply additional expenditure for transport, accommodation, food etc.

On the other hand, a number of respondents believe that higher education can be the solution only if followed by better opportunities for employment (as one respondent put it, “only in that case these universities would make sense”).

Representatives of the Roma community say that the possibility of higher education would stimulate Roma people to pay more attention to their education and that “the proximity of university and great number of students would encourage them to proceed with schooling”. Members of the Albanian community think it is indispensable to solve the problem of academic recognition of diplomas with the seal of Kosovo in Serbia because the present situation “is unfair on students” who are studying now or have already obtained their diplomas in Kosovo. Representatives of civil society propose the solution to be found in cooperation with the EULEX, especially for the sake of students who would continue to go and study in Kosovo regardless the potential opening of a faculty in Preševo or Bujanovac. On the other hand, respondents, members of the Serbian community, mentioned that the recognition of diplomas obtained in Kosovo should imply evaluation of both the curriculum and acquired knowledge. They also think that the Ministry of Education should solve the problem.

Respondents offer their perceptions of how higher education should be developed in Preševo and/or Bujanovac. Considering that the argument will be addressed in detail later on, here are presented only the most frequent statements.

The best solution for the majority of respondents would be that the Government opens faculties in Preševo and/or Bujanovac feeling that, as some of them put it, “it is high time for the Government to do something for South Serbia”. According to their statements it means that a certain number of students would study at the Government expense while the others would pay less than for the private schooling. Not going into specifics, the respondents usually suggest the faculties to be branches of University of Niš. Some respondents suggest opening of special “mini university”, as they put it, situated in Bujanovac or Preševo, but without further elaboration of the idea. Some representatives of the Albanian community suggest a higher education institution be founded as public-private partnership pointing to the example of the South East European University in Tetovo as an example of such cooperation. One Albanian representative of the local government suggested a department of the above mentioned University to be opened in Preševo, since it is necessary to “define the modality of financing such faculties so that they are at least partially supported by the Republic of Serbia”.

The subjects most frequently mentioned in the context of possible study programs in Preševo and Bujanovac are law and economics (banking, finance, enterprise management), then the Teachers Training Faculty where the future primary and secondary school teachers would acquire competency in teaching in Albanian language. A great number of respondents suggest that the study program should change annually or every five years, in order to prevent the local labour market be overcrowded by the same professions. The majority of entrepreneurs suggest the school of chemical engineering (food technology in the first place) is needed in order to revive the food industry in the region. Medicine, law and economics would be the most frequent choice of secondary-school graduates from Preševo and Bujanovac.

Speaking of the language of instruction, the respondents believe the best solution would be to organize the teaching in both Albanian and Serbian, in the same building but in separate classes. According to their statements the lectures in Serbian should be delivered by lecturers from higher education institution that would be the founder of the faculty, while for the lectures in Albanian should be engaged professors from Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo. According to the statements of the Albanian community there are qualified personnel in Preševo and Bujanovac for the instruction in Albanian. On the other hand, some members of the Serbian community think that the instruction in Albanian could be organized through simultaneous translation, as it is the case with Medveđa; however, as they state, the problem could be oral exams.

The Albanian language, as an optional subject for Serbian students and vice versa, according to the majority of respondents, would remove language barrier existing among young people in Preševo and Bujanovac and

would make them more competitive on the labour market in the Pčinj Region. The further segregation could be prevented by joint student activities and lectures delivered by visiting professors in English language, which would be attended by members of both communities. It would be a chance for students from different ethnic communities to make contacts, respondents believe.

As regarding textbooks, respondents suggest to translate them in Albanian or to adjust those being used at other faculties to the needs of faculties supposed to be opened in Preševo or Bujanovac. Some respondents suggest that in certain cases “textbooks from Albania and Macedonia” can be utilized (“mathematics is the same, the differences comes up with subjects like history or law”, says one of the respondents). This suggestion can be explained by the fact that translation would cost a lot which increases the total price of textbooks.

As for the participation of central and local institutions in founding and financing the future institution of higher education or units, respondents mainly suggested that the municipality should provide for higher amounts of scholarships for students, location for future faculty (by adapting existing structures, such as the Cultural Centre, or building a new one), and cover expenses for transportation and staff accommodation. However, the majority of respondents expect the Government to take over the lion’s share of the activities and responsibility for the development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac, which means to insure sufficient number of tuition fees for students founded from the budget.

Standpoints

Besides the problems and solutions, the standpoints of respondents regarding the importance and the role of education and social and ethnic relations were also analyzed, as well as their vision of their own future and the future of Bujanovac and Preševo, and study programs of University of Niš in Medveđa. These standpoints were not obtained separately, they appeared as an integral part of their responses obtained in the course of identification of both the problems and the solutions. They are not important only for helping us get a more complete picture of viewpoints of the local community but primarily because they would probably have a great impact on success of any future development project.

Having in mind the type of study, respondents refer in particular to the importance of education in their municipalities. Although all of them generally agree that higher-education institutions would be welcome in the region, there are certain differences in standpoints between members of Serbian, Albanian and Roma communities.

The initiative to open faculties in the region respondents primarily perceive as meeting the needs of the Albanian community to study in their native language. According to the viewpoints of all respondents a higher-education institution would contribute to integration of all the three communities, especially the integration of Albanians into the state institutions; as highly educated they would be qualified for certain positions. Members of all the three communities said that higher education would reduce social and economic differences and, according to members of international organizations, provide schooling for those who cannot afford it outside Preševo and Bujanovac.

Members of the Albanian community think that education is of great importance for the development of the community and improvement of ethnic relations. One Albanian representative of civil society says, “it is easier to cope with a literate enemy than with an illiterate brother”. Studying at a multiethnic education institution youngsters would have more opportunities to mingle with others and overcome prejudices. At this point it is everything but easy considering that in both Preševo and Bujanovac, starting with pre-school age, one-language courses with separate classes are offered to members of the Albanian and the Serbian communities (Roma generally attend classes in Serbian).

One Albanian high-ranking official thinks that higher education would improve both political and economic situation. “Qualified persons are a basic precondition for economic development, they would be stimulated to start some private business”, he says. The development of higher education, however, would depend, according to some respondents, on study programs and employment possibility once finished the school. Sharp words came from the headmaster of a mixed elementary school who believes that education cannot improve the economic situation or social relations. He stated that it is necessary first to improve the quality of instruction in elementary school, then to revive the production which would ensure new workplaces. Otherwise, “what would they do in Preševo and Bujanovac once graduated”, he asked.

Albanian students and their parents, as potential beneficiaries, emphasize the importance of higher education in their region, first of all because of expenses for studying outside Preševo and Bujanovac. Parents also mentioned the problem of validation of diplomas and lack of workplaces for graduates with degrees from Macedonia, Albania or Kosovo, the reason why their children never return once graduated. They believe it would change if they get the opportunity to study in their own municipalities.

Representatives of the Serbian community agreed that the opening of a faculty in the region would reduce expenditure for studying and improve relations between different ethnic groups and encourage integration of both Serbs and Albanians. However they emphasize the poor interest of Serbian children

to study in this region; they usually go to Leskovac, Niš or Belgrade and stay there after graduation. So they perceive the opening of a higher-education institution as a part of “political game” to satisfy the Albanians, the only ones who really need it. Some representatives of the Serbian community still connect this project with the idea to attach the bordering municipalities of central Serbia to Kosovo. They say that young Albanians identify themselves with their peers in Kosovo and will insist on using the curricula and textbooks of Kosovo. Some members of the Serbian community go to such lengths as to say that higher education is the possibility to “spread the separatist idea”. Many of them, however, point to the importance of this institution which is expected to reduce the ethnic tension and confirm that the Government does not discriminate members of the Albanian community.

80 | Parents of Serbian students are often sceptical when it comes to this idea. They describe it as a “typically Albanian initiative”, which would not ensure the employment in Bujanovac. Only parents who due to their poor economic situation could not afford studying outside these municipalities said their children might enrol at the faculty in Preševo and Bujanovac. They insist on separate classes as the only acceptable option; they believe that Serbian students have more knowledge and perceive the mixing of students from different ethnic groups as risky; they also perceive as risky the possible arrival of personnel from Kosovo or mass presence of Albanian students from these two municipalities and from neighbouring countries. There is a slight difference in viewpoints between Serbian students attending the school in Bujanovac and those from Preševo. Serbian students from Preševo perceive positively this idea and believe it would increase the interest for studying and give the opportunity to poor children to acquire higher education and fit better with others. On the other hand, Serbian students from Bujanovac perceive this idea as an alternative, in case they fail to enrol faculties in Niš and Belgrade. They believe the whole idea is of much more importance to the future generations. Serbian students from both municipalities recognize the obvious necessity to speak Albanian for the needs of everyday life and employment. They would be willing to take Albanian language as an elective subject at the faculty.

Representatives of the Roma community emphasize that education is the precondition for independency of an individual, considering that, as said by an employee in the Centre for Social Work, “education means that you are independent and capable to work, that tomorrow you will not become a burden on someone”. The opportunity for higher education would certainly raise awareness of the Roma people of importance of further schooling, said the respondents.

Roma students said it would stimulate many of them to go to secondary school. According to their statements, Roma children often drop out of school after the fourth grade of elementary school and do seasonal works because of the poor economic conditions of their families and low education level of

their parents. Roma students believe that any kind of education would stimulate youngsters to study instead of spending their time in the streets and cafés as they do now. Besides, representatives of the Roma community feel that education would contribute to the development of the municipality and better ethnic relations.

Representatives of the business community in Bujanovac and Preševo welcomed the initiative of opening of a higher-education institution and they believe, in spite of practically inexistent economy and unemployment, that it can “set things in motion and deter youngsters from leaving”. Almost all businessmen emphasize that education changes the way of thinking and perception and contributes to the development of the community. As potential positive effects they indicate the development of economy and trade, as well as the development of the place where the institution is to be located; they also mentioned the development of multi-ethnicity and the change of age distribution (with arrival of youngsters from neighbouring areas). Businessmen said that there is no need to wait for the development of the municipality to start developing higher education, as one of them put it “if you do not have qualified personnel with clear ideas what to do tomorrow, you will not know what you are looking for when the time comes”. One of the businessmen from Preševo said that qualified people are indispensable for achieving the European standards and to ensure that the municipality would meet the criteria necessary to apply for the European Commission funds for development of local self-government. Finally, businessmen mentioned the importance of schooling in native place regardless of the opportunity for employment because, as one of them put it, “if they graduate here they will stay here”.

Within the standpoints about higher education we perceive as remarkable the statements regarding the plans for the future made by secondary school students (and their parents). These statements show not only how the respondents perceive themselves and their social environment, but also their attitude, as potential beneficiaries, toward higher education and its importance for their future. Albanian students usually want to graduate expecting to get a job. Most often they would look for a job in Preševo or Bujanovac if graduated there, convinced that their community needs them. However, they would leave if “there would be no future”. Albanian parents think their children would eventually graduate in Priština, Tetovo or Tirana for they have no alternative. Other parts of Serbia are still perceived as unsafe.

Serbian students, like their parents and their Albanian peers, do not believe there is the future for them in Preševo and Bujanovac and intend to enrol at the faculty outside their native towns. Although without a well-defined plan where they would like to study in Serbia, they keep saying it would be “as far away as possible from here”, generally because there is no job for them in Preševo or Bujanovac.

According to their statements the future is ensured only to “doctors’ children” or those whose parents have friends in high places. “Those who finish secondary school and leave for studying or for work never return except if they have a job waiting for them or good connections”, says one respondent. One third of Serbian students would like to go abroad after graduation.

Roma children generally plan to finish secondary school and do not think about further schooling; they usually see themselves as tradesmen or shopkeepers, employed in any case right after secondary school, probable finding difficult to enrol at faculty. Two respondents would go to university, other two would go to secondary school. One third say they could afford further schooling.

The respondents inevitably refer also to the opening of the faculties i.e. the study programs in Medveđa, with different viewpoints with each community. The members of the Albanian community have negative attitude toward these programs that consider irrelevant for their education. As for the reason of their dissatisfaction they emphasize the poor integration of the Albanians, pointing to the fact that only nine Albanian students enrolled. They also said the faculties are opened without consultation with the Albanian community and without feasibility study; furthermore, it is difficult to follow the lectures because of the low-quality of simultaneous translation; finally, for students from Preševo and Bujanovac it is not worth the trouble because of the distance and expenditures. Although some Albanian local officials declare not to be against the initiative in general considering that “open one school means close one jail”, they believe the faculties should have been open firstly in Bujanovac and Preševo because of the considerable number of Albanians in these municipalities and consequently the significant number of potential students. The representatives of the Albanian community state also that it is much easier to reach Gnjilane, Priština or Kumanovo than Medveđa.

As for the Serbian community, its members generally welcomed the initiative convinced that Medveđa offered the best conditions for opening of the faculty considering its vicinity to Nis, existing infrastructure and teaching staff. Some members of the Serbian community even criticize the Albanian officials for boycotting Medveđa, accusing them to look after their own interest, not the interest of their people. On the other hand, significant number of the respondents from both Serbian and Roma communities believe that the faculties in Medveđa do not solve the problem of the education of the Albanians and that for the distance and underdevelopment it would have been better if they were opened in Bujanovac or Preševo.

The next topic we consider important concerns the social and (inter)ethnic relations in the multiethnic environment such as Bujanovac and Preševo.

Almost all respondents emphasize that the ethnic relations in Bujanovac and Preševo have always been good, that they accept coexistence and have good neighbourly relations, but that the politics has negative impact on these relations. The representatives of the Albanian civil society state that the relations would be better if the area is economically developed for, as one respondent put it “when there is no economic development people fight over nothing”. In spite of statements that population “does not mix”, that attend separately both pre-school and school facilities, that there is no joint sports clubs where youngsters could meet each other, hang together and tend to European values, the Albanian respondents said that ethnic relations are all in all good. The Albanian high-school students say they would like to study with other ethnic groups since they already live in multiethnic environment, but they do not speak the language very well. The Albanian students from Preševo usually mixed with the children from other ethnic groups attending a football match or seminars, while the Albanian students from Bujanovac do not manage to make contacts with the Serbian students that are reserved, they say. All students believe the faculty should organize separate classes for technical reasons (staff, language) and language barrier, but they would like to share some activities with the students from other ethnic groups.

Among the representatives from the Serbian community there are different standpoints. Some of them think the ethnic division is caused by the lack of communication, language barrier (the Albanians do not speak Serbian well and vice versa), and the fact they grow up influenced by the nationalism. Therefore, they believe it is necessary for the Albanians to learn Serbian language and for the Serbs to learn Albanian in order to improve the relations that are “not perfect but are satisfying and could be even better”. Besides the language barrier that deters the children from mixing with each other, the respondents emphasize the ethnic segregation beginning in the pre-school.

On the other hand, some of the representatives of the Serbian community indirectly express negative attitude toward the Albanians. They call them “Siptari” and believe they are not interested in high education since they have always been tradesmen; besides, they are not on the same cultural level with the Serbs, as some respondents added. These respondents have extremely negative attitude toward the Roma people, and perceive them as “undefined nation, unorganized and dirty”; they argue for the Roma children not to attend only the Serbian but as well the Albanian schools, in order to be equally distributed, as they said.

The parents of Serbian children have negative attitude toward the Albanian community and it seems they feel endangered. According to them, the Albanians are better organized, more competitive and eager to “prove themselves”, but they perceive their competitiveness as negative since they have neither capacity

nor quality education. “A lot of forged diplomas... They (the Albanians) are natural black marketers, and forgers too”, said one respondent.

As for the attitudes toward the Albanians, the students from Bujanovac keep their distance more than students from Preševo, which is expected considering that students from Bujanovac go to school together which is not the case in Preševo. Although the students from both cities said they have acquaintances and friends among the Albanians and have no prejudices, some of them lose no time to express their viewpoints about “intellectual superiority of the Serbs”. The students from Bujanovac say there is a difference between “Siptars” and Albanians i.e. between the newcomers and native people. They perceive the natives as “highly civilized” emphasizing that they have no problem with them, but some students said the newcomers from Kosovo are barbarians. There is no mutual respect between the newcomers and the natives, they stated, probably trying somehow to justify the negative attitude toward the newcomers. The Serbian children from Preševo said they generally do not mix with other ethnic groups, but have nothing against ethnically mixed higher education since they have always attended mixed schools. Although the respondents prefer separate classes and are defensive about shared activities with other children, it is obvious that they perceive such organization as necessary but not the optimal one.

84

Some Serbian students believe that it is forbidden for Albanians to mix with the Serbs, and that Serbs do not have such prohibitions. However, one student said: “There will always be a barrier between the Serbs and the Albanians in Bujanovac. There is no such power that can remove it. The situation is awful. But among them there are as many good and bad people as among us or among Roma people or any other. But they (Albanians) are somehow involved in everything, active in every situation, whenever and wherever. We want to be first in everything, to go out, to express our opinion, but for some reason, I cannot explain it, we do not go out with them and that is all... I really don’t know why”. It is interesting that the same group of students emphasize as important for Serbian youngsters to learn Albanian in high school mostly because they believe that the knowledge of Albanian would make them more competitive on the labour market.

The representatives of the Roma community think that the ethnic relations are good in relative terms but without social contacts since the ethnic communities live separate lives, giving the example of Roma people that live in four large settlements in Bujanovac. There are prejudices among different ethnic groups but specially toward the Roma people, says one Roma activist quoting the usual stereotypes: “Roma are thieves, do not like to work or to go to school. The Serbs are belligerent and the Albanians violent”. The Roma representatives point to the problem of poor economic conditions of Roma population; Roma children are not sufficiently “good looking” or nicely dressed so are unattractive to members of other ethnic

groups. They think the Roma are discriminated at school since the teachers pay less attention to them compared to Serbian pupils. The representative of the Roma community from Preševo emphasizes that teachers treat badly the Roma children and give the example of the teacher who called one child “Gipsy who knows nothing but to steal”. This respondent said also that the Serbian students go to other schools only to avoid being with Roma in the same class convinced that quality of teaching is lower because of the Roma children.

Although emphasizing the similarity with the Albanians in terms of culture, customs, language and religion the Roma children have better communications with Serbian children because the Albanians, as they put it, “provoke and touch the girls”, which is not the case with Serbian children. However each of them has a friend from the Albanian community.

As for the prospects of the region, the respondents believe that the future of Preševo and Bujanovac depends on political and economic situation and education system. With adequate education system and qualified people as a result of it, it would be possible to overcome the poverty. The respondents emphasize in particular the importance of pre-school education. The representatives of the Albanian civil society point to the importance of learning both languages, Serbian and Albanian; it is important for equal access to the employment but as well for better work of institutions and improvement of ethnic relations. Only a few among representatives of the Albanian community from Preševo do not believe in the future of the region, convinced that the young people with or without the diploma have no chance to find a job since “Preševo is like a medieval small town... at this point the deadlock”.

The representatives of the Serbian community do not believe either in great future of the region or that the opening of the faculty would stimulate economic development. They think there is no future without employment and that both the Albanians and the Serbs are supposed to get equal chances for a job in the region. The Roma representatives, on the other hand, connect the future with education and expect the government to support the Roma children in this process.

Analysis of the Results

Almost all respondents agree that the main problems of the municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa are related to economy. The municipalities are underdeveloped and consequently unemployment is high. These two problems cause brain drain which means that young people move to more developed parts of Serbia or to neighbouring countries.

The lack of higher education in Albanian is also identified as a part of the problem. Due to the lack of possibility to get higher education in native language, some members of the Albanian community remain with lower qualifications (which reduce the possibility of employment), and many youngsters leave to study in their native language at the universities of Tetovo, Priština or Tirana. The respondents say many of them stay where they graduated either for better chances to find a job or for the problem they have to validate diplomas in Serbia, especially those with the seal of Kosovo.

Many respondents mentioned the problem regarding ethnic relations, in particular those between the members of Serbian and Albanian communities. Although they all agree there is no conflict, the respondents often say that it is only due to the fact that they live separate lives and go to separate schools. So they point to separate schools as one of the main problems.

According to the identified problems and having in mind the type of the study, the respondents generally agree higher education in Albanian in the municipalities of Preševo and Bujanovac is of utmost importance. They often mention how important is to insure the financial support of the government for this education project since many citizens could not afford studying (low living standard, high unemployment rate...). As presumed, the higher education level in Albanian would give the possibility to the members of this community to study free of charge and to get better chances to find a job as well as easier access to the labour market of the Republic of Serbia.

Many respondents point to the importance of investment in the economic development, emphasizing that the education is not sufficient to revive the economy. The respondents highlight the importance of the government's role in the development of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa, referring not only to the development of higher education but also to the whole strategy for the improvement of life conditions of the population living there.

The standpoints of the respondents mostly regard their perception of ethnic relations and their own positions in the social and economic context. It is important to say that a majority of the respondents emphasize that there is no conflicts between ethnic communities (Albanians, Roma and Serbs), but there is not much communications either. In the context of this study, it is important that almost all respondents believe that higher level of integration is indispensable, independently of their personal viewpoints, their ethnic distance or their perceptions of ethnically divided communities as a result of "natural characteristics". The respondents agreed that higher education would be the step toward the integration of all communities. This indicates the importance the respondents attach to public policies in the context of social and economic situation of the region at the present time and in future. However, it is fair to say

that the perception of the respondents regarding their position within this social and economic context is negative. The respondents perceive both Preševo and Bujanovac as pretty hopeless in terms of the possibility for the development, therefore many young people plan to leave. It only confirms the necessity of higher education which brings better chances for the employment and higher wages, but would also raise the awareness of young people, as well as of the adults, that they can learn and develop their skills. This aspect is also important for the improvement of both economic and general living conditions as well as for the possibility for the citizens of Preševo and Bujanovac to participate in social life and decision making process on local and central levels.

Possible Solutions for the Development of Higher Education

Mihajlo Babin, Jana Baćević and Vanja Ivošević

It is important to mention that only a small number of the respondents understood the whole concept of higher education. Most often they suggested some of study programs, language or, in certain cases, type of the institution. Hereinafter are presented the above mentioned options which then are analyzed by categories. Finally, the general recommendations are offered. The different aspects of the solutions often overlap in practice so it was not possible or desirable to separate them in the analysis. This classification is significant for the development of practical solutions since it indicates both positive and negative aspects of each solution and therefore it is not possible to identify the perfect one.

1. Levels of Study

The viewpoint prevails among the institutions and among the respondents that higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac has to be organized at a bachelor-level degree (basic studies). The opinion prevails that basic academic studies (general-quality education) should be developed, not professional career ones, but except for the fact that basic academic studies bring major prestige, it is possible that many of the respondents do not quite distinguish one from another. It is certain is that almost no one mentioned university studies of the second or third level.

From the perspective of long-term development of education, social integration, economy and the educational reform within the Bologna process, it is necessary however to think about further advancement of the students. It implies first of all the second stage that could be developed over the long term in these municipalities or to give the possibility to talented students to continue their study at the

university centres here or abroad. At this point it would not be the integral part of higher education in the southern Serbia, but further advancement has to be taken into consideration.

2. Institutional Framework

2a. The Founder

The Law on Higher Education foresees that the institution of higher education can be “the Republic, a legal entity or a natural person, in compliance with the Law” (The Law on Higher Education, Article 40). In the first case the decision about founding is made by the Government of the Republic of Serbia. In the course of the research some respondents mentioned the possibility that the founder could be a legal entity or a natural person i.e. some institution of higher education from abroad. Although such a possibility exists, it should be said that the development of higher education within the institution founded by the Republic has many advantages. A major difference is the financial mechanism. The Republic provides funds for, among others, material expenses, current and investment maintenance, wages of employees, as well as a number of scholarships for students. The scope of financing is regulated by by-law regulations. The matter of financing is of a great importance for the future students and their parents. Having in mind the poverty of the region and the rate of unemployment, it is almost certain that only a few students (or their parents) could afford studying, which the respondents confirmed in the course of the interview. So the development of higher education within the institution founded by the Republic has great advantages since it implies certain number of scholarships, which make the education accessible to those who otherwise could not afford it.

Except for the sufficient number of scholarships, it is important to develop an appropriate system to support student standards. It implies student loans and scholarships (already existing on the Republic level, and under equal conditions accessible to the students from Preševo and Bujanovac); taking a long-term view, it implies also the possibility to establish other types of support such as student restaurants, fare reduction (in particular between Bujanovac and Preševo) etc. The issue of financial support is crucial for insuring equal higher education accessibility, independently from single economic situation. Therefore, it is necessary to take into consideration the possibility of additional funds, scholarships or loans which would be accessible to the students from marginalized and vulnerable groups, and not only to those who showed excellent results in previous stage of schooling. The cooperation between local and central authorities in establishing the system of support for students is of utmost importance.

2b. Type of Institution

The Law on Higher Education (Article 32) foresees that higher education can be delivered by the following institutions: universities; faculties or academies of arts within universities; academies of professional career studies; colleges and colleges of professional career studies. From educational aspect the type of institution that would deliver higher education in the region has different implications.

Not only does the university have the major prestige, it also has a major autonomy in the development of curricula and selection of teaching staff. The decision about founding of the university is made by the Government of the Republic of Serbia. Furthermore, it is necessary for the university to get the working license which implies accreditation of the university and the curricula in compliance with the procedure required by the Law on Higher Education. The Law also foresees that the university should offer at least three different science courses based on the three-level hierarchy of degrees: Bachelor, Master and Doctoral degree. We may conclude that the opening of the university would not be accomplishable in short or medium-term with the available capacities for the development of a higher education system and pertinent staff.

The next institutional option is to establish one or more faculties. The opening of a faculty implies that it is founded by an already existing university since the Law on Higher Education does not allow for faculties to be founded as independent higher education institutions. The existing universities should submit a request for the extension of their operating licence, and go through the process of accreditation required for new faculties and degree programs, in compliance with the procedure required by the Law on Higher Education. This solution may have some advantages since it would insure major commitment of teaching staff considering that it would be engaged primarily in this institution.

The institution of higher education can found its satellite units, without the quality of legal entity. The higher education unit offers degree programs outside the seat, within the organization and as a part of the faculty administration, i.e. the university in the case of interdepartmental studies. Upon deciding to found the higher education unit outside its seat, the higher education institution submits the request for extension of operating licence and accreditation of the curriculum, in compliance with the procedure required by the Law on Higher Education.

The opening of colleges and/or colleges of professional career studies also requires the operating licence and the process of accreditation. Although their founder need not be a university, they are subject to the same regulation as independent higher education institutions. It means that prior to the opening, the

institution has to procure operating licence and go through the process of accreditation. On the other hand, the attitude of the respondents toward these institutions depends a lot on both social and cultural aspects. These institutions are perceived as “lower ranked” compared to the faculty mostly because the majority of respondents are familiar with the education system where these schools were really of lower rank and connected with low-prestige and poorly paid occupations. Although current definition of these professional career colleges insures the accessibility to certain types of advancement (specialized studies), it is still limited.

From the social aspect, the opening of a university would probably appeal the most to the local population, the Albanian community in particular. Faculties as institutions come second on the list of prestige. It seems however that the majority local people do not make the difference between the faculty and higher education units that are not legal entities (they talk about “the faculty” in Medveđa, whereas it is a higher education unit that is not a legal entity). It is important to mention that higher education units, which are not legal entities, perform their financial, managing and administrative activities within the institution of higher education and/or faculty which is the founder.

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3. Study Programs

According to the reasons and/or explanations offered by respondents, these programs can be classified into three groups: general, applicable and developmental.

The first group (“general”) includes study programs that according to the respondents offer a widest range of job opportunities. These include law, economics, banking i.e. finance, management and computer science to a certain degree. The respondents believe that general-education quality of these programs will make it easier for them to find a job. These professions can be “useful” in the region if it begins to develop economically, as well as throughout the country. The successful development of the law degree programs can contribute to the multilingualism in public administration and insure

better communication in the course of legal proceedings. It has to be outlined that practicing law in the Republic of Serbia requires excellent knowledge of the Serbian language, while practicing law in some other country implies also the excellent knowledge of its legal system. Therefore focusing on law study in multilingual environment would imply acquiring knowledge, skills and competency in the Serbian language.

The second group of study programs is called “applicable” because these occupations, knowledge and competencies would be competitive on the labour markets of Preševo and Bujanovac. Medicine and teaching profession are also included into this group, as well as study programs of the Albanian and Serbian languages and translation competences.

Taking into consideration that the health care system is public and that the majority of citizens of Preševo and Bujanovac cannot afford private health services, the medicine degree programs would improve their trust in the State and public services. But medical school is expensive and requires adequate infrastructure (labs, equipment) for the moment nonexistent either in Preševo or Bujanovac. The possible solution could be to open medical school with only a first year to be attended in Preševo and Bujanovac and the rest would be attended in one of university centres in Serbia. This model would require a specific first year medical school curriculum, along with the mechanism for overcoming language barriers and financial support for the students willing to continue their schooling in other university centres. Although this solution would be adequate for the integration into the education system of the Republic of Serbia, there are some obstacles to remove regarding studying outside Preševo and Bujanovac - first of all financial; another problem concerns the fact that many Albanians feel unsafe in places where they constitute the minority.

As for the teaching profession, the choice is based generally on the respondents’ perception of the lack of qualified teachers – especially those teaching in Albanian; but there is a short supply of teachers of the Serbian language too (almost all respondents, independently from their ethnic affiliation, pointed to a lack of trained teachers of the Serbian language and literature, which is also confirmed by the data of the National Employment Service). It goes without saying that it renders more difficult the communication which is impossible if at least one group does not speak fluently the language of the other. Therefore, it would be desirable to develop programs for teacher education in the Romani language followed by courses in Romani culture etc.

The importance of teachers’ competences is certainly of utmost importance. Therefore it is essential to develop training and degree programs for teachers (and pre-school teachers) not only for filling vacancies

but for the development of competences that will contribute to successful education of future generations as well. One should also take into account the possible rapid filling of vacancies, as was the case in Montenegro. A possible solution could be to develop, after degree programs, the programs for licensing and advancement of teachers. Thus the teachers would get the possibility (now obligatory) for advancement in the course of the career, and, at the same time, the sustainability of the program would be insured.

As for the knowledge and translation from Albanian into Serbian and vice versa, it is obvious that there is a pressing need for qualified people with a good command of both languages. Both profiles are important and would certainly contribute not only to the knowledge of languages but also to the development of the identity of the communities; it should be taken into account that at this point the knowledge of both languages in this region is perceived primarily as a tool to improve efficiency of the local administration and other public services, not as the purpose by itself. Therefore the integration of both languages into other study programs would be the useful first step. The degree courses in both languages could be developed in parallel but it is important to insure good chances for the employment of graduates in different fields.

92

Finally, the last group is called developmental. It includes study programs in chemical and mechanical engineering, agriculture, food technology, catering and tourism. These fields the respondents recognize as those that could contribute to the development of the economy of the region, whether it concerns the generic competences (chemical engineering, mechanical engineering, civil engineering) which offer broadly applicable knowledge or the development of those potentials being recognized by the respondents as particular advantages of Preševo and Bujanovac (tourism, catering, economy, food technology). These programs are very important since the respondents perceive them as the impetus for the economic development of the region that could contribute to the employment growth and higher living standard. However the attentive planning is required and close partnership with the business community: all mentioned study programs imply student training which, as presumed, would result in applicable knowledge. Therefore these professional profiles have to be developed in partnership with regional economy - i.e. large, small and medium enterprises.

In conclusion we can say that the choice of study programs to be developed in Preševo and Bujanovac should be guided by the wishes of future students, possibility of employment (in terms of labour market demand), as well as the possibility to give impetus to the economic development. In this respect as most significant professional profiles are recognized lawyers, economists, teachers and food technologists as well as mechanical engineers. It is obvious that the qualified teachers with knowledge of both Albanian and Serbian are indispensable in almost every mentioned field; the knowledge of English or some other foreign language would be preferred.

4. Target Group

4a. Target Group

It is very important to emphasize that the predominant social perception among the respondents, especially in the beginning of the research on the ground, was that the project for establishing a higher education institution in Preševo and Bujanovac was intended primarily for the members of the Albanian community. However, the existence of an education programme intended exclusively for the members of certain groups contributes neither to the social cohesion nor the integration. Higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac should be intended for everybody, irrespective of their national or other background, and efforts should be taken to ensure its general accessibility. The major challenges with that regard lie in the organisation of teaching, the language, teaching staff and textbooks.

4b. Teaching Language

As regards the language in which the instruction is provided, if we adopt the reasoning that teaching should not be organised exclusively in one language (either in Albanian or in Serbian), we need to consider the possible solutions for teaching in both languages, with the possibility of introducing the Romany language as the third option. Two solutions have emerged as the most viable: one solution envisages separate monolingual classes with teaching in both languages, and the other entails simultaneous interpretation from one language into another, and vice versa.

According to the first solution, teaching can be delivered parallel in Serbian and Albanian languages, while the students have certain lectures or activities together. Although this is the solution preferred by most of the respondents, and one that enables simpler teaching arrangements for the students, the organisation of such teaching does not come without problems. The language skills of the university professors point to the fact that in such a case one group of teachers would give lectures in Albanian, whereas another group would teach in Serbian. This would probably give rise to certain problems with respect to coordination of the study programmes, i.e. the curricula, as well as of examination and grading methods.

As a part of this solution, some respondents suggested that “joint” lectures for the students of both communities should be delivered in the English language. In educational sense, this would be an excellent solution, because it would build the students’ capacities to receive instruction in English, in addition to their mother tongue. However, this solution entails even larger organisational requirements, related to the ability of lecturers to teach in the English language.

We believe, and the respondents share our opinion, that it is important that the development of higher education should also require students to study the language of the other community, at least as an optional course. As regards the Serbian language, the command of it, at least on the level of formal communication, is a necessary condition for the integration of the members of the Albanian population into the wider framework of the Republic of Serbia. On the other hand, the members of the Serbian ethnic population very rarely speak Albanian. It is certain that the command of both languages would positively influence the interaction and communication between the members of all communities. The higher education is a platform where this could be put into practice. It is possible to define the course of the second language as not only optional, but compulsory, as well. At the same time, it is possible to develop joint “learning groups”, gathering students of both Serbian and Albanian languages, where they could help each other in learning the second language (such informal groups have become practice in many universities abroad). Certain study programmes could also include the course of the Romany language. Combined with English lessons, this model could enable students to master at least three languages by the time they have graduated, which would definitely be regarded as an asset in the search for work.

The solution based on simultaneous interpretation between the two languages, although possibly temporary, still comes with many problems. The first major problem is the quality of interpretation. Simultaneous interpretation requires a proficient command of both languages (the source and the target languages), as well as the familiarity with the field-specific terminology and publications. As previously seen in Medveđa, it is very difficult to find staff with sufficient qualifications for this task, especially if we acknowledge that simultaneous interpretation of good quality requires at least two interpreters to work at the same time, regardless of the language in which the lecture is given. In the long term, poor quality interpretation can have adverse effects on the motivation of students to attend lectures. If one opted for parallel teaching in two languages, a certain share of joint lectures (where a part of the students would be listening to simultaneous interpretation), including the visiting lecturers, should be considered. In combination with a course of the second language within the study programme, this could enable most students to follow the lectures in both languages, or at least some of the lectures.

Hence, the crucial issue is to provide to each community the possibility to have at least a part of the course in its mother tongue, but also to develop the students’ competences in the languages of other communities, as well as in English. This can be achieved through organisation of the joint activities – both academic (e.g. lectures by visiting professors, “study groups”) and other (sports associations, clubs, students’ organisations, etc).

4c. Teaching Staff

The language in which instruction is delivered also defines the needs for the teaching staff. In this case that means that hiring qualified staff for teaching both in Albanian and in Serbian would be needed. The most obvious solution is to have visiting Serbian-speaking lecturers from the institution (university/faculty) which organised the study programme. However, it is vital to ensure that the teaching staff can dedicate enough time to this study programme, including the preparation of lectures, communication and consultations with the students. Simple “copy-pasting” of the syllabuses and curricula from another institution would leave a bad impression and have adverse effects on the students’ motivation, not to mention the insufficient commitment of the lecturers. In this context, the role of teaching assistants is particularly important. The students in doctoral studies, typically young people, often have higher professional motivation to work with the new groups of students. On the one hand, this could entail financial benefits for them during the doctorate studies and, on the other hand, it would contribute to interaction and communication between the students and the teaching staff.

Most respondents assume that some sort of qualified Albanian-speaking teaching staff can be found in Preševo, Medveđa and Bujanovac. This is, of course, the easiest and the most advantageous option, but account should be taken of the fact that teaching at the university level requires at least a PhD degree. It is possible to recruit young people from Preševo and Bujanovac as teaching assistants. In an ideal situation, these would be the students who are already in the master or doctoral studies (in Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia or Albania), but it is also possible to offer scholarships for post-graduate studies to the young graduates from Preševo and Bujanovac, subject to their taking the position of teaching assistants in the study programmes in Preševo and Bujanovac. This is a common model of financing post-graduate studies abroad and, since recently, in some universities in Serbia. At the same time, it serves two objectives: ensuring the availability of qualified young teaching staff and developing the human capital in Preševo and Bujanovac by providing high-quality labour force. Naturally, the teaching assistants could become full-time lecturers after they have acquired the PhD degree.

As regards other possible Albanian-speaking teachers, the respondents mostly suggested that regular or visiting lecturers could be hired from the South East European University in Tetovo, the University of Tirana or the University of Priština. During the research, some respondents suggested that certain lecturers (especially in Tetovo) had the competences required to give lectures in Albanian and Serbian, but also in the English language; therefore, this option is definitely worth exploring further. It should be investigated whether these institutions keep records of the students who have recently acquired PhD degrees in their study programmes. The education trends indicate that the number of such young

persons will be on the rise, but that they will not necessarily be able to find work. Therefore, the post of a docent in one of the study programmes in Preševo or Bujanovac could mean a good start for them, as well as a “springboard” for their future careers.

4d. Textbooks

A consideration closely related to that of the language and teaching staff is also the issue of textbooks and other teaching materials. This is especially prominent in the respondents’ perceptions that each professor uses his “own” textbook. Although these solutions are feasible in the short-term perspective, in the long run they give rise to the serious problem of parallelism in teaching. If one group of students is studying in one language from one set of textbooks, with one group of teachers and according to one grading system, while another group uses different language, textbooks, teachers and grading system, the big question is what these two groups have in common and why this should be regarded as one study programme. Hence, the idea is to gradually gravitate towards unifying the syllabuses and curricula as much as possible, organising joint activities/lectures and building the students’ competences in both languages. In this process, it is necessary to bear in mind the quality criteria: students cannot benefit enough from the low-quality, poorly conceived and incompetently translated textbooks. Quality assurance in the course of organising the study programmes, curricula and the teaching process is crucial for the success of this initiative.

96

5. Infrastructure Issues

5a. Location

An ideal solution would be to develop higher education both in Preševo and in Bujanovac. Not only would this prevent the possible conflict with respect to the location, but also contribute to the more even economic development. Nevertheless, even if it is decided otherwise, the distance between the two towns is not excessive, so the students living on one town would find it easy to study in the other. This would certainly envisage the development of efficient transportation means between the two towns, adapted to the needs and budget of the students.

5b. Facility

Closely related to the location issue is also the building where instruction is to be delivered under the future study programmes. Similar to the discussions about the location, the people living in the two

towns have shown the tendency of stressing the advantages of their respective local buildings. As regards the social and integration aspects, it would clearly be the best option to develop higher education both in Preševo and Bujanovac and thus employ all the local capacities. For instance, the capacities of Bujanovac could be used for the academic profiles with fewer students, such as the education of teachers and the field of hotels, restaurants and tourism, whereas the Preševo capacities could serve the development of larger study programmes in the field of banking, management, technology, mechanical engineering, agriculture and, potentially, law and economics. The research on the ground has shown that good will certainly exists among the population, while the implementation of this agenda will depend primarily on well-conceived planning and coordination between the implementing authorities and the local communities.

5c. Administrative and Information Capacities

As regards the administrative capacities, it is vital to ensure the existence of a functional and accessible administration, especially the students' offices, which must be organised in the languages of all the communities participating in the higher education. The students' offices should allow for not only the administrative, but also the counselling support to the students, especially when they are experiencing hardship (financial or other) during their studies.

Likewise, it is important to design a solid information system available to the students, as well as to other persons interested (potential students, their parents etc). With that respect, though, it is the most important to ensure the access to the information technology, as well as to raise the level of computer literacy of the students and teaching staff. A computer centre should certainly be provided, where students could have free access to computers, as well as the training for using computers and the Internet, especially within the framework of academic activities.

From the above, it is reasonable to draw the conclusion that the development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac should take into account the balanced development of the region, with appreciation of the specific features of each municipality. Special attention should be given to the infrastructure capacities, with regard to the location of the building for higher education, as well as in relation to transportation and ensuring the efficient functionality of the administrative and IT support. It is encouraging to see that the local communities seem willing to support this process and cooperate.

CASE STUDIES

Introduction

Vanja Ivošević

As has already been mentioned in the Introduction, the primary goal of the feasibility study on the opportunities for the development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac is to outline a practical and theoretical framework for tackling the issue of national minority education, in the context of effective integration, exercise of human and minority rights and a joint contribution to economic, social and political development of the country and the region. The case study methodology was selected having in mind that the process of establishment of a practical and theoretical framework relating to national minority education requires an insight into similar solutions in other multiethnic environments. Therefore, the aim of the case studies is to provide an overview of education in the languages of national minorities and analyze the methods in which the applied solutions have contributed to resolving the issue of minority education, along with a higher integration and strengthening tolerance within ethnically diverse societies.

Analyzing the goal and the context of the study hereof, as well as the timeframe of the project, the following three case studies were selected: Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (hereinafter: Vojvodina), Montenegro and Macedonia.

Vojvodina was selected to present the description and analysis of the existing solutions to higher education in (mother) languages of national minorities, considering that the same legal and institutional framework applies to Vojvodina and South Serbia (of course, taking into account the special authorities of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina). Montenegro and Macedonia were selected as countries in the region which recently analyzed and developed solutions relating to higher education in the languages of national minorities, in particular in the Albanian language, which makes them particularly useful for the analysis of a solution for South Serbia.

It should be underlined that the historical and political framework of relations between national communities differs both among the case studies and among the situations described in the case studies and the situation in South Serbia. Therefore, the historical and political framework of the relations among national communities were analyzed only in cases of direct impact on the method for establis-

hing the solution or on the concept of higher education in the language of national minorities. However, the differences among the case studies, as well as the availability of data, analyses and research on higher education in minority languages had impact on the differences in the selection of the techniques of data collection and analysis applied in the case studies.

Vojvodina is particularly diverse ethnically since its history has seen different administrations, as a border region of many empires and kingdoms. As of the World War II, the ethnic characteristics of Vojvodina and the education in minority languages as a specific aspect of preserving the diverse ethnic identity of minorities, have been the subject of a number of analyses and research. Therefore, the relevant statistical data, analyses and research tackling specifically the issue of education in the languages of national minorities were relatively easily accessible, including the latest scientific research and expert analyses of non-government organizations. The case study of Vojvodina represents, primarily, a secondary research, which included statistical data collected from state higher education institutions and the Provincial Education Secretariat, for which we are particularly grateful.

The issue of higher education in the languages of national minorities in Montenegro and Macedonia was opened much later in comparison to Vojvodina. Therefore, the statistical data, analyses and research tackling the issue of higher education in the languages of national minorities were not equally available to the researchers. For this reason, the method of analysis of relevant documents was complemented with an interview method in both case studies. The interviews with key stakeholders were conducted in February 2010.

All three studies share the same structure. Each case study, in addition to a short introduction and the description of the applied methodology, contains an overview of the ethnic structure of the population. The case studies also contain an overview and analysis of the legislative framework of higher education in minority languages, as well as an overview and analysis of existing institutional instruments of higher education in minority languages. The conclusions sum up the analyses of existing solutions to higher education in minority languages.

The authors of the case studies are Tajana Brkanović and Ivana Stanojev (Montenegro), Tanja Ivošević (Macedonia) and Norbert Šabić (Vojvodina).

AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF VOJVODINA: ORGANIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR MINORITIES ON THE TERRITORY OF THE AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF VOJVODINA

Norbert Šabić

Introduction

The Population Census conducted in 2002 indicates that members of 21 national minorities reside in Serbia, comprising 17% of the overall population in Serbia (Ilić 2007:1). The members of national minorities are not equally distributed across the territory, since every third citizen in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (hereinafter: Vojvodina) is a member of a national minority, as opposed to every tenth citizen in Central Serbia (Ibid.). The majority of Hungarians, Croats, Slovaks, Yugoslavs, Romanians, Bunjevac and Ruthenians are concentrated in Vojvodina, indicating the multiethnic character of the region. Therefore the higher education of minorities is particularly important in the territory of Vojvodina, containing the most ethnically diverse population within the Republic of Serbia. According to the Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Serbia, no person can be denied the right to higher education if they fulfil the defined requirements.

“The right to higher education shall be endowed to all persons who have completed their secondary education irrespective of race, colour of skin, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin or social background, language, religion, political or any other opinion, birth, sensory or movement disability or property.”

(Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Serbia, Article 8)

The current legislative framework regulating the education of minorities is mostly perceived as adequate (National Strategy of Serbia for Accession to the European Union, 2005:107), however this does not mean that developed mechanisms providing for equal opportunities and conditions for all students are implemented in practice (i.e. on the level of institutions). Therefore, the research hereof aims to outline the process of higher education for minorities in the territory of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, the ethnic structure of students in faculties and colleges of professional career studies and to indicate the gaps and good solutions that have been put in place attempting to achieve equal opportunities and conditions for all students in the higher education system.

Methodology

This is a secondary research collecting, comparing and summing up the results of previous research and data relating to the national structure of Vojvodina, legislation relating to minorities and the involvement of the members of minority communities in the higher education of Vojvodina. The aim of the research is also to present positive and less positive solutions which exist in the current framework of higher education for minorities in Vojvodina. The research covered all higher education institutions founded by the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, leaving out faculties and colleges of professional career studies (hereinafter: colleges) founded by legal or natural persons (hereinafter: private faculties and colleges), due to the lack of reliable data thereof.

The Description of Vojvodina

Vojvodina is located in the North of the Republic of Serbia and covers 21,506km². According to the Census conducted in 2002, there are 2,031,992 inhabitants and/or 27.1% of the total population of Serbia⁴⁶. Vojvodina is an autonomous province within the Republic of Serbia, meaning that it is granted the status of legal entity and is represented by the Government of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (Statute, Article 2). The Government of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina is situated in Novi Sad, the capital of the Province (Statute, Article 10).

The territory of Vojvodina is divided into three geographic regions (Bačka, Banat and Srem), comprising 7 administrative counties and 45 municipalities.

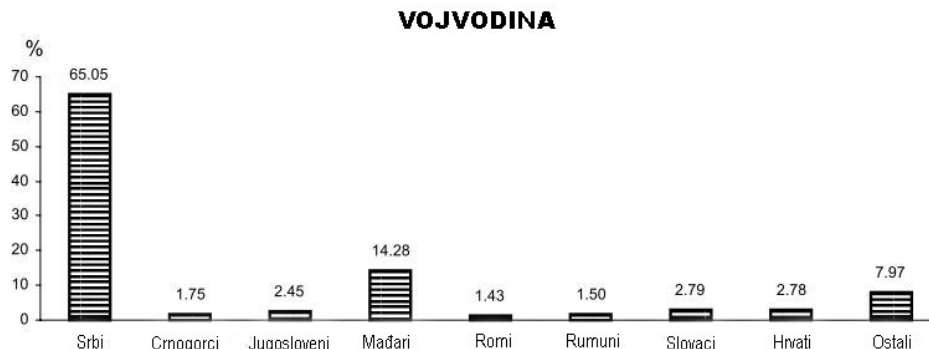
Picture 1. Territorial organization of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina



Vojvodina is characterized by multi-lingualism, multi-culturalism and multi-confessionalism, reflecting the ethnic diversity of the population (Statute, Article 1). The most populous ethnic community in Vojvodina are Serbs (65.05%), followed by Hungarians (14.28%), Slovaks (2.79%), Croats (2.78%), Yugoslavs (2.45%), Montenegrins (1.75%), Romanians (1.50), the Roma (1.43) and other less represented national communities⁴⁷ (7.97%).

⁴⁷ Albanian (0.08%), Bosniak (0.02%), Bulgarian (0.08%), Bunjevci (0.97%), Vlach (0.00%), Gorani (0.03%), Macedonian (0.58%), Muslim in the ethnic sense (0.18%), German (0.16%), Russian (0.05%), Ruthenian (0.77%), Slovenian (0.10%), Ukrainian (0.23%), Czech (0.08%), other (0.26%), regional identity (0.50%).

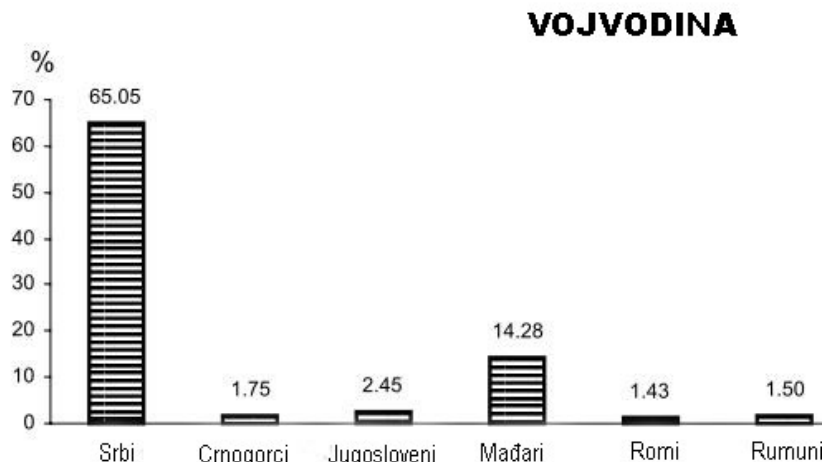
Picture 2. Graphical representation of the share of national minorities in the total population



* Prikazano je stanovništvo etničkih zajednica čija je učešće u ukupnom stanovništvu veće od 1%

National communities are often concentrated in specific municipalities. According to the Census conducted in 2002, the Hungarian population constitute the majority in the city of Subotica and 7 other municipalities (Bačka Topola, Kanjiža, Senta, Ada, Mali Iđoš, Bečej, Čoka) and Slovaks constitute the majority in two municipalities (Bački Petrovac, Kovačica) of the 45 Vojvodina local governments, whereas the Serbian population represent the majority in other municipalities (Census 2002:12).

Picture 3. Demography in terms of national communities



* Prikazano je stanovništvo etničkih zajednica čija je učešće u ukupnom stanovništvu veće od 1%

The ethnic diversity of Vojvodina is reflected in the languages, since the Hungarian, Slovakian, Croatian, Romanian and Ruthenian languages are also in official use in Vojvodina. Furthermore, Vojvodina has a diverse religious structure, with the Orthodox, Catholic, Greek-catholic, Protestant and Muslim religions being practised.

These characteristics represent a universal value relevant for the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, as underlined in the Statute of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. The Statute also provides for equal rights for all citizens of Vojvodina, irrespective of their sex, race, birth place, language, nationality, religion, political or any other belief, education, social background, financial standing or any other personal feature (Statute, Article 20). This means the Serbian, Hungarian, Slovak, Croat, Montenegrin, Romanian, Roma, Bunjevci, Ruthenian and Macedonian communities, as well as other less represented national minorities, are equal in exercising their rights in Vojvodina (Ibid., Article 6). The duty of all

provincial bodies and organisations within the scope of their rights and duties shall be to foster and facilitate protection and development of multilingualism and cultural heritage of national communities which traditionally live in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, as well as to support mutual respect and learning with different languages, cultures and confessions in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (Statute, Article 7).

National minorities in Vojvodina face the problems of a low birth rate and assimilation (as part of this study the term “assimilation” is not used in the sense of “violent assimilation”, but instead denotes the process wherein members of certain national minorities integrate or adopt the values, norms and customs of another national community), leading to a decrease in their numbers. If the data of the censuses conducted in 1991 and 2002 are compared, the trend becomes evident (Ilić 2007:1). This is often ascribed to economic and political instability which reigned during the 1990s in the country. In accordance with this, the stabilization and recovery during the past years are expected to have contributed to halting the reduction in the number of minority communities over the previous years, although reliable data thereof shall be acquired during Census conducted in 2012. One of the frequently underlined potential solutions to maintaining the demographic structure of Vojvodina is to preserve and develop the network of educational institutions enabling the minority communities to have their children educated in their mother languages (Gábrity 2006b:61). As one of the most common reasons for leaving the country, members of national minorities list the limited ability to attend education in their mother language in Serbia. There is also a noticeable trend of parents enrolling their children in classes where tuition is delivered in Serbian in order to enable their children to find employment more easily, which also accelerates the assimilation of national minorities. (Gábrity 2006b:65)

It is difficult to identify and implement an adequate solution, in particular when there is no consensus on the best model of minority education (monolingual or bilingual). The advantage of bilingual institutions is in establishing constant communication and social ties between members of minority and majority communities, while an advantage of monolingual institutions is their increased efficiency.

Legislative Framework Relating to the Rights of Minorities

The national minorities residing in Vojvodina enjoy all the rights that are guaranteed by the following legislation of the Republic of Serbia: the Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities, adopted in 2002, the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, adopted in 2006, and the Law on National Councils of National Minorities, adopted in 2009. After the so-called Omnibus Law establishing the competency of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina had been adopted in 2009 by

the National Assembly, minority rights were granted additional protection through the Statute of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, while the detailed regulation and control was transferred to the competency of the Government of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina.

The members of national minorities are guaranteed participation in decision-making processes on the Republic and Provincial level by means of collective rights regulated by the Constitution (Constitution, Article 75). At the parliamentary elections in Serbia, in accordance with Republic regulation, minority parties are subject to “affirmative action”, i.e. the threshold the other parties need to meet (5%) does not apply to them.

The Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities envisages the establishment of the Council for National Minorities. This Council, set up by the Government of the Republic of Serbia, plays a crucial role in preserving, enhancing and protecting national, ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural features of the members of national minorities (Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities, 2002, Article 18). The Council represents national minorities on the Republic level and state authorities are liable, pursuant to Article 19 of the Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities, to seek opinion and consult with the Council when deciding on all issues relating to minority rights guaranteed by the Constitution (Ilić 2007:3). Members of the Council for National Minorities of the Government of Serbia are members of national councils (Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities, Article 18).

The participation of minority communities in the decision-making process at the provincial level was envisaged similarly. Specifically, the establishment of the Council for National Communities within the Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina was envisaged. Although the body has not been established thus far, the Council shall comprise 30 members (15 from among members declaring themselves members of the majority population and 15 members declaring themselves as members of minority communities) and will represent a separate body of the Provincial Assembly (Statute, Article 40).

These instruments have been set up to guarantee equal participation of national minorities in decision-making processes in national and provincial authorities. However, it is questionable whether and how the legal provisions are being implemented. There are evident discrepancies in the organization level of minority communities, and those more numerous and better organized have representatives in the National Assembly and the Provincial Assembly, while other less numerous and less well organized communities are often unable to meet the criteria for establishing national councils and thus, for example, they cannot take part in the work of the Council for National Minorities of the Government of Serbia, where members are elected among members of national councils.

Fundamental minority rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, laws and the Statute of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina include: 1. the right to official use of the language and script, 2. right to information in the mother tongue, and 3. right to education, preservation and development of culture (Ilić 2007:2). In order to exercise their right to self-governance in the field of culture, education, information and official use of language, national communities may decide in favour of national councils (Constitution, Article 75), legitimate bodies representing the respective minorities and functioning as “small-scale assemblies”, with their competencies regulated closely in the Law on National Councils of National Minorities. National Councils are established upon a request of the community and by collecting 5% of signatures of the members of a given national minority. Members of national councils are selected by means of electoral assembly or directly (Law on National Councils of National Minorities, Article 29). In order to hold direct elections, national communities need to ensure the support of half of the total number of their members according to the latest census, reduced by 20% (Ibid.). Through their respective national councils, national communities establish institutions, delegate representatives, decide autonomously or participate in decision-making on issues relating to minority rights (Statute, Article 25). Thus far, 16 national councils have been constituted within the territory of Serbia. Among others, national councils have been established by the Bunjevac, Bulgarian, Bosniak, Hungarian, Roma, Romanian, Ruthenian, Slovak, Ukrainian, Croat and other communities. The work of national councils operating within its territory is monitored by the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina within its rights and competencies.

Good inter-ethnic relations are a precondition for stability in Vojvodina. The Constitution of Serbia defines that by means of measures in education, culture and public information the Republic of Serbia stimulates understanding, tolerance and respect for differences arising from the specific ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity of its citizens (Constitution, Article 48).

Official Languages and Minority Education

The Serbian language and Cyrillic script are in official use in Serbia (Constitution, Article 10), while in Vojvodina the Serbian, Hungarian, Slovakian, Croatian, Romanian and Ruthenian languages and their respective scripts are in official use. Along with the Serbian language, one or more national minority languages are in use in 38 of the total number of 45 municipalities in Vojvodina (Ilić 2007:4). In order to have a national minority language become the official language within a local self-government, the community needs to comprise at least 15 percent of the municipal population, according to the official census (Ibid.). The fact that 38 municipalities have at least two official languages indicates the multiethnic character of Vojvodina. However, field research and international reports indicate frequent

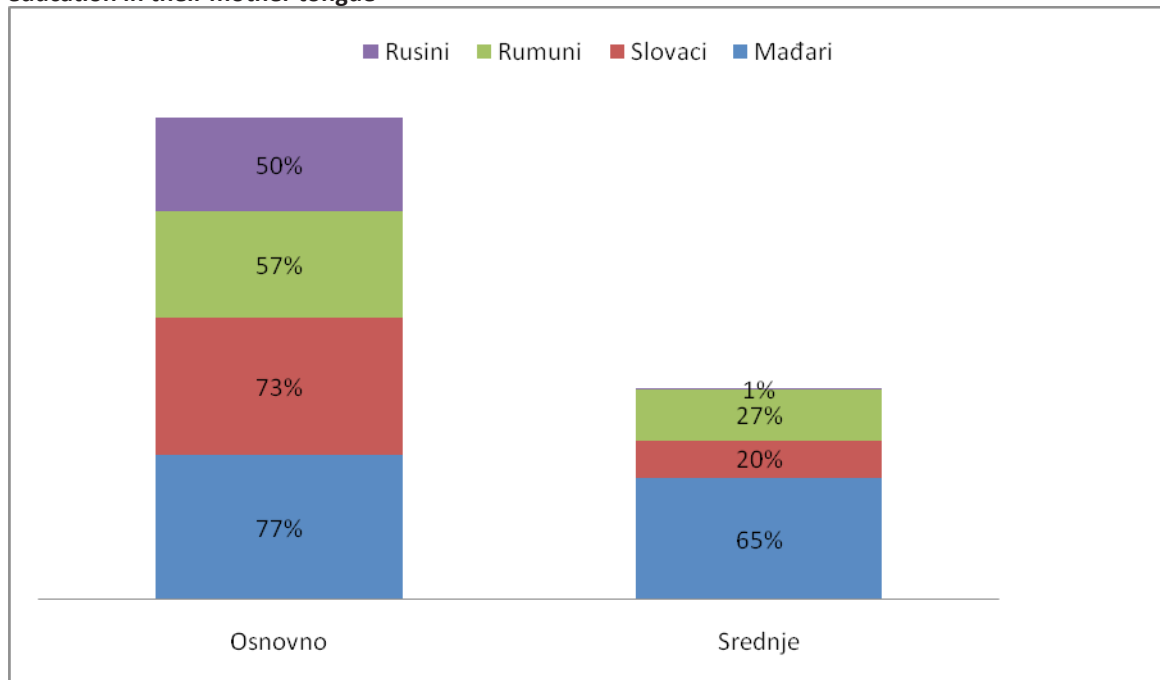
disregard for regulation providing for the official use of languages and scripts for members of national minorities. (Ibid, CoE: (2009:6))

Education within the territory of Vojvodina is conducted in Serbian, as well as national minority languages – Hungarian, Slovakian, Croatian, Romanian, Ruthenian and Romani. According to previous regulations, the learning of the language of the community was mandatory in primary schools in municipalities where members of national minorities comprised the majority population (so-called „community language“). This solution largely contributed to establishing understanding between various ethnic communities, particularly in Vojvodina, but it was revoked during the 1990s. Instead of studying the community language, the current Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities envisages that the curricula of institutions delivering teaching in the Serbian language should contain material relating to the history, culture and status of national minorities, along with other contents that advances mutual tolerance and coexistence. (Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities, Article 13)

Based on the Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities, the members of national minorities are entitled to education in their language in institutions of pre-school, elementary and secondary education (Article 13). The Law, however, omits the right to education in national minority languages in higher education institutions. This right is guaranteed by the Statute of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, adopted in 2009 and prescribing that the national minorities are entitled to education in their mother tongue at all stages of education. (Statute, Article 29)

In order to realize the right to education in the mother tongue for national minorities as part of pre-school, elementary and secondary education, a minimum number of students can be prescribed, with the stipulation that the number can be lower than the minimum number of students envisaged by Law for providing adequate forms of education (Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities, Article 13). The same Article prescribes that every individual education institution determines the minimum number of students required to provide education in a minority language. In practice, this is achieved through coordination with the Secretariat for Education of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina and consultation with the adequate national council.

Table 17 Percentage of members of national minorities making use of the right to elementary and secondary education in their mother tongue



Source: Ilić, S. (2007)

In Vojvodina, elementary school is attended in the mother tongue by 77% of students of Hungarian nationality⁴⁸, 73% of students of Slovak, 57% students of Romanian, 50% of students of Ruthenian, while approximately 200 students of Croatian nationality attend the first four grades of elementary school in their own language. Secondary schools in Vojvodina are being attended in the mother tongue by 65% of members of the Hungarian, 20% of the members of the Slovak, 27% of Romanian and one percent of the members of the Ruthenian national minority. (Ilić 2007:5)

Most educational institutions in Vojvodina are bilingual. The problem with these institutions is that frequently, when lacking lecturers in national minority languages, teachers whose mother tongue is Serbian deliver teaching for all students. Thus, there are cases of half the subjects being conducted in the Serbian language in minority classes in certain municipalities. Therefore many parents enrol their

children in elementary schools with instruction in the Serbian language, to avoid subsequent problems in studying (Gábrity 2006b: 65 and Gábrity 2008a: 235), or enrol their children in secondary schools with instruction in the Serbian language, if aiming for their children to complete faculties that require a good command of the Serbian language (e.g. Law or Medicine).

Thus the need for opening monolingual educational institutions is frequently underlined. There are two monolingual secondary schools in Vojvodina with instruction exclusively in the Hungarian language: in Subotica – the gymnasium for talented students “Kosztolányi Dezső” and in Senta – “Bolyai Tehetséggondozó Gimnázium és Kollégium” gymnasium for talented students. A catholic secondary school also exists (“Paulinum“, classical catholic gymnasium) with instruction in the Hungarian and Croatian languages.

Curricula for elementary and secondary education are approved by the National Council for Education, but the national minorities have the right to propose amendments and additions to the curriculum in accordance with their needs, through the representatives of their national councils in this body. (Gábrity 2006b:66)

The members of national minorities are entitled to textbooks printed in their language and script (Law on Textbooks and Other Teaching Tools, Article 3). These textbooks are approved by the Ministry of Education, based on the opinions of the national councils of each minority (Law on Textbooks and Other Teaching Tools, Article 20). Thereafter they are translated and used in institutions where instruction in minority languages is conducted. The Ministry of Education can approve textbooks used in countries of origin for given subjects and grades, printed in the mother tongues and scripts, with the previously obtained positive opinion of the national council of the national minority and the Institute for the Advancement of Education. (Law on Textbooks and Other Teaching Aids, Article 28)

As regards the competencies of state authorities in the field of national minority education, at this point the responsibilities of the Republic and provincial authorities are not clearly delineated, since the Law on the Establishment of the Competencies of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina was recently adopted, and the alignment of other relevant regulations is under way. Through its bodies, the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina further regulates and provides for the realization of the right of national minorities to education in the mother tongue within its territory, at all levels and in accordance with the Law (Law on the Establishment of Competencies of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, Article 38). Within the systems of primary and secondary education, the Autonomous Province, through its bodies, in accordance with the Law regulating primary and secondary education, inter alia:

1. Develops the curricula for national minority languages;
2. Approves of textbooks for national minority languages;
3. Adopts curricula for certain subjects of interest for national minorities, establishes the conditions and methods for organizing instruction in national minority languages, in agreement with the Minister in charge of education;
4. Approves textbooks and teaching aids for certain subjects of interest for national minorities, in agreement with the Minister in charge of education;
5. Provides consent for the implementation of the curriculum in the languages of national minorities in cases of fewer than 15 students.

The Law on the Establishment of the Competencies of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina does not provide special competencies to the Province in regulating the system of higher education for national minorities.

In terms of the delivery of elementary and secondary education in national minority languages, it is key to provide teachers able to provide instruction in said languages. Even though there is no national strategy for resolving the issue of lacking teaching resources, the Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities envisages the creation of departments and faculties for the education of teachers in national minority languages (Ibid, Article 14), in order to make the education of teaching staff easier. Pursuant to this regulation, the minorities (Hungarians, Slovaks, Croats, Romanians, Ruthenians and Roma), with the exception of Croats, have departments for their respective language and literature at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad (Department for the Hungarian Language and Literature, Department for the Romani Language and Literature, Department for the Romanian Language and Literature, Department for the Ruthenian Language the Literature, Department for the Slovak Language and Literature). Teacher education is only provided for instruction in the Hungarian language (Teachers' Faculty in the Hungarian language in Subotica) and the Slovakian language (Teachers' Faculty in Sombor). Members of national minorities can be educated as teachers (for pre-school institutions) in colleges for professional career studies in the Hungarian language (College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies in Subotica and partially at the College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies in Novi Sad), and the Romanian and Romani languages (College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies "Mihailo Pavlov" in Vršac), and, partially, in the Slovakian language as part of the College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies in Novi Sad. Of the other numerous minorities, only the members of the Ruthenian and Croatian national minority are not provided for education in their mother tongue. The National Strategy for the Accession of Serbia to the European Union underlines that by-laws in the field of minority education should primarily regulate the issue of

education and additional education of teachers members of national minorities (National Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for Accession to the European Union, 2005:107). The issue of by-laws is also underlined in the amended and expanded National Program for the Integration of the Republic of Serbia in the European Union (2009).

The System of Higher Education in Vojvodina

The system of higher education in Vojvodina encompasses⁴⁹ 23 higher education institutions founded by the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, and seven founded by legal entities or natural persons. Education in professional career studies is undertaken in nine state colleges for professional studies, with a total of 26 accredited programs. These schools include:

- College of Professional Business Studies in Novi Sad;
- College for Technical Professional Career Studies in Novi Sad;
- College for Technical Professional Career Studies in Subotica;
- College for Technical Professional Career Studies in Zrenjanin;
- College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies in Novi Sad;
- College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies in Subotica;
- College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies “Mihailo Pavlov“ in Vršac;
- College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies in Sremska Mitrovica;
- College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies in Kikinda.

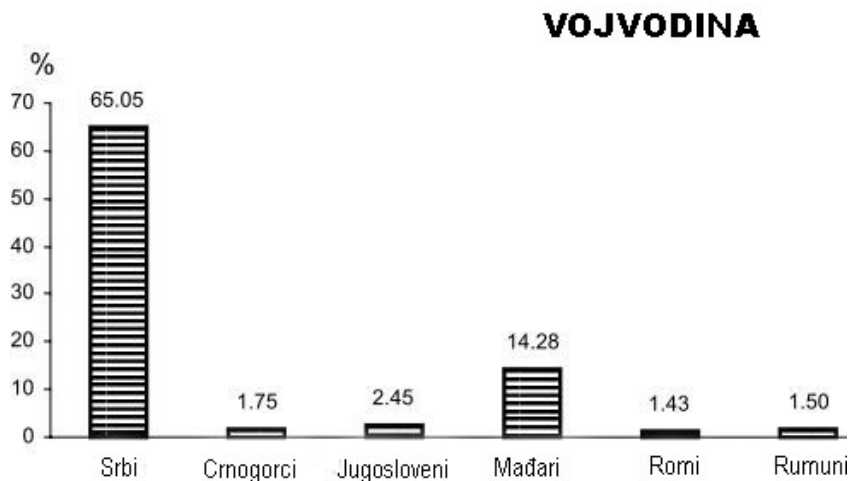
Teaching in most colleges for professional studies is organized in two fields: education of pre-school teachers (five colleges) and technical sciences (three colleges). Colleges for professional career studies exist in six counties in Vojvodina, i.e. except in the Zapadno-bački County (Sombor). Higher education in academic studies is undertaken at 14 faculties and/or academies of art, all members of the University of Novi Sad.

- Academy of Arts in Novi Sad;
- Faculty of Civil Engineering in Novi Sad;
- Faculty of Economy in Subotica;
- Faculty of Medicine in Novi Sad;
- Faculty of Pedagogy in Sombor;
- Faculty of Agriculture in Novi Sad;

- Faculty of Law in Novi Sad;
- Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics in Novi Sad;
- Faculty for Sports and Physical Education in Novi Sad;
- Technical Science Faculty in Novi Sad;
- Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad;
- Technical Faculty “Mihajlo Pupin” in Zrenjanin;
- Faculty of Technology in Novi Sad;
- Teachers’ Faculty with instruction in the Hungarian language in Subotica.

Faculties are opened in four counties, and more than half of them have their seat in Novi Sad. A total of 286 accredited programs at all study levels were registered at the University of Novi Sad during the academic year of 2009/10⁵⁰.

Picture 4. Distribution of higher education institutions as per the ethnic structure of Vojvodina



* Prikazano je stanovništvo etničkih zajednica čija je učešće u ukupnom stanovništvu veće od 1%

Analysing all higher education institutions and their seats and based on the ethnic structure of Vojvodina (Error! Reference source not found.), we can state that the majority of higher education institutions founded by the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (17) are located in local communities with Serbian majority population (i.e. Novi Sad, Sombor, Zrenjanin, Sremska Mitrovica, Vršac, Kikinda). There are five institutions of the kind In Subotica, where the minorities comprise the majority population. The location of these institutions largely determines the languages used in teaching, thus education in the languages of national minorities is more present in ethnically mixed communities.

In Vojvodina, 23% of the population aged between 20 and 24 is enrolled in some form of higher education institution⁵¹. Analysing the total number of students, including final year students and those that had repeated a year of studies, there were a total of 53,914 students in state educational institutions during the academic year of 2008/2009 in the territory of Vojvodina. Of this number, 18.36% study at colleges, while 81.64% study at faculties. Of the number, the cost of studies for 60.21% is covered by the state budget, while 39.79% pay for their education.

Having in mind all years of studies and students with the status of final year students, a total of 9,902 students were enrolled in colleges for professional career studies that year. There is a marked drop in the number of students - by 10.38% - in relation to the previous year, when 11,049 were enrolled. Simultaneously, the number of students financed from the budget increased by 13.83%, while the number of self-financing students dropped by 10.29%. (Ibid.) According to the available data, a total of 2,174 students graduated from colleges for professional career studies during the school year of 2008/2009, representing an increase by 260 in comparison to the previous academic year. The average duration of studies in colleges is 4.21 years.

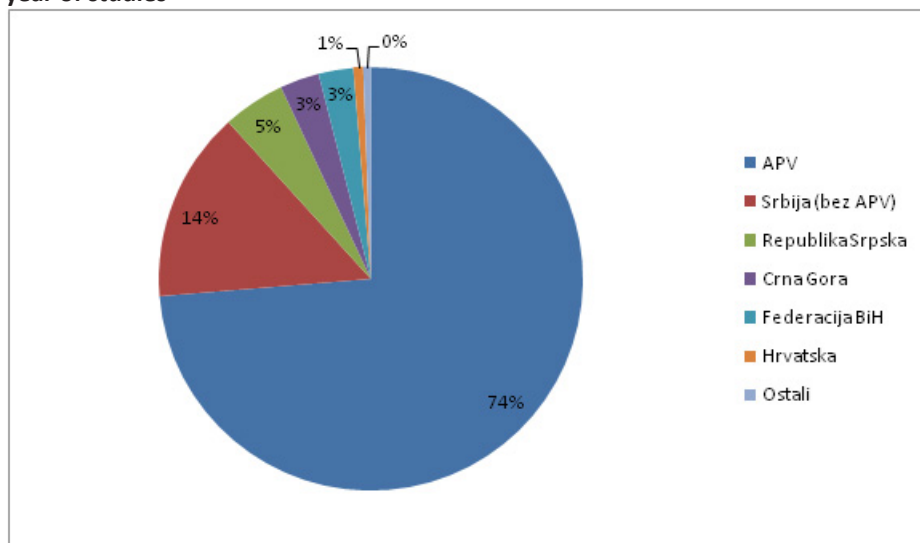
A total of 44,012 students enrolled the faculties of the University in Novi Sad in the school year of 2008/09, i.e. 753 more than in the previous year. The number of students financed from the budget dropped by 0.83%, while the number of self-financed students increased by 0.82%. At the faculties of the University of Novi Sad, 3,436 students graduated in 2006/07, i.e. 1,162 students less than in 2005/06. The average duration of studies at the faculties is 7.46 years.

51 Taken from the website of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. Link: http://www.vojvodina.gov.rs/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=100&Itemid=68

The Ethnic Structure of Students

A total number of 53,914 students were registered in state-founded higher education institutions in Vojvodina during the year of 2008/09, with a total of 12,295 students enrolling the first year of studies (Statistics 2009:3,8). Analysing the place of residence for “freshmen”, we may conclude that most of them reside within the territory of Vojvodina (73.78%), while 14.55% of the students are from other parts of Serbia, 4.77% from Republika Srpska, 3.01% from Montenegro, 2.66% from the Federation of Bosnia and Hercegovina, 0.75% from Croatia and 0.58% from outside the region.

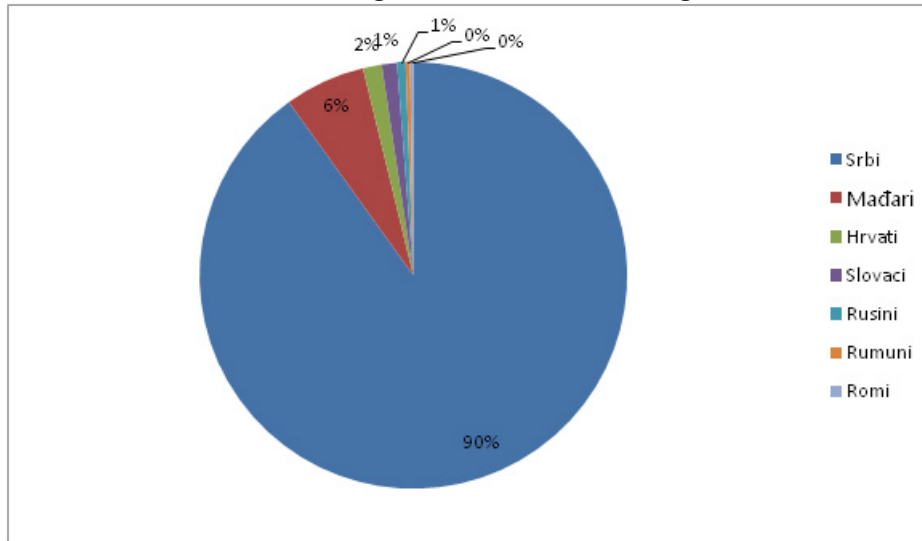
Picture 5. Citizenship or residence (for Vojvodina and Serbia without Vojvodina) of students enrolled in the first year of studies



Picture 5 indicates that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the students reside in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, while the data that 3,919 “freshmen” in higher education institutions in Vojvodina have permanent residence outside of Vojvodina is also worthy of note.

As regards the national structure of the student population, it should be noted that 97.33% of the students declared their national affiliation, while 2.67% did not, or were undeclared, or declared themselves as "others". This data indicates that most students are members of the majority Serbian population (82.97%), while members of national minorities comprise 9.92%. In colleges for professional career studies members of national minorities comprise 15.79% of the total student population, while in faculties that number is 8.61%.

Picture 6. National structure of registered students at state higher education institutions



In the school year 2008/09, the most numerous among the students who were members of national minorities were Hungarians (6.12%), followed by Croats (1.43%), Slovaks (1.16%), Ruthenians (0.64%), Romanians (0.34%) and, finally, the Roma (0.24%). (Statistics 2009:5, 13-14) Comparing these percentages with the demographic structure of Vojvodina, it is noticeable that the minority communities, comprising 34.95% of the population of Vojvodina are represented with as little as 9.92% in the student population.

Table 18 Comparative overview of the share of national minorities in the total and student population

National community	Share in the total population of Vojvodina	Share in the student population
Serbs	65.05%	90.08%
Hungarians	14.28%	6.12%
Slovaks	2.79%	1.16%
Croats	2.78%	1.43%
Romanians	1.50%	0.34%
Roma	1.43%	0.24%

*Data for the Ruthenian minority not shown

An increased presence of members of national minorities in higher professional education is notable, as opposed to academic study programs. A potential explanation is that most programs in minority languages are conducted at colleges for professional career studies.

Legal Framework Relating to the Higher Education of National Minorities in Vojvodina

Higher education for minorities was regulated exclusively by the regulations of the Government of the Republic until recently. After the National Assembly had adopted the Statute of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, a more in-depth regulation of minority rights and obligations became the competency of the provincial authorities. While pre-school, primary and secondary education of the members of national minorities is well regulated, higher education is only partially adapted to the needs of national minorities. The Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities does not guarantee the right of minority communities to higher education in their own language. The recently adopted Statute of Vojvodina, envisaging this right, does not prescribe the competencies of the provincial authorities to more closely regulate this field, which is a precondition for the exercise of the right to higher education in national minority languages.

The focus of the provincial authorities and minority communities during the development of studying opportunities was on the education of staff for delivering teaching in national minority languages at the level of pre-school, elementary and secondary education. Due to these reasons, most study programs in minority languages are realized in the field of pre-school teaching, elementary teaching and literature professor training, while the highest number of institutions with minority instruction are colleges for professional studies of pre-school teachers – five in all. Apart from social and humanistic sciences, the study programs in minority languages are seldom delivered in Vojvodina.

Keeping in mind the deficiencies of the national higher education system, the Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities envisages the improvement of international cooperation, aiming to provide for the members of minorities the possibility to study abroad in their mother tongue, and the recognition of those diplomas in Serbia in accordance with the Law (Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities, Article 14). It is important to note that the process of diploma validation in Serbia is not in line with the Lisbon Convention ratified by Serbia. Furthermore, Serbia does not have stimulating measures, such as bilateral agreements, which would facilitate diploma validation in Serbia for members of national minorities, nor any motivating measures for their return to Serbia. In practice, the members of national minorities, as other citizens of Serbia, can be endowed with benefits in the process of diploma validation, predominantly in the sense of lower prices in comparison to foreign citizens.

The Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities also envisages the opportunity for opening private higher education institutions for members of national minorities, i.e. guarantees the right to found and support private higher education institutions wherein education would be organized in national minority languages or bilingually, in accordance with the Law (Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities, Article 15). As regards private institutions of higher education conducting study programs in national minority languages, their number is limited. Two so-called “displaced departments” from universities in Hungary have operated in Vojvodina since 1996. The Law on Higher Education does not provide for such status, therefore these institutions are registered as consultation centres. (Gábrity 2008b:53) Due to the inability to register as higher education institutions, their study programs have not been accredited.

One such example is the displaced department of the Faculty of Gardening of the Corvinus University from Budapest, organizing distance learning for the study program of Gardening Engineer in Senta. There were 166 students studying at this study program in the Hungarian language in the 2004/05 academic year. (Gábrity 2008b:57) The „Gábor Dénes“ college in Subotica, the second displaced private

higher education institution in the Hungarian language, where study programs for computer science engineers are organized, stopped operating in 2009. There were 128 students studying in the Hungarian language in this institution in the 2004/05 academic year. (Gábrity 2008b:57) In addition to foreign higher education institutions, the private Faculty for Service Business (FABUS) in Subotica has organized studies in Hungarian since 2007, while the Megatrend University is planning to organize basic studies in the Hungarian language in Bačka Topola in the field of agriculture.

The Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities prescribes benefits for the operations of private schools which deliver teaching in national minority languages (incentives, tax exemption for grants, etc.) (The Law on the Protection of the Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities, Article 15) According to the information obtained by the authors, these benefits are not implemented in practice. When analysing the relationship between the Hungarian minority in Vojvodina and their ethnic homeland, it may be concluded that there is no constant financial support by the ethnic homeland for education institutions in Vojvodina providing instruction in the Hungarian language. Instead, they are financed exclusively through projects. (Gábrity 2006b:62)

The Use of National Minority Languages in Higher Education

Instruction in colleges for professional career studies founded by the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina and faculties of the University of Novi Sad is delivered in the Serbian language. However, in accordance with the Law on Higher Education, an institution of higher education may organize study programs and instruction in certain subjects, the writing and the defence of a doctoral dissertation in the languages of national minorities and foreign languages, in accordance with the statute of the institution (Law on Higher Education, Article 80). Students can enrol accredited study programs conducted in the language of a national minority or a foreign language if they have command of the language of instruction (Law on Higher Education, Article 82). The conditions, method and procedure for testing knowledge of a language are regulated by the general instrument of the higher education institution. (Ibid.)

In accordance with the Law on Higher Education, an institution may conduct study programs in a national minority language once they are accredited. However, the language of instruction is not verified during the process of accreditation, wherefore the institution may conduct the accredited study program in any language, in accordance with its statute. In practice, this means that higher education institutions may individually determine the study program language for instruction, taking into consideration the demand in the student market and the existence of staff able to conduct instruction in

the respective language. Thus, higher education institutions may decide to conduct a study program in several languages.

The Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina adopted the decision on taking the classification test and/or the test for affinities and abilities for members of national minorities in their mother tongues in 2001 (Official Gazette of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, nr. 5/01). The decision prescribes (Article 2, paragraph 1 thereof) the right of the candidate to decide on the language of the national minority to be used when taking the entrance exam, when applying for enrolment in a college or faculty. The aim of the regulation was to provide for equal rights regarding the enrolment in the faculty for candidates who had finished secondary education in a national minority language. Still, this decision does not oblige institutions to organize the entrance exam in minority languages, particularly when there are only a few students interested in such an exam. The decision solely prescribes (Article 3, Paragraph 2) the obligation of faculties and colleges for professional career studies to notify the candidates in the call for applications of the languages available for taking the entrance exam, based on a decision by the management body of the institution.

Public documents (student's card, diploma and diploma supplement) are, as a rule, issued in the Serbian language using the Cyrillic script, and in case instruction is conducted in another language (for example, the language of a national minority), public documents are also issued in the language in question based on a request by the student (Law on Higher Education, Article 99). Recordkeeping is regulated along similar lines (central student registers, records of issued diplomas and diploma supplements and minutes on examinations taken). The records are to be kept in the Serbian language and the Cyrillic script, but also in the other language of instruction (Law on Higher Education, Article 97). However, since there are few study programs wherein teaching in all subjects is delivered in national minority languages, institutions often do not feel obliged to issue public documents in other languages. These rules provide for selective adherence to the regulation, since the law does not regulate the procedures in case only one subject is conducted in the national minority language, i.e. whether members of national minorities have the right to a student's card, diploma and diploma supplement in their mother tongue, and whether the institution is then obliged to keep records in the minority language.

The preparation, approval and publishing of textbooks is regulated by a general instrument of the higher education institution, in line with the Law (Law on Textbooks and Other Teaching Aids, Article 1). Every higher education institution adopts a special rulebook on textbooks regulating the language of textbooks in greater detail. In practice, there are frequently no available textbooks and other literature in national minority languages, since institutions, due to financial reasons, seldom decide to translate

and publish textbooks in minority languages. Likewise, there is no option of using foreign textbooks and other literature due to differences in curricula between local and foreign higher education institutions.

Adequate teaching staff represent a precondition for conducting instruction in national minority languages, and this is the most frequent obstacle in organizing this type of teaching (Gábrity 2006a:367). Based on the available data from 2000, there were a total of 239 teachers employed in colleges, 26% of whom declared themselves as members of a national minority. During the same year, there were 2,107 teachers employed in faculties, 29% of whom declared themselves as members of a national minority. However, this data is insufficient to draw conclusions, since the number of employees in the entire higher education system of Vojvodina increased by as much as 155% during the last nine years, as well as because of the fact that the national affiliation of the teachers is not as relevant as their command of the language of instruction in terms of conducting teaching in national minority languages, and there is no reliable data on this issue.

Organizing study programs and entrance exams in multiple languages, as well as recordkeeping, issuing public documents and textbooks in several languages drastically increases the expenses of higher education institutions. However, there is no financial support or other benefits in Serbia to facilitate the organisation of multilingual education in these institutions. Therefore, the management of higher education institutions are of key importance, since they decide on the extent to which they will make studying easier for members of national minorities, or whether they will also demand the command of a language of a national minority when employing professors. Institutions that are currently conducting study programs for minorities do so out of their own funds. In order to satisfy accreditation standards, particularly in the segment of total professor workload, certain higher education institutions had to pay additional attention to professor engagement. According to the rulebook for the accreditation of higher education institutions and study programs, each teacher can take an average of 180 classes per year. Teachers teaching the same subjects in two languages double their number of classes, therefore the institution needs to provide additional funds to pay the teachers for the classes that exceed the envisaged fund, and can also prevent the fulfilment of accreditation standards.

Languages of Instruction at Colleges for Professional Career Studies

Instruction in a minority language is conducted at four of the total of nine state colleges for professional career studies. Instruction in Serbian and Hungarian is delivered at two colleges:

- College for Technical Professional Career Studies in Subotica (375 students attend lectures in the Hungarian language) and
- College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies in Subotica (120 students attend lectures in the Hungarian language).

Instruction in the Serbian and Romanian language is conducted at the College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies “Mihailo Pavlov” in Vršac (51 student attends lectures in Romanian). There are a total of 14 subjects in Romanian in the “Professional Pre-school Teacher” study program, while the same institution offers the same study program in the Roma language. However, there are no precise data on the number of students enrolled in this program.

Instruction at the College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies in Novi Sad is conducted in the Serbian, Hungarian and Slovakian languages, however the study programs are only partially organized in the languages of these two national minorities (a total of five subjects with 23 members of these communities attending lectures at certain years in the Hungarian or Slovakian language).

Analyzing all study programs, we arrive at the data that a total of 511 students attends instruction in the Hungarian language, 51 students in Romanian and seven in Slovakian. This means that a total number of 569 students and/or 5.75% of the total number of students in colleges attend classes in their mother tongue. (Ibid.)

The entrance exam in the languages of national minorities were organized by three colleges (College for Technical Professional Career Studies in Subotica – in Hungarian, College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies in Subotica – in Hungarian and the College for Pre-school Teacher Professional Career Studies “Mihailo Pavlov” in Vršac – in Romanian). The option of taking the college entrance exam in their mother tongue was used by a total of 228 students, 208 of them in Hungarian and 20 in Romanian.

Languages of Instruction at Faculties

Instruction in a minority language is organized at six of the total of 14 state faculties. Instruction in Serbian and Hungarian is conducted at the Faculty of Economy in Subotica, the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad and the Faculty of Civil Engineering in Subotica. Instruction in Hungarian is held at the Teachers’ Faculty in Subotica. At the Teacher’s Faculty in Sombor instruction is conducted in the Serbian and Slovakian language (the department in Bački Petrovac). At the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, instruction is conducted in Serbian, Hungarian, Slovakian, Romanian and Ruthenian.

Instruction in national minority languages is attended by a total of 663 students or 1.5% of the total number of students in faculties, representing an increase of 11 students in comparison to the previous year, but also a decrease of 0.05% in comparison to the total number of students. These numbers do not include the students of Hungarian nationality attending instruction in Serbian at the Faculty of Philosophy and the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics in Novi Sad, with instruction in certain general education subjects (psychology, pedagogy, sociology) in their mother tongue (in accordance with the Protocol on the Cooperation in Delivering Programs of Instruction in National Minority Languages, signed by the Provincial Secretariat for Education and Culture and the University of Novi Sad).

Entrance exams in national minority languages are organized in 12 faculties. Entrance exams in Hungarian are organized by:

- Faculty of Economy in Subotica;
- Faculty of Civil Engineering in Subotica;
- Faculty of Medicine in Novi Sad
- Faculty of Agriculture in Novi Sad;
- Faculty of Technical Sciences in Novi Sad
- Faculty of Law in Novi Sad;
- Teachers' Faculty with instruction in Hungarian in Subotica;
- Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad;
- Faculty of Technology in Novi Sad;
- Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics in Novi Sad.

Entrance exams in the Slovakian language are organized by:

- Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad;
- Teacher's Faculty in Sombor;
- Faculty of Law in Novi Sad;
- Faculty of Agriculture in Novi Sad.

Entrance exams in Romanian and Ruthenian are organized only by the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad.

The opportunity to take the entrance exams in their mother tongue was used by 322 candidates, 12 more than in the 2007/08 academic year. The entrance exam in Hungarian was taken by 288 candidates, in Slovakian by 23 candidates, in Romanian by five and in Ruthenian by six candidates.

In addition to the Serbian language, instruction is conducted in the Hungarian, Romanian, Ruthenian and Slovakian languages in colleges for professional studies founded by the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina and the faculties of the University of Novi Sad, thereby directly implementing the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia in the field of education in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. Still, it bears noting that the number of student members of national minorities accounts for 9.92% in the total student population, while the number of students attending instruction in national minority languages accounts for 2.28%. Even fewer students (1.02%) take entrance exams in national minority languages. (Ibid.) These percentages indicate a degree of inefficiency in organizing higher education in national minority languages.

Conclusion

It is important to identify why a state would tend to build a system in which minorities are educated on equal terms and in their own language, keeping in mind that organizing higher education for national minorities demands additional human and material resources. One of the key arguments is certainly that higher education plays a key role in the sustainable economic development of the country and the achievement of social cohesion. Difficulties faced by members of national minorities in attempting to continue education in their mother tongue are aggravated by the fact that the level of education of members of minorities is below that of the majority population. Due to these reasons, members of national minorities have reduced chances of employment. (Gábrity 2006b:61)

Table 19 Highest level of education completed by members of the Hungarian and Serbian national community between the age of 30 and 34 in Vojvodina

	Primary school		Secondary school		College for professional studies		University	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Serbs	21.4%	26.6%	59.8%	51.2%	4.9%	5.5%	8.1%	8.8%
Hungarians	30.2%	35.7%	48.7%	47.1%	3.0%	4.3%	5.8%	6.9%

Source: Gábrity 2008c:68

Table 19 indicates distinctly that the Hungarian national minority on average has a lower level of education in comparison to the majority population. Percent-wise, more Hungarians than Serbs complete elementary school; however more members of the majority population complete other levels of education. The case is similar with other national minorities. These differences are ascribed to the reduced

options for national minorities to enrol, attend and complete higher education, but can also be related to the insufficient choice of study programs. A reduced desire to continue studies was noted among members of national minorities, as compared with the majority population. (Gábrity 2006b:62) Also worth noting is that members of minorities study abroad, and frequently, upon completing studies, do not return to the country. Therefore, inadequate organisation of higher education for minorities can seriously jeopardise the survival of certain national communities, but also can be reflected in their standard of living.

Key positive solutions that stand out and are in use in Vojvodina relate to: 1. deregulation of education for minority communities, enabling an increased involvement of their members in further education of minorities and 2. delivery of higher education for pre-school teachers, teachers and lecturers in minority languages, which contributes to resolving human resources issues in elementary and secondary education. Positive solutions were noted, to an extent, in elementary and secondary education of national minorities, while higher education is somewhat unstructured.

The deficiencies of higher education for minorities in Vojvodina include: 1. unresolved financing of study programs in national minority languages, 2. unresolved status of displaced departments organizing education in national minority languages, 3. overreaching competencies of faculty deans and college directors in determining the language of study programs, entrance exams and teacher employment criteria, potentially leading to rivalries between members of ethnic communities in fighting for prominent positions in institutions and 4. not considering the language of study programs in accreditation, particularly in the field of professor lecture funds, creating a specific human resource issue in bilingual institutions.

Based on the standards for the accreditation of study programs of the first and second level of higher education and in accordance with standard number 9 relating to teaching staff, teachers are envisaged to conduct an average of 180 classes of active instruction per year, i.e. six classes per week (Accreditation in Higher Education 2007:57). In bilingual (or multilingual) institutions, teachers teaching the same subjects in several languages easily reach the envisaged number of lectures, and therefore these institutions often have to set aside additional funds to pay these teachers for classes above the determined fund (overtime). The increased financial and educational load on these institutions hampers their ambitions to develop new study programs, partake in scientific research and, in general, leads to their lagging behind monolingual higher education institutions. Therefore, the current solution of financing and accrediting higher educational institutions conducting bilingual instruction cannot be described as sustainable in the long term.

MONTENEGRO

Tajana Brkanović and Ivana Stanojević

Introduction

This case study aims to present the model of higher education for minorities in the Republic of Montenegro, with a focus on the Albanian national minority, and to show the relevance of this model for the study of higher education development in Preševo and Bujanovac. An independent study program for the education of teachers in the Albanian language was initiated at the University in Podgorica in 2004. The study program spans over eight semesters and approximately 30 students enrol every year. This study is an attempt to discover how the need for this study model emerged, how the model was established and if it is sustainable. The intent of this case study is to analyse the full social context, emphasizing interethnic relations and higher education. This study aims to present all the advantages and disadvantages of organizing higher education for the Albanian minority in Montenegro and to put the resulting data to the best possible use for identifying potential solutions to this issue in the Republic of Serbia.

Methodology

The method of document analysis was used in the initial phase of this study, which was launched in February 2010. All relevant documents were collected and analyzed during this stage of the investigation – the Constitution of the Republic of Montenegro, the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms, the General Law on Education of the Republic of Montenegro, the Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Montenegro, statistical data, analytical articles on problems of higher education for minorities and interethnic relations in Montenegro. The second stage involved field research in the form of interviews with stakeholders directly or indirectly partaking in the opening of higher education institutions in the Albanian language in Montenegro, including the representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science of Montenegro, Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, students that attended (or are still attending) lectures at the Teacher Studies in the Albanian language, a representative of the Student's Parliament of the University in Podgorica and teachers. The goal was to use the in-depth interview method to obtain relevant data relating to the process of opening these studies, interethnic relations in Montenegro, problems that were resolved using this method and those yet unresolved. In line with the subject of the study, the respondents were encouraged to freely present their ideas and suggestions on organizing

higher education in the Albanian language in South Serbia. Furthermore, the legal framework and data obtained by document analysis is compared to data on the exercise of the right to higher education for minorities based on the impressions of relevant respondents, as well as the impressions of researchers from the field.

Context

The Republic of Montenegro

The citizens of the Republic of Montenegro voted in favour of independence from the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro at the referendum held on May 21, 2006. Podgorica is the largest city and capital of Montenegro, whereas Cetinje represents the former royal capital. Montenegro consists of 21 municipalities and two town municipalities (Golubovci and Tuzi), which are part of the municipality of Podgorica.

A key demographic property of Montenegro is a great diversity of various minorities residing on a relatively small area, a consequence of many historical circumstances such as wars, shifting borders and population migrations. According to the 2003 Census, 620,145 persons reside in Montenegro, while the ethnic structure of the population is made up of: Montenegrins - 43.16%, Serbs - 31.99%, Bosniaks - 7.77%, Albanians - 5.03%, Muslims - 3.97%, Croatians - 1.1%, Roma - 0.42%, Yugoslavs - 0.3% and other minorities - 1.09%. A total of 4.34% did not state their national affiliation. A large number of refugees and displaced persons still reside in Montenegro. Displaced persons arrive from Kosovo (18,019 – according to data from the Government of Montenegro and the UNHCR), while refugees are mostly from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (a total of 8,474 – according to the same source).

Table 20 Population by national or ethnic affiliation according to the censuses of 1981, 1991 and 2003

	1981		1991		2003*	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Montenegrins	400,488	68.54	380,467	61.86	267,669	43.16
Serbs	19,407	3.32	57,453	9.34	198,414	31.99
Yugoslavs	31,243	5.35	26,159	4.25	1,860	0.30
Albanians	37,735	6.46	40,415	6.57	31,163	5.03
Muslims	78,080	13.36	89,614	14.57	24,625	3.97
Bosniaks		0.00		0.00	48,184	7.77
Croatians	6,904	1.18	6,244	1.02	6,811	1.10
Roma	1,471	0.25	3,282	0.53	2,601	0.42
Other	2,741	0.47	2,383	0.39	4,486	0.72
Not stated/Undecided	301	0.05	1,944	0.32	26,906	4.34
Regional affiliation	1,602	0.27	998	0.16	1,258	0.20
Unknown	4,338	0.74	6,076	0.99	6,168	0.99
TOTAL	584,310	100.00	615,035	100.00	620,145	100.00

Source: Monstat, 2008

Montenegrins mostly reside in the central regions of the country. Serbs are the majority population in the bay of Boka Kotorska and in the north of the country. Bosniaks and Muslims mostly reside in the Montenegrin part of Sandžak and in the east, while most of the seaside and a segment of the north of the Republic of Montenegro have an ethnically diverse population. Albanians mostly reside in the regions bordering Kosovo and Albania. Albanians are the majority population in Ulcinj (72.14%, according to the 2003 census). A significant number of Albanians reside in the town municipality of Tuzi in Podgorica – where they make up the cultural region known as Malesija (encompassing neighbouring settlements with majority Albanian populations). According to the 2003 census, 9,296 Albanians live in Podgorica, 2,300 of those in Tuzi (the others live in rural areas around Tuzi, stretching to the northern part of the Skadar Lake). A significant number of Albanians live in the municipalities of Plav (2,719 – 19.7%), Rožaje (1,008 – 4.44%), Bar (3,036 – 7.61%).

Ethnic structure of the population of Montenegro
Etnička struktura stanovništva Crne Gore

according to settlements
po naseljenim mjestima

census 2003
popis 2003. god.

author:
autor: Vajčić Vladimir

130

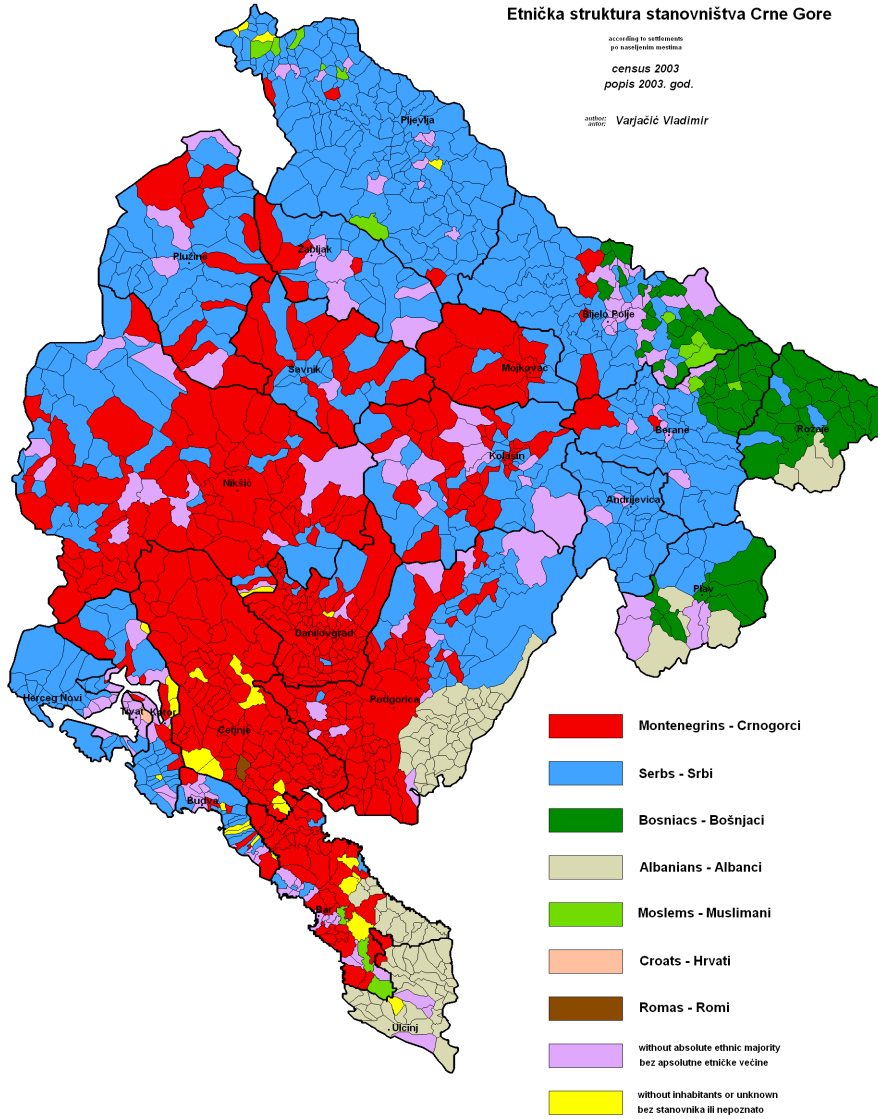


Table 21 Ethnic structure of the population of Montenegro by municipalities, according to the 2003 census

T 3	TOTAL	Montenegrins %	Serbs %	Albanians %	Bosniaks %	Muslims %	Croats %	Roma and Egyptian	Other %
Andrijevica	5,785	25.13	69.61	0.00	0.00	0.14	0.03	0.00	5.08
Bar	40,037	47.25	27.68	7.61	2.30	6.43	0.65	0.16	7.92
Berane	35,068	25.52	46.51	0.10	16.15	6.56	0.13	0.34	4.69
Bijelo Polje	50,284	17.77	40.32	0.06	22.63	15.78	0.09	0.26	3.08
Budva	15,909	45.33	40.87	0.35	0.15	1.28	1.12	0.37	10.53
Danilovgrad	16,523	67.84	25.51	0.04	0.01	0.35	0.28	0.03	5.94
Žabljak	4,204	43.03	50.26	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.05	0.00	6.64
Kolašin	9,949	50.65	44.77	0.01	0.01	0.32	0.11	0.00	4.13
Kotor	22,947	46.81	30.91	0.33	0.07	0.46	7.68	0.30	13.44
Mojkovac	10,066	54.77	41.12	0.02	0.09	0.14	0.04	0.00	3.82
Nikšić	75,282	62.64	26.74	0.04	0.20	0.92	0.18	0.59	8.71
Plav	13,805	5.54	18.93	19.70	49.32	5.71	0.03	0.00	0.78
Plužine	4,272	32.61	60.51	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.00	6.84
Pljevlja	35,806	21.52	60.11	0.02	5.21	8.14	0.04	0.00	4.97
Podgorica	169,132	56.96	26.27	5.50	1.36	2.60	0.42	0.83	6.06
Rožaje	22,693	1.94	3.98	4.44	82.09	6.65	0.02	0.07	0.81
Tivat	13,630	29.95	35.19	1.06	0.27	1.14	19.54	0.40	12.45
Ulcinj	20,290	11.93	7.44	72.14	1.46	3.36	0.38	0.57	2.72
Herceg Novi	33,034	28.60	52.88	0.08	0.24	0.67	2.42	0.64	14.48
Cetinje	18,482	90.67	4.62	0.23	0.03	0.12	0.27	0.70	3.37
Šavnik	2,947	46.83	47.44	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.10	0.00	5.46
MONTENEGRO	620,145	43.16	31.99	5.03	7.77	3.97	1.10	0.46	6.52

The official language is Montenegrin according to the Constitution of Montenegro. The Serbian, Bosnian, Albanian and Croatian languages are also in official use. The Cyrillic and Latin scripts are both recognized. The Albanian minority is guaranteed by the Constitution the use of their language in places where they comprise the majority population. According to the population census of 2003, around 85% of the population use the Serbian or Montenegrin languages (during the census, the official language of Montenegro was Serbian), while Bosnian was used by 6.13% and Albanian by 5.26% of the population.

Most citizens of Montenegro are Orthodox Christians (around 74.24%, according to the last census of 2003). A significant number of Sunni Muslims also reside in the state, organized as the Islamic Community of Montenegro (17.74%), while Catholics are organized around the Bar and Kotor Dioceses (3.54%).

A Brief Overview of Ethnic Relations in the Republic of Montenegro

132 | “The minority issue has always been sensitive. Even the world wars started, at least formally, due to a disregard for minority rights. The complete disintegrative process of the former Yugoslavia began because no one wanted to be a minority,” stated one of our respondents, a human rights issues expert. His words are possibly the best description of the policy of Montenegro towards minorities. According to him, the Republic of Montenegro has not had negative historical experiences with minorities ever since World War I, and thus has “no open minority issues in any sense”. This represents another distinguishing point in relation to other Balkan countries. Another respondent believes that, until the creation of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, Montenegrins had shared the fate of minority peoples. Only with the creation of Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) did Montenegro regain its name, and Montenegrins the right to ethnic individuality. Our respondent further stated that only after the collapse of SFRY did the former constitutive populations of former SFRY become minorities in the newly established states. Thus, up to 1992 and according to the Constitution, among others, Albanians were a constitutive population in Montenegro. According to our respondent, a disintegrative process for the minorities began with the breakup of Yugoslavia, reflected in that “during the early nineties, it was undesirable to be a member of a minority anywhere in the region of the former Yugoslavia, including Montenegro.” There were “acceptable minority representatives” as exceptions in public office.

Our respondent believes that multiculturalism is profitable and he claims this attitude is pragmatic since multiculturalism brings about the integration of communities and creates political stability in the long run, representing a precondition for the long-term development of economy. “Economy is not possible in politically unstable circumstances and conditions, and the entire region of former Yugoslavia saw the truth of this. None of the states (ed. note: successors to SFRY) represented an interesting destination for investments for precisely this reason.”

The respondent concluded that cooperation with minorities in Montenegro is somewhat more efficient than in the rest of the region. Political awareness of minorities in Montenegro is ripe, he said, as is the attitude that it is important to tend to minorities. He believes that this attitude was the result of the political context when the then ruling coalition broke up in 1997. The government chose to fully

ally with the minorities for pragmatic reasons - in order to gain political stability. Thus they gained the favour of the United States of America and ever since the representatives of minorities, primarily the Albanian minority are key actors in the makeup of almost every government. "Since 1997, the rights of minorities in Montenegro have not taken a step backwards," said the respondent.

Legal Framework and Treatment of Minorities

The current Constitution of Montenegro (Constitution of the Republic of Montenegro, Official Gazette of Montenegro, October 25, 2007) was adopted on October 22, 2007 and it defines Montenegro as a civil, democratic, environmental and socially just state founded on the rule of law. The Constitution provides a legal basis for promoting, strengthening and advancing the protection of basic human rights and freedoms and confirms the obligation of Montenegro to respect international standards in the field of human rights protection. Article 6 of the Constitution provides general guarantees for the protection of human rights and freedoms as inviolable categories. Article 7 proscribes inciting hatred or intolerance on any basis, while Article 8 proscribes discrimination, thus representing a basic precondition for enjoying all human rights and freedoms. Articles 17 through 81 of the Constitution are dedicated to human rights and freedoms - civil and political, economic, social and cultural, as well as minority rights.

Special minority rights guaranteed by Constitution are the protection of identity and prohibition of assimilation. The Constitution also guarantees the following special minority rights:

- Expression, preservation, development and public display of national, ethnic, cultural and religious affiliation;
- Choice, use and public display of national symbols and celebration of national holidays;
- Use of their own language and script in private, public and official use;
- Education in their own language and script in state institutions, and curriculum including the history and culture of the members of minority populations and other minority national communities;
- That local government, state and judicial bodies in communities with a significant population percentage hold proceedings in the languages of minority communities and other minority national communities;
- To found educational, cultural and religious associations with financial aid of the state;
- To write and use their first and last names in their own language and script in official documents;

- That traditional local names, street and settlement names, as well as topographic signs, in communities with a significant population percentage be written in the languages of minority communities and other minority national communities as well;
- The right to authentic representation in the Assembly of Montenegro and the assemblies of local government units wherein they comprise a significant percentage of the population, in accordance with the affirmative action principle;
- The right to proportional representation in public services, state and self government bodies;
- The right to information in their own languages;
- The right to establish and maintain contact with citizens and associations outside Montenegro with common national and ethnic descent, cultural-historical heritage as well as religious beliefs;
- To found councils to protect and advance certain rights.

The relationship between the majority, particularly the ruling political elite, and the minorities grew stronger during the campaign for the independence of Montenegro. Minority representatives supported the idea of independence, indicated by the fact that the option for an independent Montenegro garnered the greatest number of votes in the predominantly Bosniak Rožaje and the predominantly Albanian Ulcinj. Minority political parties, including the representatives of national minority communities in the leading political parties of Montenegro, played a significant role within their communities during the campaign up to the referendum on the independence of Montenegro. As noted in the final report of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) on the referendum on the status of the Republic of Montenegro, the Montenegrin parliament adopted a new law on minorities during the campaign period, establishing a mechanism that increased the guaranteed presence of minorities in the Parliament in future elections (the Constitutional Court subsequently dismissed this provision as unconstitutional). Thus the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms (Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms, 2006, Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro, nr. 13/2006) was adopted in 2006, following three years of discussions in the Parliament of Montenegro. The law defines a set of minority rights and mechanisms for the protection thereof (preservation of the national identities of minorities, i.e. protection from assimilation, as well as effective partaking of minorities in public life). The law complies with the following international documents:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;
- European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms;
- Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities;

- European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages;
- Recommendations of the High Commissioner of OSCE for national minorities, from Hague, Oslo and Lund;
- Guidelines for the participation of national minorities in the electoral process.

One of the respondents from Montenegro, who had worked as a member of the working group for the drafting of the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms, said that the law had been adopted without public debate and that its adoption before the referendum was a matter of political agreement between the Government of Montenegro and political representatives of minorities. He claims that the law was revolutionary, since the political climate in Montenegro was not conducive to effective minority participation at the time.

The Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms defines a minority as any group of citizens of Montenegro numerically smaller than the dominant population, which shares common ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics, historically tied to Montenegro and motivated by the desire to express and preserve their national, ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity.

A number of other laws indirectly protect the rights of minorities in other areas of public life (education, media, culture, local self government, etc.). The Government of the Republic of Montenegro was obliged, pursuant to this law, to adopt the Strategy for Minority Policies specifically outlining measures for the implementation of the Law, improving the living conditions for minorities and increasing the integration of the Roma into the social and political life of Montenegro. The ten-year Strategy for Minority Policies was adopted in June 2008, and it sets the goal of “integration without assimilation” of all members of minorities and minority communities as collectives within the Montenegrin state and society. In the area of education in minority languages the Strategy envisages a harmonization of educational-scientific and general educational programs through various measures and activities, aiming to include adequate contents from the culture, tradition and history of minorities. Likewise, the strategy obligates the state to work on providing access to higher education for all minority communities by implementing the affirmative action principle.

The protection of rights and improvement of the status of minorities in Montenegro is in the mandate of the Ministry for the Protection of Human and Minority Rights and the Council for Human Rights and Freedoms (a working body of the Assembly of Montenegro). The Assembly adopted the decision on establishing the Minority Fund. Another body operating as a separate and independent institution is the Ombudsman for Human Rights and Freedoms.

Minority Education

The Constitution guarantees the right to education in the mother tongue for all minorities in Montenegro. The general law on education provides for teaching in the language of members of minorities in municipalities where they constitute a majority or a significant portion of the population. The Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms makes separate provisions for the possibility that minorities exercise their rights in the field of education in the mother tongue.

Provisions of the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms Relating to Education

Articles 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 of the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms relate to minority education and the methods of organization thereof. The law guarantees that minorities and their members have the right to education in their own language (at all stages of education) and the right to adequate representation of their language in the general and professional education system, depending on the number of students and the financial capacities of the Republic. Instruction may be organized in special schools or special classes in regular schools and is conducted entirely in the minority language. If education is conducted in the minority language, the teaching of the official language and script is mandatory. Programs containing subjects for education in the minority language include topics from history, art, literature, tradition and the culture of the minority. Topics from the mother tongue and literature, history, art and culture of minorities are included in educational programs in institutions and schools with instruction in the official language, to facilitate mutual tolerance and coexistence.

The law provides for the provision of departments, faculties or institutes for the education of teachers in the minority language as part of higher education, to meet the needs of education in minority languages.

The establishment of international educational, scientific and technical cooperation is to be enabled for members of minorities, so that they may study abroad in their mother tongue and have the obtained diplomas recognized pursuant to the Law.

However, as one of our respondents pointed out, Montenegro has not resolved the problem of recognizing diplomas from Albania, while the diplomas from Kosovo are recognized. The problem of reco-

gnizing diplomas from Albanian universities has been pressing for years and no progress has been achieved. In the period when no study programs were available in Albanian in Podgorica, Albanians from Montenegro studied in Albania and the process of diploma validation was lengthy and demanding. Our respondent noted that the students had to complete two or three additional years of studies in Montenegro, and this discouraged many students from even entering the process, since it all depended on the number of additional examinations the validation commission would prescribe. However, the respondents also mentioned some positive solutions. As they said, “the Faculty of Economy in Podgorica recognized diplomas from the Faculty of Economy in Albania without any problems and without exceedingly difficult conditions.”

Pursuant to the law, the members of minorities may found educational institutions, but the funding of these institutions remains in the hands of the founders. Educational activities in an education institution or special class in a regular school delivering teaching in a minority language is conducted by teachers from the minority community who speak the language actively, as well as teachers from outside the minority community with an active knowledge of the language and script of the minority. The law mentions only existing teaching staff and it remains unclear what happens in cases when there are no available human resources.

The Strategy for Minority Policies from 2008 (adopted by the Ministry for the Protection of Human and Minority Rights) indicates that in practice there are potential legal complications when there is a lack of human resources for education in minority languages, i.e. if the employed educational staff do not speak both the minority and official language of Montenegro. As a solution, the Strategy defines the significance of planning and developing study programs aiming to satisfy minority standards and the parallel learning of the minority language. A potential gap exists at the level of higher education, i.e. in the structure and number of institutions, the enrolment policy and the contents of teacher training programs. “The enrolment policy at the highest level of education is in the domain of higher education institutions and it must embrace certain legal solutions relating to minorities, where the state would have a supervisory and controlling function, financing in accordance with its capacities and otherwise stimulate the institutions to meet minority education standards in accordance with the Law. This approach is applied both institutionally (organizing and stimulating educational institutions or their units in all forms of ownership) and relating to contents, in terms of regulating the relationships within the educational system as a whole. The entire process should be designed to meet the form and to preserve the required level of education to enable achieving goals in the field of minority rights. Even though the Law on the Education of Adults does not prescribe required standards, it is obvious that the same general principles apply to this area of education as to other users of the educational process, and therefore to the education of members of minority communities,” the Strategy states.

It is the opinion of one of our respondents that the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms is currently in the process of “oscillating implementation” – everything depends on the political context, daily events, political will and the willingness of minorities to respond positively to all these processes, particularly integrative processes, without reserve or fear.

Book of Changes and the Laws Relating to Education

Montenegro published the Book of Changes in 2001 – a baseline document for the reform of the educational system in Montenegro. Subsequently, a set of laws in the field of education has been adopted, namely:

- General Law on Education;
- Law on Pre-school Education;
- Law on Elementary Education;
- Law on Gymnasiums;
- Law on Vocational Education;
- Law on Adult Education;
- Law on Higher Education;
- Law on Education for Children with Special Needs;
- Law on Educational Inspection;
- Law on Scientific – Research Activities.

The expert Commission for the Education of National and Ethnic Groups was established as part of the Council for General Education, tasked with examining and providing an opinion to the Council on new educational programs relevant for the preservation of the identity of minority peoples and other minority national communities in Montenegro.

The General Law on Education provides for education in the mother tongue for members of minorities. When education is conducted in the language of minorities, the teaching of the official language is mandatory.

Instruction in Albanian as the mother tongue in communities where a significant percentage of the population consists of members of the Albanian national community is organized in stages: pre-school education, elementary education, secondary education. The First National Report on the Implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (2007) notes that provisions were

made for pre-school education in Albanian in territories where the Albanian language is in use, pursuant to the provisions of the Law on Pre-school Education, in two municipalities - Ulcinj and Podgorica. Elementary schools in Montenegro provide incomplete, four-grade, five-grade and six-grade classes – units, as well as independent core, complete, eight and nine-grade elementary schools. In territories where the Albanian population represents the majority or a significant part of the population (Ulcinj, Podgorica, Rožaje, Plav, Bar) the instruction of elementary education in certain schools is conducted in Albanian, pursuant to Article 11 of the General Law on Education. Textbooks are translated into Albanian. The curriculum of elementary school education envisages that 20% of the content may be created by teachers, parents and schools in cooperation with the local community, pursuant to Article 22 of the General Law on Education.

Secondary schools may be founded as gymnasiums, art schools or vocational schools. Gymnasiums provide general education in natural and social sciences, as a foundation for further studies. Gymnasium education lasts four years. Arts schools provide fourth degree professional education in music and ballet, lasting four years. Vocational four-year schools provide fourth degree vocational education and/or secondary education enabling work or further studies. Vocational schools include: civil engineering, mechanical engineering, agriculture, forestry, medicine, economy, catering, trade, transportation, maritime affairs, etc. Three-year vocational schools provide third degree vocational education. In regions where the Albanian population represents the majority or a significant part of the population such as Ulcinj, Podgorica, Rožaje and Plav, secondary education instruction is conducted in Albanian in four secondary education institutions (several classes in gymnasiums and vocational schools, and one gymnasium in full). Textbooks are translated into Albanian and 20% of the curricula are designed by teachers, parents and schools in cooperation with the local community pursuant to Article 22 of the General Law on Education.

This will also be enabled within the institutions of the Montenegrin educational system in territories where the Albanian population constitutes the majority or a significant part of the population (Ulcinj, Tuzi, Rožaje, Plav) and in case of a sufficient number of students interested in obtaining technical or specialist education in this minority language. As one respondent said, the problem lies in the reduced number of secondary school profiles for (linguistic) minorities – Albanians have at their disposal only 4 schools (of different profile). This is a limiting factor since there is no extensive choice of future profiles. Non-linguistic minorities do not face this problem. Albanians and Roma are de facto the only linguistic minorities in Montenegro, while Bosniaks and Croats do not face this problem.

However, previous research indicates that the Constitution of Montenegro, the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms and the General Law on Education (General Law on Education, 2003; Government

of the Republic of Montenegro, published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro nr. 64/02, 31/05 and 49/07) are not fully implemented. “Thus at the ‘Boško Strugar’ primary school in Ulcinj students attending classes in Albanian have a considerable number of classes in Serbian. Therefore, students are forced to attend English language classes in Serbian, representing an additional difficulty for students having to use two foreign languages at the same time.”⁵² The study further notes that another problem was identified in the inadequately or poorly translated textbooks. “Even though many textbooks were translated into Albanian, students are still forced to use a number of textbooks in Serbian. Thus, for example, the Musical Education textbook for the VI grade of elementary school contains numerous illustrations in the Serbian language and Cyrillic script. The Albanian language Geography textbook for the VI grade of elementary school contains many illustrations in Serbian. There are obvious errors in the translation of textbooks for I - IV grades of elementary school from Serbian into Albanian. The Mathematics textbooks and workbooks for junior grades are also poorly translated. Students find the text-based problems are incomprehensible, while illustrative examples contain words or sentences written in Serbian,” this study shows. As one respondent notes, Montenegro used to handle this issue very poorly: textbooks were translated from the official language, while the translators had to be Montenegrins who, in addition to Montenegrin, also spoke the Albanian language, producing very poor translation (e.g. “magnetic meadow” for “magnetic field”). However, previous research indicates that the Constitution of Montenegro, the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms and the General Law on Education (General Law on Education, 2003; Government of the Republic of Montenegro, published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro nr. 64/02, 31/05 and 49/07) are not fully implemented. “Thus at the ‘Boško Strugar’ primary school in Ulcinj students attending classes in Albanian have a considerable number of classes in Serbian. Therefore, students are forced to attend English language classes in Serbian, representing an additional difficulty for students having to use two foreign languages at the same time.”⁵³ The study further notes that another problem was identified in the inadequately or poorly translated textbooks. “Even though many textbooks were translated into Albanian, students are still forced to use a number of textbooks in Serbian. Thus, for example, the Musical Education textbook for the VI grade of elementary school contains numerous illustrations in the Serbian language and Cyrillic script. The Albanian language Geography textbook for the VI grade of elementary school contains many illustrations in Serbian. There are obvious errors in the translation of textbooks for I - IV grades of elementary school from Serbian into Albanian. However, our respondent says that the state has made visible progress with textbooks in the Albanian language since it “produces” them. Reviewers are professors from Albanian universities, and he sees this as a positive practice in building trust. By creating authentic textbooks in minority languages, he says, the state makes it known that it

52 Minorities in Montenegro – Legislature and Practice, Initiative of Youth for Human Rights, Montenegro – Program of Human Rights Protection, Report nr. 1, February 2007, Podgorica

53 Minorities in Montenegro – Legislature and Practice, Initiative of Youth for Human Rights, Montenegro – Program of Human Rights Protection, Report nr. 1, February 2007, Podgorica

supports minorities and their development. The state thus retains insight into the contents of textbooks, which is not possible when they are being imported. As our respondent explains, a faculty can also “import” textbooks from other states, mostly professional literature, particularly when the contents does not depend on the characteristics of the country in which teaching is delivered, such as the Albanian Language and Literature.

Important issues are also the subjects of History and Music. Even though the First National Report on the Implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages claims that the subject of History in Montenegro is not studied based on nationality but according to the principle of historic and territorial developments and worldwide historic periods, and that the history of Albanians is not overlooked in curricula and textbooks, the students we talked to are of different opinions.

Students attending Teacher Training in the Albanian language note that the program they work by is taken from the Teacher’s Faculty in Nikšić. There are certain specific differences in programs such as the Albanian Language and Music, where a number of Albanian songs are taught in addition to Montenegrin songs translated into Albanian. However, they note that in History classes only the Montenegrin and World history are taught, leaving out the Albanian history.

Higher Education for Minorities

Studies at all faculties have been organized in accordance with the principles of the Bologna Declaration since the 2004/05 academic year. The implementation of this declaration eliminated higher schools and envisaged only colleges and professional career colleges, whose studies last for three years. Basic academic studies last for three years minimum. The following universities operate within the Republic of Montenegro: the state University of Montenegro, the first private University Mediteran, as well as the private UDG University for Business, Economy and Law, where the Albanian language studies were launched at the foreign language department in 2009.

Affirmative action measures for members of minority communities are implemented at the state University as well. Based on the proposal of the Minority Council, the University of Montenegro may enrol a certain number of minority students each year. The Senate of the University adopted the Recommendations for Faculty Units urging them to introduce affirmative action targeting minorities during enrolment. These measures have been used by members of the Albanian and the Roma minority. The Law on Higher Education (Law on Higher Education, 2003, Assembly of the Republic of Montenegro, Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro, nr. 60/03) does not tackle specifically the mino-

rities and the methods for organizing minority educational programs. Higher education provides for obtaining diplomas of applied basic studies, academic basic studies, specialist studies, applied master's studies, the academic title of master of sciences and the academic title of doctor of sciences. Article 7 of this law prescribes that there shall be no discrimination in exercising the right to higher education based on sex, race, marital state, colour of skin, language, religion, political or other belief, national, ethnic or other descent, affiliation with a national community, property status, disability or any other similar basis, state or circumstance. Article 19, inter alia, envisages that a higher education institution may innovate higher education within its license, offer study programs of any educational level for obtaining required or adequate knowledge to attain the goals of higher education, establish study programs and subjects, independently develop and apply study curricula and research projects, establish the conditions for student enrolment, teaching methods and student knowledge examinations, select management bodies and determine their structure, scope of work and mandate, select academic and other staff and award honorary titles.

Furthermore, Article 6, paragraph 2 of the Rulebook on the Contents and Form of the Diploma and Diploma Supplement, Maintaining of the Student Registry, Records and Content of Public Documents Issued by the University and Higher Education Institutions prescribes that "when instruction for a certain study program is conducted in the language of the national minority or a foreign language, the diploma is to be printed in the language of instruction as well."

Teacher Studies at the University of Montenegro in the Albanian Language

The first generation students enrolled the Teacher Training Studies at the University of Montenegro in the Albanian language during the 2004/2005 academic year. The studies, lasting for eight semesters, were established in line with current norms of the national higher education quality system. Teacher training studies represent an individual study program and are the result of several years of negotiation between the Montenegrin authorities, representatives of the Albanian community and the international community. 70% of the instruction is organized in the Albanian language, while 30% is organized in the official, Montenegrin language. Due to agreements signed with universities in Albania, guest lectures by teaching staff (and textbook exchanges) were easy to organize with Skadar and Tirana, comprising two thirds of the total number of teachers in these studies, and the textbook exchange was provided for. Professors from faculties in Niš and Podgorica also teach in these studies. One professor from these studies stated that approximately 60% of the subjects studied in these studies are "linguistically

neutral”, i.e. they represent general and universal subjects and comprise part of a common program. However, there are subjects that depend on the language of instruction and therefore instruction is organized in this “linguistically combined” manner.

According to the data obtained from the representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science and professors from Teacher Training Studies, more than 130 students have been enrolled in this program since 2004, while 26 graduated by October 2009.

When discussing the beginning of the higher education launching process for the Albanian minority in Montenegro, all respondents agree that the negotiations and agreements on establishing the studies in the Albanian language were intensified in 2000. A former professor from Teacher Training Studies in the Albanian language in Montenegro said that the idea of opening such institutions was based on the conventions of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, particularly on the Hague Declaration on Minority Education in their Mother Tongue.

Montenegro signed the Hague Declaration in 1996. The Hague recommendations set minority education as a priority, since education is also an important factor in preserving the identity of national minorities. The states are recommended to introduce specific measures (where necessary), in order to exercise the active right to education. It is also recommended that the teaching program for minorities should encompass not only education in the mother tongue, but also studies in minority culture, tradition and history. The majority population should also learn the basics of the minority language and culture, since this fosters multiculturalism and tolerance in society, the declaration states.

The respondents state that the initiative to launch education in the Albanian language came from the Albanian community – political parties, non-government organizations, citizens, schools. The representatives of Albanian political parties, non-government organizations and the government of the Republic were involved in the negotiations. An important factor was certainly the mediation of the American Project for Ethnic Relations (hereinafter: PER) and the American Consul. A representative of the Albanian political opposition said that the PER required the Albanian politicians to identify their demands. One of the demands was the opening of a higher education institution in the mother tongue as a separate institution, within the University of Montenegro. Albanian politicians asked that these studies be opened in places where Albanians constitute a majority – in Ulcinj or the Tuzi municipality. The respondents agree that there was a general consensus in the community on the need to open such an institution, but the key problem was the location, i.e. where these studies should be opened. The authorities required that these studies be opened in Nikšić as a study program within the Faculty of

Philosophy. Albanian political parties rejected this. For two years in a row there was an open call for students to enrol the Teacher Training Studies in the Albanian language in Nikšić, but no one applied for this program. For Albanians, Nikšić was unacceptable since, as one Albanian political party representative stated, it was “pro-Serbian”, not to mention that it was far from places where Albanians live. A representative from another Albanian political party said that “Nikšić was quite a problematic city at the time”. After Nikšić, the American suggestion was to open such studies in Podgorica. The political party of the Democratic Union of Albanians accepted this offer, while other Albanian political parties were opposed. The influence of the American mediators was key in selecting Podgorica as a compromise (between Ulcinj, representing the wishes of the Albanians, and Nikšić, opted for by the authorities), and most respondents consider this was a good solution, since Podgorica is the intellectual, cultural and economic centre of Montenegro.

The respondents agree that Teacher Training Studies were opened since they were the most necessary, while certain respondents also note that there was a study which indicated the need for this program. During the 1990s, there was a lack of teachers in the Albanian language in junior grades of elementary school. Older teachers retired, while new human resources were not trained. A professor from the studies says that the teachers did not have faculty diplomas, since this was not a precondition for employment back in the days. He says that the this study showed that approximately one hundred new teachers were required, i.e. that many were needed at the labour market. He also believes that this was not a realistic number and that it was “overblown” for reasons of “political nature”. This respondent believes that the realistic need was for half as many teachers in the Albanian language. Another professor says that the “market was not analyzed well” and that the issues should have been analyzed better, as well as the definition of the study program. The assessments of the respondents on the number of students that enrolled in the first year differ, but nearly all agree that the candidate response to the call was the best indicator of the “need” for these studies. One of the respondents also states that a large number of Albanian girls enrolled the studies and that this was a huge improvement, since it would have been additionally difficult for these girls to obtain education outside of Montenegro, both due to financial reasons and traditional prejudices against female Albanian youth. Students from Teacher Training Studies note that, apart from the secondary school graduates, older students have also enrolled the studies, as well as the persons that completed school several years earlier and several married women and mothers. One student from the first year of Teacher Training Studies said that her generation was a test and that they faced plenty of problems and difficulties with instruction and organization, stating that “the program got better in the following years.”

Instruction at the Teachers Training Studies is conducted in one amphitheatre for all four years of studies. The students say that this space is insufficient and that „it was set up properly“ in the beginning

and that it has deteriorated in the meantime. The issue of qualified teaching staff was raised during the opening of Teacher Training Studies. A representative of an Albanian political party believes that a minority that “wants this product shall never say that they do not have everything required for its realization”. The Albanian community claimed that the required staff were available, but practice indicated something completely different - that there were insufficient human resources. Textbooks translated from Montenegrin were used, while professors from Skadar were of great assistance to students and brought the required literature in cases when it was lacking. The respondents said that the library of the University of Montenegro does not contain textbooks and other literature in Albanian that could be used in Teacher Training Studies.

Analysis of Higher Education for Minorities in Montenegro Based on the Interview Analysis

The opening of higher education studies in the Albanian language in Montenegro has had several positive effects. Firstly, observed from a political perspective, as several professors from these studies believe, the opening of these studies was motivated by politics. Even though the relations with the Albanian community in Montenegro are traditionally good, this has been another step forward for improved cooperation. One of the professors states that “opening the studies certainly carried a political significance.” Political representatives also note that these studies contributed to the realization of the rights of Albanians in Montenegro to education in their mother tongue. On the other hand, the model provided for a sufficient number of teachers for elementary education. According to an Albanian official, the initial idea was that the study program would last for four years, because it was believed that it would produce sufficient human resources during that time. However, it became apparent in time that this model “should live on”. “The product is never of the level expected, few students graduate and complete their exams in time,” this respondent notes. Likewise, this program does not deliver specific competencies, therefore students could also find employment outside elementary schools - there are examples of graduates from these studies finding work as journalists, in the media, public administration or translation.

These studies, as one respondent says, “offer a few other exits”. Respondents from the Ministry of Education and Science state that the program works well and should continue to exist. As for the students, their chief motivation for enrolling these studies is the proximity, as well as the financial aspect. As they state, their families could not afford studies abroad, while the student respondents do not want to study outside the country. They were motivated to study in their own language and, despite having good command of Montenegrin, there is a level of insecurity and fear in studying in the Montenegrin

language. They believe this uncertainty is purely language-related, and not a fear of not being accepted by Montenegrin students. These students note that interethnic relations in Montenegro are good. One of the stated reasons against studying abroad is the issue of diploma validation (the complicated procedure and its duration), but also the decreased value of such diplomas in applying for work in state institutions. "They look at you askew, why you went there when you could have studied here," one student said.

The respondents believe that the Teacher Training Studies in the Albanian language fit well within the educational system of Montenegro. The academic community perceives them as part of the University and their status is the same as the status of other study programs. Even though initially this study program was envisaged to grow into a faculty, this has not yet happened. Teacher Training Studies did not have and still do not have representatives in the Student Parliament. The head of the Teacher Training study program launched an initiative to involve students from these studies in the work of the Parliament, but according to the representative of the Student Parliament for the period 2006-2008, this was not possible due to the University statute. The Statute envisages that only faculties may have representatives in the Parliament, which is not the case with study programs, even though the Parliament was interested in involving these students, specifically because they were representatives of minority national communities. A new draft statute has been developed which envisages that study programs may also have representatives in the Student Parliament, as associate members who may take part in its activities, yet with no right of vote. The change of the statute is expected to involve students from Teacher Training Studies and all other study programs in the work of the Parliament.

In practice, very few graduates of these studies have found employment. Of the 26 students who graduated by the completion of this study, the students say that only five or six have found employment in Albanian elementary schools. A number of graduates work as interns, while others have not been given the opportunity for internships. In addition to those employed in schools, a few graduates got employed elsewhere – in media, cultural centres and public administration. Even though the law does not stipulate that students graduating in Albanian may not teach in Montenegrin schools, this has not happened in practice. A reason given is that only 30% of the study program is delivered in the Montenegrin language. One professor states that there are cases where Albanian students got employed in Montenegrin schools and that he is uncertain about the quality of their work. One student states that her colleague attempted to find employment in a Montenegrin school, but was refused because she had not studied in Montenegrin, despite completing both elementary and secondary education in Montenegrin. In her words this girl „knew Montenegrin better than Albanian“. Some respondents claim that the research conducted on the labour market and the need for teaching staff in the Alba-

nian language was inadequate. There is an excessive production of teaching staff for junior grades of elementary schools, while there are insufficient staff for pre-school, senior elementary and secondary education. No common model was found during the study establishment process that would include developing pre-school teaching resources. Several respondents claim that the severest shortage is with staff for the Albanian language and literature, while some respondents say that there is a lack of teachers in Mathematics, History and Geography in secondary schools. One Albanian official states that the greatest demand is for profiles in tourism and public administration and that there is an idea for opening an administrative-tourism study program in the Albanian language. Regarding the sustainability of Teacher Training Studies, a professor from the faculty says that the current organization of studies is unsustainable, since it has become known that employment prospects are not good and thus the quality of students enrolling the studies has deteriorated. The first generations comprised the best students from secondary schools, while today merely passing grades are sufficient, he says. He also claims that those that graduate are “not put to sufficient use”. They could be employed in teaching illiterate adult Albanians or for educating the Roma in Montenegro who speak mostly Albanian, this respondent notes.

Although everyone agrees that certain needs of the Albanian community are met, others remain unfulfilled. As one respondent says, one of the ideas in the early phases of opening was to create some type of a centre for Albanian studies, encompassing multiple faculties, but not a university. The political representatives of the Albanian community were clear that the community did not need a university – they needed faculties that would cover specific areas in which their characteristics stood out, and where they lacked staff. An agreement was signed to that end and “it will soon become necessary to consider the most pressing requirements in this phase”, the respondent notes. Another representative of an Albanian political party says that a centre for the Albanian language should be opened with multiple faculties, within the University of Montenegro. There is also a consensus on the need to open other profiles. However, several respondents claim that it is hard to find an optimal solution in a country as small as Montenegro. There is a lack of space, and particularly not enough staff for opening other programs. In addition to teaching staff, the number of students interested in other programs is also questionable. The idea of stimulating students to study at other universities through scholarships is also suggested. Cooperation with universities from neighbouring countries is of key importance for satisfying these needs. Other potential solutions are also proposed. One of them is to modify Teacher Training Studies and organize the program so that the first two years of studies cover general teaching, while the following two would represent some type of specialization for subject teaching. Thus resources for higher grades of elementary schools would be established, potentially including staff for secondary schools. Students from the Teacher Training Studies claim that there are no financial capacities for implementing this idea. Another idea is the rotating programs.

While some claim that this would represent no problem and that the procedure lasts between three and six months, and that all modules may be accredited at once, others claim that this is a problem due to the duration of the procedure, but also due to the legal and statutory framework for changing programs from one year to the next. The issue of human resources is once again questionable. “This is idealized and difficult to implement in practice”, one respondent says. While most respondents consider that the choice of Podgorica as the seat of the study program is good, the Albanian political opposition claims this is a mistake. They say that it is good that the studies exist, but that the location is pointless since the students have to pay for accommodation. The respondents point out that it is questionable why a student from Ulcinj would come to study in Podgorica, located 100 kilometres from Ulcinj, if they could study in Skadar, located only 40 kilometres from Ulcinj where most Albanians in Montenegro live.

148 | However, others claim that Podgorica is a good solution and that it contributes to integration. One Albanian official notes that the existing model of education in the Albanian language has certainly contributed to the integration of Albanians in the society of Montenegro. “This is a segment of integration, a very, very persuasive one, because we want integration with a preservation of identity – integration plus identity... but the opening of this faculty and the life of this faculty in Podgorica absolutely showed that interethnic relations, with a specific product, may prove to be the best way to nurture interethnic relations as a whole”, this respondent says. As a respondent from the Ministry of Education and Science says, integration is more important than the economic factor. Without evidence in favour of integration on a general level, it could be said that there is at least progress in individual integration. The professors believe that students from the Teacher Training Studies in the Albanian language and students from other studies and faculties socialize. Contact between students contributes to bringing closer and a better understanding between the two communities and indicates the need and potential for their living together. One respondent sees joint dinners with Albanian music and traditional dancing as one measure of integration. He believes that this indicates the relations are not directed, but happen spontaneously, which is seen as one of the positive effects of the common student life of different communities. According to his opinion, the capital is always at an advantage in relation to other places. The Albanians “start seeing Podgorica as their city”. Albanian students feel they are equal to other students even though, as they note, they do not have much contact with students of technical and natural sciences, since they do not have a lot of common subjects. The president of the Student Parliament says that it is rare to see Albanian students socialize with others. However, he is uncertain whether this is due to prejudice, language barriers or differing programs. This respondent says that the Albanian students have not turned to the Parliament with their requests. However, it is quite possible that the Parliament is also responsible for this lack of communication, since they have not organised special access for minority students. On the other hand, as he says, the practice of the Parliament is that the faculties, study programs or students turn to them for assistance and cooperation.

Conclusion

Montenegro is one of the potential examples of resolving the issue of higher education for minorities and their integration into society. The process of establishing higher education studies in the Albanian language in Montenegro required good cooperation of state authorities, Albanian representatives and political parties. The role of the state was vital in this process. The international stakeholders certainly influenced the identification of a compromise solution in Montenegro. The existence of political will, both at the state level, as well as the level of local authorities and minority representatives, must be the basis for launching such a process, while the counsel and mediation of international stakeholders may contribute to finding a better solution.

The model of Montenegro cannot be automatically applied to Serbia. Every country has its own specific characteristics. Between the desire of the Albanian community to open Teacher Training Studies in the Albanian language in places where they constitute the majority and the readiness of the state to open them within the Faculty of Philosophy in Nikšić, a compromise was made to establish them in Podgorica. The opening of studies in the Albanian language in the capital of Montenegro created the potential for further interethnic dialogue and an increased integration of Albanians in the Montenegrin society. However, in Serbia, with a much larger territory, such a location would be pointless due to the distance from the capital and other cities. Therefore the respondents believe that the needs of the Albanian community should be met and higher education for Albanians should be developed where they constitute a majority. Thus they would feel more satisfied and safer. The general conclusion of all the respondents was that the decision on the location is to be agreed with the minority community.

As for the human resources, the number of qualified persons and their availability should be taken into account. The existing resources of the Albanian intellectual elite in Serbia should be used to the maximum, for this would improve the studies. A professor from the Teacher Training Studies in the Albanian language says that it would be better for Montenegro if teachers from Montenegro and the former countries of the SFRY taught at the Teacher Studies. The staff from the same or similar educational systems have an advantage over the “imported staff”, says this respondent. He notes that a number of teachers from the University in Skadar and from Albania teach in Albanian-language studies in Montenegro and points out that this could “diminish the quality of instruction due to the different mental matrix”. If there is a lack of human resources in the state, local intellectuals could be stimulated to complete doctorates and become qualified as teachers for education in minority languages, or inter-university and inter-state cooperation should be established which would include staff from neighbouring countries.

If the studies are organized according to the Montenegro model, predominantly with instruction in the Albanian language and less in the official language, the key subjects should be accessible to students

in their mother tongue. Some students from the Teacher Training Studies in the Albanian language in Montenegro say that a problem is the fact that the professor of one of the most important courses taught in Montenegrin, while his assistant taught in Albanian. This caused confusion, wherefore some students filled out tests in Montenegrin, while others did so in Albanian. They believe it is important that at least the core courses should be delivered in their mother tongue, and state that this is impossible in Montenegro due to a lack of human resources. Certainly, most respondents agree there should be a tendency to acquire a good command of the official language in elementary and secondary schools, as well as in subsequent studies.

One respondent says that a regional approach should be applied in the overall process of developing higher education. The education of profiles required by the labour market should be facilitated in the entire region, so that Serbia, Montenegro, Albania and Macedonia, as neighbouring countries, may complement each other. Curricula and mutual diploma validation should be harmonized. According to his words, forestry could be studied, for example, in Medveđa (Serbia), and the persons interested in tourism could come to Montenegro to study in the Albanian language. He believes this would be more cost-effective and could contribute to the sustainability of these programs.

150 | The opening of Teacher Training Studies in the Albanian language in Montenegro is an example of good practice in exercising the rights of the Albanian minority to higher education in their mother tongue. It has contributed to the integration of this minority, as well as a better understanding between the Albanian and Montenegrin community, as has been previously said, on an individual if not on a general level. These studies have resolved the need for Albanian teaching staff in lower grades in the coming period. If there are similar problems in Serbia, the Montenegrin model could serve as a good foundation thereof.

However, certain deficiencies in the Montenegrin model of higher education in the Albanian language are caused by the fact that the market was not well analyzed. According to the words of several respondents, there were political stakeholders with interest in accelerating the process of opening studies in the Albanian language who overestimated the need for teaching staff, making unrealistic estimations. This is a reason for current talk of market saturation in teaching staff in the Albanian language. However, as one of the professors says, their experience may be used since teachers are needed everywhere. This, in his opinion, is not the final, yet currently is the best solution. The market should be well researched and the most needed study programs should be identified. It is certain that no time should be lost. "If the need for one profile is voiced, at least one profile should be launched, and then more may be opened along the way without waiting for an entire package and end up, potentially, without a

single product,” one Albanian official says.

Attention should certainly be paid to the need for specific human resources in the labour market and a specific model should be developed which would correspond to the “situation in the field” so that the graduates of these studies would find employment. As one of the respondents notes, more “flexible” higher education should be stimulated, in the sense of making it easier to open new faculties and rotate study programs. It is important to create profiles as long as the market can absorb them, follow the trends of market policies, and then create new ones. “One should not produce human resources for the employment bureau, one should develop resources who will find employment,” one of the respondents says.



MACEDONIA

Tanja Ivošević

Introduction

This case study aims to show the way in which the Republic of Macedonia organized higher education for the Albanian minority community. We have tried to give a historical overview of the development of higher education institutions and the need for such institutions in the Albanian language, as well as the current situation in the field of higher education for ethnic communities in Macedonia, with special emphasis on the Albanian community, and the mutual relations between the Albanian and Macedonian communities.

Methodology

The document analysis was carried out in January 2010 and all documents relevant for the research were collected during this phase of the research – the Constitution, relevant laws, statistical data, analytical articles on ethnic relations and higher education in Macedonia. During the second phase of the research, in February 2010, a field research was organized in Macedonia with the aim of interviewing individuals relevant for this topic. The respondents were selected by targeted sampling method, as individuals who are well acquainted with the higher education system and the changes that it underwent in the last 10 years in Macedonia. Interviews were held with representatives of three universities, a representative of the Ministry of Education and Science of Macedonia, as well as representatives of the student population. The aim of the interviews was to complement the data collected by analyzing legislation, reports and statistical data on the process of creating studies in the Albanian language in the Republic of Macedonia.

Background

The Republic of Macedonia

The Republic of Macedonia gained its independence by secession from the Social Federative Republic of Yugoslavia on September 8, 1991. Macedonia is divided into eight statistical regions and 84 municipalities.

Skopje, the capital city of the state, as the administrative seat and a separate entity, is divided into ten municipalities which make up Veliko Skopje. The statistical regions are: Eastern region, North-eastern region, Pelagonia, Polog, Skopje, South-eastern region, South-western region and Vardar.

Picture 7. Regions of the Republic of Macedonia



Source: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1d/MSR.png>

According to the Census of 2002, there are 2,022,547 people living in Macedonia. 64,2% (1,297,981) of the population is Macedonian, 25,2% (509,083) Albanian, 3,9% (77,959) Turkish, 2,7% (53,879) Roma, 1,8% (35,939) Serb, 0,8% (17,018) Bosnian, 0,5% (9,695) Vlach and 1,0% (20,993) other.

Table 22. 2002 Census by region and ethnicity

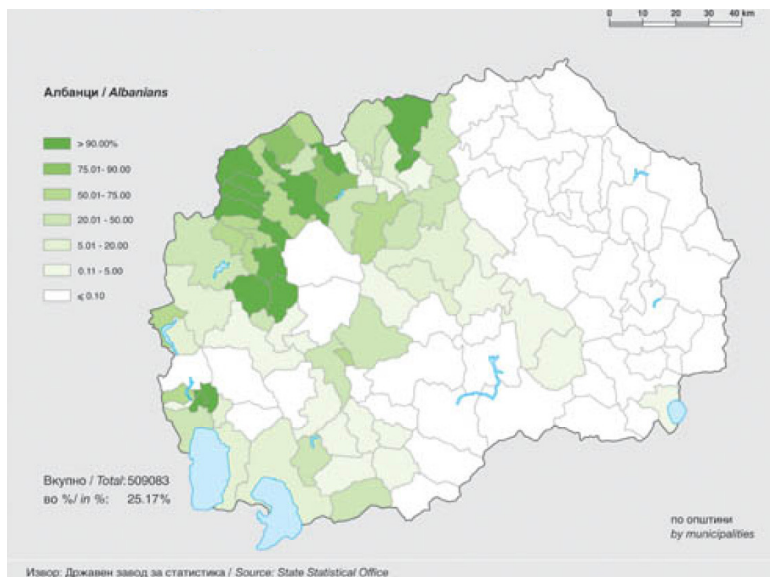
	Total	Macedonians	Albanians	Turks	Roma	Serbs	Bosnians	Vlachs	Other
Republic of Macedonia	2,022,547	1,297,981	509,083	77,959	53,879	35,939	17,018	9,695	20993
%		64.2	25.2	3.9	2.7	1.8	0.8	0.5	1
Vardar	154,535	137,520	5,217	3,178	2,153	2,102	2,979	745	641
Eastern region	181,858	168,046	20	3,163	6,929	594	25	2,535	546
Southwestern region	221,546	107,387	81,896	21,433	2,899	629	144	1059	6099
Southeastern region	171,416	154,957	38	12,746	555	2,104	18	253	745
Pelagonia	238,136	204,471	11,689	7,527	7,268	869	2,627	2,341	1344
Polog	304,125	56,079	222,679	17,394	4,717	977	251	30	1998
Northeastern region	172,787	102,108	53,651	302	5,133	10,512	28	152	901
Skopje	578,144	367,413	133,893	12,216	24,225	18,152	10,946	2,580	8719

Source: National Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia

The data collected reveal that ethnic minorities account for 35.9% of Macedonia's total population. Of the total population, ethnic Albanians are the most represented minority (25.2%), which predominantly populates the north-western part of the country. Of 84 municipalities, in 16 municipalities Albanians comprise the majority of the population. These municipalities are: Saraj and Čair (municipalities of the city of Skopje), Aračinovo, Bogovinje, Brvenica, Vrapčište, Gostivar, Debar, Želino, Zajas, Lipkovo, Oslomej, Struga, Studeničani, Tearce and Tetovo. In some of these municipalities Albanians account for more than 90% of the population. The following table shows municipalities in which Albanians are the majority and the percentage of the Albanian population in each of them.

Table 23. Municipalities in Macedonia with an Albanian majority

Municipality	Percentage of Albanian population in the municipality
Želino	99.20
Oslomej	98.39
Zajas	97.44
Lipkovo	97.42
Bogovinje	95.23
Aračinovo	93.81
Saraj	91.53
Tearce	84.39
Vrapčište	83.08
Tetovo	70.32
Studeničani	68.38
Gostivar	66.68
Brvenica	61.62
Debar	58.07
Čair	57.00
Struga	56.85

**Picture 8. Distribution of the ethnic Albanian minority on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia**

Source: National Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0b/Albanians_in_macedonia2002_03.png

As regards the distribution of other minorities, the greatest number of members of each individual minority lives in the 10 municipalities which make up Veliko Skopje. Members of the Turkish minority in Macedonia account for 3.9% of the total population, of which 8,595 live in Skopje. Turks constitute the majority of the population in 2 of the municipalities – in the municipality of Plasnica with 97.82% and in the municipality of Centar Župa with 80.16%. The Roma minority accounts for 2.7% of the total population in Macedonia, while in the municipality of Šuto Orizari, Romas are the majority population with 60.59%. Members of the Serbian minority in Macedonia account for 1.8% of the total population, and their largest number is found in ten Skopje municipalities (14,298 or 2.8% of the total population of Skopje). The largest Serbian minority population is located in the municipality of Čučer-Sendevo, where 2,426 ethnic Serbs live, accounting for 28.56% of the municipality's population. Other minorities in Macedonia are represented with less than 1% of the total population.

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, the official language in Macedonia is the Macedonian language and in the local self-government units where an ethnic group constitutes the majority, the language of that ethnic group is also in official use together with Macedonian. According to the 2002 Census, the Macedonian language is spoken by 66.5% of the population, the Albanian language by 25.1% of the population, Turkish by 3.5%, Roma by 1.9%, Serbian by 1.2%, while other languages are spoken by 1.8% of the population.

Legal Framework and Relations with Minorities

The moment Macedonia gained independence, it faced a series of challenges. In a multi-ethnic society, in which one third of the population belongs to one of the ethnic minorities, with ethnic Albanians as the largest minority, regulating relations between the majority and minority communities and defining the rights and obligations of minorities proved to be an extremely arduous task. In order to gain a better insight into inter-ethnic relations, we shall first provide an overview of the status of minorities, as it is defined in the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, and then also of the inter-ethnic relations of the Macedonian and Albanian communities at the time when the Constitution was adopted.

The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia was adopted in 1991, and significantly revised in 2001. The following table shows the articles of the Constitution that apply to the protection of minorities and the subsequent amendments to these articles, made in 2001.

Table 24. The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia 1991/2001 – Protection of Minorities⁵⁴

Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia of 1991. ⁵⁵	Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia of 2001. ⁵⁶
<p>Preamble: ...Macedonia has been established as the national state of the Macedonian people, in which full civic equality and permanent co-existence with the Macedonian people is granted to Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Romas and other nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia ...</p>	<p>Preamble: Citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, the Macedonian people, as well as the citizens living within its borders who are members of the Albanian people, Turkish people, Vlach people, Serbian people, Roma people, the Bosnian people and others...</p>

⁵⁴ The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia was translated by the author of the text, taking care that the terminology and language remains as close as possible to the source text and in compliance with the legal terminology used in the Republic of Macedonia, even when these do not necessarily translate well into the Serbian language or correspond to the terminology used in the Republic of Serbia.

⁵⁵ The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia (1991) URL: <http://www.mlrc.org.mk/law/l004.htm> (page last accessed on 17/02/2010)

⁵⁶ The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia (2001) URL: http://www.minelres.lv/NationalLegislation/Macedonia/Macedonia_Const2001_excerpts_English.htm (last accessed on 17/02/2001)

Article 7

The Macedonian language, written in Cyrillic, is the official language in the Republic of Macedonia.

In the units of local self-government where the majority of the population belongs to an ethnic minority, the language and alphabet of that minority shall also be in official use, in addition to the Macedonian language and Cyrillic alphabet, as determined by law.

In the units of local self-government with a considerable percentage of ethnic minority population, the language and script of that minority shall also be in official use, as specified by law.

Article 7

The Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet, is the official language in all of the Republic of Macedonia and in the international relations of the Republic of Macedonia.

Any other language spoken by at least 20% of the population shall also be an official language, written in its alphabet, as specified in this Article.

Personal documents of citizens who speak an official language other than Macedonian shall be issued in the Macedonian language and its alphabet, as well as in the language and alphabet of those citizens, pursuant to the law.

Any citizen living in a unit of local self-government in which at least 20% of the citizens speak an official language, other than Macedonian, may use that official language and its script to communicate with the regional units of the ministries. The regional units that have jurisdiction over those local self-government units shall reply in the Macedonian language and its alphabet, as well as in the official language and alphabet used by that citizen. When communicating with the ministries, every citizen shall be entitled to use any of the official languages and their respective alphabets, while the ministries shall reply in the Macedonian language and Macedonian Cyrillic alphabet, as well as in the official language and alphabet used by the citizen.

In the state authority agencies of the Republic of Macedonia, any of the official languages which are different than Macedonian can be used in accordance with the law.

In the units of local self-government, any language and alphabet which is used by at least 20% of the population shall be an official language and alphabet, in addition to the Macedonian language and Cyrillic alphabet. The local authorities shall decide on the use of languages and alphabets spoken by less than 20% of the citizens of a local self-government unit.

<p>Article 8</p> <p>The fundamental values of the constitutional order of the Republic of Macedonia are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic freedoms and rights of the individual and citizen, recognized in international law and set forth in the Constitution; • freedom of expression of national identity; • rule of law; • division of state powers into legislative, executive and judicial; • legal protection of ownership; • freedom of the market and entrepreneurship; • humanism, social justice and solidarity; • local self-government; • planning and humanization of space, protection and improvement of the environment and nature; • compliance with generally accepted norms of international law. 	<p>Article 8</p> <p>The fundamental values of the constitutional order of the Republic of Macedonia are::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic freedoms and rights of the individual and citizen recognized under international law and set forth in the Constitution. • equitable representation of members of all communities in state authority agencies and other public bodies at all levels and in other areas of public life; • freedom of expression of national identity.
<p>Article 9</p> <p>Citizens of the Republic of Macedonia have equal freedoms and rights, regardless of gender, race, skin colour, national and social origin, political and religious beliefs, ownership and social status.</p> <p>All citizens are equal before the Constitution and the Law.</p>	<p>Article 9</p> <p>(The article has remained unchanged)</p>

<p>Article 19 The freedom of religion shall be guaranteed.</p> <p>The right to manifest belief freely and in public, individually or collectively, shall be guaranteed.</p> <p>The Macedonian Orthodox Church and other religious communities and groups are free to establish schools and other social and charitable institutions, in the manner regulated by law.</p>	<p>Article 19 The freedom of religion shall be guaranteed.</p> <p>The right to manifest belief freely and in public, individually or collectively, shall be guaranteed.</p> <p>The Macedonian Orthodox Church, as well as the Islamic religious community in Macedonia, the Evangelistic Methodist Church, the Jewish religious community and other religious communities and groups shall be independent from the state and equal before the law.</p> <p>The Macedonian Orthodox Church, as well as the Islamic religious community in Macedonia, the Evangelistic Methodist Church, the Jewish religious community and other religious communities and groups shall freely establish schools and other social and charitable institutions, in accordance with the procedures regulated by the law.</p>
<p>Article 20 Citizens shall be guaranteed freedom of assembly to exercise and protect their political, economic, social, cultural and other rights and convictions.</p>	<p>Article 20 (The article has remained unchanged)</p>
<p>Article 32 Everyone shall have the right to work, to free choice of employment, protection at work and financial assistance during temporary unemployment.</p> <p>Every job is available to all under equal conditions.</p>	<p>Article 32 (The article has remained unchanged)</p>
<p>Article 44 Everyone shall have the right to an education.</p> <p>Education shall be accessible to everyone under equal conditions.</p> <p>Primary education is compulsory and free.</p>	<p>Article 44 (The article has remained unchanged)</p>

<p>Article 45 Citizens shall have the right to establish private schools at all levels of education, except primary education, under the conditions determined by law.</p>	<p>Article 45 (The article has remained unchanged)</p>
<p>Article 46 The autonomy of universities shall be guaranteed.</p> <p>The conditions for the establishment, performance and termination of the activities of a university are regulated by law.</p>	<p>Article 46 (The article has remained unchanged)</p>
<p>Article 48 Members of nationalities shall have the right to freely express, encourage and develop their identity and national attributes.</p> <p>The Republic guarantees the protection of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of nationalities.</p> <p>Members of nationalities shall have the right to establish cultural and arts institutions, as well as scientific and other associations for expressing, developing and fostering their own identity.</p> <p>Members of the nationalities shall have the right to instruction in their language, at primary and secondary education level, in the manner determined by law. In schools where education is conducted in the language of a nationality, the Macedonian language shall also be studied.</p>	<p>Article 48 Members of communities shall have the right to freely express, encourage and develop their identity and national attributes, as well as to use their community symbols. The Republic shall guarantee the protection of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all communities. Members of the communities shall have the right to establish cultural, arts and educational institutions, scientific and other associations for expressing, developing and fostering their own identity.</p> <p>Members of the communities shall have the right to instruction in their language at primary and secondary level education, as determined by the law. In schools where education is conducted in the other language, the Macedonian language shall also be studied.</p>

As is evident in the preceding Table, the Republic of Macedonia accords legal protection to its minorities, considers them equal citizens of Macedonia and grants them a series of special rights to enable them to foster and protect their culture. Yet, ever since the Republic of Macedonia was constituted, minorities have expressed their dissatisfaction with their status and proposed certain changes. "The ethnic Albanians in a large part boycotted the 1991 referendum on independence from Yugoslavia and the adoption of a new constitution. This boycott occurred because of Albanian demands for recognition as a constituent people of the Republic, equal in status to the ethnic Macedonians. The new Macedonian constitution accords its non-ethnic Macedonian citizens the status/designation of a "nationality", a carry-over term from Yugoslav times when the constitution made a distinction between the six "nations" of the country and other "nationalities". Not surprisingly, ethnic Albanians interpreted this as a lower constitutional status for non-ethnic Macedonians, although the constitution per se guarantees the same civil rights and liberties to all citizens of Macedonia." (Fleet et al., 2000:1)

The Albanians emphasized that this formulation in the Constitution made them feel as citizens of second order and that in reality Macedonia's minorities did not enjoy equal status, despite the fact that equal rights are guaranteed to them by Constitution. "The Albanians, however, tend to point to differences in economic advantages, the domination of the public service by Macedonians, and differences in educational opportunities from them in a country that honours equality only in the breach." (Fleet et al., 2000:5)

For instance, in 1993 Albanians accounted for only 3% of the total number of employees in the public sector. In the same year, only 38 Albanians graduated from Macedonian Universities, while at the same time there were 2,022 Macedonian graduates. In 1994 only 2.8% of Albanian high school graduates enrolled into university. (Brunnbauer, 2004)

Following the conflict between the National Liberation Army (NLA) and the army of the Republic of Macedonia in 2001⁵⁷, the Ohrid Agreement was stipulated "in an attempt to address many of the grievances of ethnic Albanians and to give them a greater say in managing the affairs of the country which a system of majoritarian democracy alone cannot guarantee." (Daftary, 2008:301)

The Ohrid Agreement provided Albanians with guarantees with respect to the regulation of civic relations, the use of language, local police, measures to prevent ethnic Albanians from being outvoted, proportional representation in public administration, decentralization of the country and other⁵⁸. The

57 At the beginning of 2001, an armed conflict erupted in Tanuševci between the armed members of the Albanian minority, who called themselves the "National Liberation Army", and the Macedonian security forces. For more details on the conflict, please refer to Daftary, Farimah "Conflict resolution in FYR Macedonia: Power-sharing or the 'civic approach'?"

58 For a more detailed overview of the changes introduced by the Ohrid Agreement please see the article by Farimah Daftary "Conflict resolution in FYR Macedonia: Power-sharing or the 'civic approach'?"

implementation of the Ohrid agreement required a series of revisions of the Constitution and laws. The conflicts of 2001 were thwarted in time after all and the Government of Macedonia continued pursuing activities aimed at improving the status of minorities in various spheres of life.

For instance, representation of minorities in the civil service was increased. Thus, in 2001, the number of civil service employees totalled 58,927, of which 14.7% were Albanians, 2.1% Serbs, 1.4% Turks, 0.6% Roma, 0.5% Vlachs and 0.3% Bosnian. In 2004 this percentage additionally grew, as can be seen in the following Table.

Table 25. Representation of ethnic minorities in civil service employment⁵⁹

Ethnic minorities	Percentage of minorities in the overall population	Percentage of minorities in the civil service in 2002	Percentage of minorities in the civil service in 2004
Albanians	25.2	14.7	18.1
Serbs	1.8	2.1	2.1
Turks	3.9	1.4	1.6
Roma	2.7	0.6	0.7
Vlachs	0.5	0.5	0.6
Bosnians	0.8	0.3	0.3
Other	1	/	1.2

Despite all efforts, the relations between the country's two largest communities – Macedonian and Albanian – remain a challenge for the Republic of Macedonia. Historical circumstances coupled with political relations, as well as the economic and social changes that transpired in the course of history in these regions, even before Macedonia's declaration of independence, contributed to a great extent to the division of these communities, in other words the inadequate integration of the Albanian minority and the shut-down of the Albanian community from the rest of society⁶⁰. According to some authors, the collectivisation of agricultural land, which lagged behind in the predominantly Albanian regions of the country, played a significant role in this development. This development led to the division of the labour force into the Albanian community, predominantly linked to the agricultural sector, and the Macedonian community, predominantly linked to the commercial sector. The division of the labour force also led to disparate lifestyles. For instance, in 1991 Albanians accounted for only 10.4% of the total number of employees. (Brunnbauer, 2004)

⁵⁹ The data is taken from the publication "Constitutional, legal and other measures aimed at promoting the equitable representation of communities in the civil service and the experience from the ombudsman office"

⁶⁰ For a detailed overview please see Brunnbauer, Ulf "Fertility, Families and Ethnic Conflict: Macedonians and Albanians in the Republic of Macedonia, 1944-2002"

“Besides speaking different languages and practicing different religions, they tend to operate in more or less independent social, cultural and economic spheres. Having few points of contact and sporadic social inter-action, ethnic Albanians and Macedonians have little understanding of each other’s language, culture and history. Both main communities are nurturing damaging prejudices.” (Czapliński, 2008:261).

With a view to the development of relations between the Albanian and Macedonian communities, in order to ensure stability in the country, the two communities must come closer together, get to know and understand each other better, and overcome damaging prejudices. It is precisely the educational system that plays a significant role in building relations between two communities.

Education of Minorities

Education in the Republic of Macedonia is structured into four levels – pre-school, primary school, secondary school and higher education. The organization of education is governed by the Law on Primary Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia 63/04), the Law on Secondary Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia 29/02) and Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia 35/08).

Primary and Secondary Education

Primary education lasts for nine years. The Law prescribes that teaching is conducted in the Macedonian language and Cyrillic script. Students belonging to minority communities are given the opportunity to study in the language and alphabet of their community, but they are also required to study the Macedonian language and alphabet. Elementary school education is available in the Macedonian, Turkish and Serbian languages, and since the school year 1996/07, supplementary education is also available in the Vlach language, and optional instruction in the Roma language. (Ortakovski, 2001)

According to data of the National Statistical Office, at the end of the school year 2007/08 there were 997 primary schools with 10,713 classes and 220,833 students. There were also 45 special schools with 166 classes and 978 students and 15 primary schools for adult education with 42 classes and 572 students. In regular primary schools, teaching is conducted in the Macedonian, Turkish or Serbian languages. The following Table shows the division of schools by teaching language.

Table 26. Division of primary schools by teaching language in the school year 2007/08

	Number of schools	Number of classes	Number of students
Total:	997	10,713	220,833
Teaching language:			
Macedonian language	773	6,927	140,314
Albanian language	289	3,431	74,103
Turkish language	60	321	5,999
Serbian language	8	34	417

Source: National Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia

Secondary education, by type of curriculum, can either be gymnasium based education or vocational training, and may be carried out at public or private secondary schools. Everybody has equal rights to enrol into a secondary school, and any discrimination based on gender, race, skin colour, national and social background, religion, political beliefs, property and social status is prohibited. Teaching is delivered in the Macedonian language and Cyrillic alphabet, while for students belonging to ethnic minorities teaching can be delivered in the minority's language and alphabet, provided that they also learn the Macedonian language. Types of secondary education are gymnasium education, vocational training education, secondary arts education and secondary education for students with special educational needs. Secondary education, depending on the type of education, lasts from two to four years. Secondary education is also available in the Albanian, Turkish and English language, besides Macedonian.

According to data of the National Statistical Office, at the end of the school year 2007/08 there were 107 secondary schools with 3,237 classes and 92,753 students. There were also 4 special schools with 49 classes and 298 students, 2 religious schools with 13 classes and 257 students. In regular secondary schools, teaching was delivered in the Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish and English languages. The following Table shows the division of schools by teaching language.

Table 27. Division of secondary schools by teaching language in the school year 2007/08

	Number of schools	Number of classes	Number of students
Total:	107	3,237	92,753
Teaching language:			
Macedonian	88	2,401	68,028
Albanian	32	722	22,357
Turkish	9	48	1,326
English	7	66	1,042

Source: National Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia

In its analysis of the educational sector of 2004, the European Centre for Minority Issues⁶¹ warned about the lack of joint activities between communities of different ethnic background. In some schools, members of ethnic communities are divided into different shifts, in order to prevent inter-ethnic conflicts. Southeast European Times correspondent Marina Stojanovska reported on 13 April 2009 that the largest secondary school in Struga decided to introduce shifts based on teaching languages in order to prevent the outbreak of ethnic violence among its students. Furthermore, the history and literature curricula are predominantly ethno-centric – “Either there is lack of information about the “others” or one personal ethnic identity is glorified at the expense of the “others”. The pupils, who follow instruction in the Macedonian language, learn very little history and literature of the “others”, and what little they learn refers to negative stereotypes and prejudices towards the “others”. For pupils who follow instruction in other language, more historical and literature contents regarding their ethnicity are included, but as addition to the Macedonian language curricula, which, in many cases, overemphasizes that identity.” (European Centre for Minority Issues, 2004:6)

This type of education, combined with traditional teaching methods which require students to merely memorize the study material, as opposed to also developing critical and creative thinking, leads to students becoming “rigid citizens, unable to present their own opinions and are easily exposed to influences and manipulations. This situation is a firm base for the cultivation of ethnic stereotypes and prejudices and for the development of intolerance towards those who are different”. (European Centre for Minority Issues, 2004:6)

With the aim of developing tolerance among the various ethnic communities, a series of educational projects were launched in Macedonia. During four months in 2002, 30 secondary school students in Kumanovo attended lectures in non-violent communication. The project was realized with the participation of ten Macedonians, ten Albanians and ten members of other minorities. They learned about each other’s cultures and traditions, which are not part of the teaching curriculum.⁶²

Organization of Higher Education in the Republic of Macedonia

The term higher education refers to “studies conducted at universities and independent higher education facilities”. (Law on Higher Education 2008, Article 2, para. 4). Article 16 of the Law on Higher Education sets forth that higher education facilities are universities and professional career colleges.

61 European Centre for Minority Issues, URL: <http://www.ecmi.de> (last accessed on 17.02.2010.)

62 Project designed to teach high school students about non-violent communication, 15/12.2002. A1, <http://www.a1.com.mk/vesti/default.aspx?VestID=14879> (last accessed 17.02.2010.)

Higher education facilities functioning within the university are faculties, the academies of art and professional career colleges. Professional career colleges can be founded either as independent professional career colleges, or as a part of the university. Professional career colleges can be public, private-public non-profit facilities and private (profit and non-profit) facilities.

Pursuant to Article 103 of the Law on Higher Education, teaching at higher education facilities shall be carried out in the Macedonian language. As regards the possibility of acquiring education in languages other than the Macedonian language, the Law prescribes as follows: "The representatives of the communities, for the purposes of expression, nurturing and development of their identity and other particularities, shall have the right to deliver the teaching in the public higher education facilities, in certain study programmes in their language, different than the Macedonian language, in accordance with this Law and the Statute of the Higher Education Facility. National funding for higher education for the language spoken by at least 20% of the population in Republic of Macedonia shall be secured." (Law on Higher Education, 2008, Article 103) Article 103 of this Law foresees the teaching process in public pedagogic higher education facilities for training of instructors in pre-school facilities and teachers in elementary education as well as secondary education didactic and methodical subject teachers can be delivered in languages of other ethnicities.

"The teaching process in higher education facilities can be performed in one of the world languages for particular study programmes of foreign languages or a portion of the study programme, for portions of study programmes involving foreign teachers or for study programmes where the teaching is delivered in Macedonian language or the language of the community different than the Macedonian language. Higher education facilities can offer teaching of the full study programme to be delivered in Macedonian language and one of the world languages in parallel." (Law on Higher Education, 2008, Article 103)

"The teaching process in private higher education facilities can be delivered in languages of the representatives of the communities not a majority in Republic of Macedonia or in world language." (Law on Higher Education, 2008, article 103)

"In cases of the teaching process being delivered in languages of the ethnicities not a majority in Republic of Macedonia or in world languages, the Macedonian language shall be taught as a separate teaching subject and the teaching shall be delivered in Macedonian language for at least two more teaching subjects." (Law on Higher Education, 2008, Article 103)

There are currently 4 state universities in the Republic of Macedonia – Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, St. Clement of Ohrid University in Bitola, Goce Delčev University in Štip and State University of Tetovo. There is also a larger number of private universities and faculties, for example South East European University (SEEU) in Tetovo, European University in Skopje, FON University in Skopje, Management of Information Technologies (MIT) in Skopje etc. The majority of the students choose to study at state faculties. According to available data, 64,254 students enrolled in the academic year 2007/08, of which 52,527 (81.7%) enrolled in one of the state, 11,509 (17.9%) in a private higher education institution, and 218 (0.4%) enrolled in the faculty of theology.

Higher Education for Minorities

Higher education in the Republic of Macedonia is often the focus of debates concerning the integration of minorities into the wider society, while legislation in the area of education underwent several revisions since the constitution of Macedonia until the present time, with the aim of integrating minorities into the higher education system and harmonizing this area with European standards.

With the declaration of independence of the Republic of Macedonia in 1991, minorities acquired the right to primary and secondary education in their own language, while higher education was available only in the Macedonian language. However, very soon ethnic Albanians demanded access to higher education in the Albanian language. There are several reasons for such requests. Firstly, the Albanian minority constitutes one fourth of the total population of Macedonia, so they have a considerable numerical strength, especially since they are concentrated in a certain part of the country. Secondly, in SFR Yugoslavia studies in the Albanian language were available at two universities – at the University of Priština (UP) and at the Academy of Pedagogy in Skopje. However, the Academy of Pedagogy abolished tuition in the Albanian language in 1988, and as of 1991, for political reasons, ethnic Albanian students and professors were denied access to the University of Priština as well. These two events prevented the Albanian minority from accessing higher education. For example, in 1991 there were two Universities in Macedonia – the University of Skopje and the University of Bitola. Not more than 200 Albanians enrolled in these annually. (Czapliński, 2008) Only 38 Albanians graduated from state universities in Macedonia in 1993. (Brunnbauer, 2004). Another fact indicates the poor representation of Albanian students at Macedonian universities - their share in the student body hardly grew in the in the period between the 50s and 90s in the 20th Century. Thus, in 1954 ethnic Albanians accounted for only 2.1% of the total number of students, and in 1994, this percentage amounted to 2.8%. On the one side, a small number of Albanian students at Macedonian universities can be explained by the

fact that they left to pursue their studies in Priština, for which “the main reason was the relative poor knowledge of the Macedonian language among Albanian students so they had faced problems with passing entrance exams and later on continuing education at the Macedonian language’s faculties...” (Czapliński, 2008:261)

In search of a solution, in 1992 the Government of the Republic of Macedonia introduced the quota system for minorities. The quota system entailed a guaranteed number of places for members of the Albanian minority for study programmes at all state universities. Despite the measures introduced, the Albanian community was still under-represented in the country’s educational system – of the total number of students that enrolled at state universities in Macedonia, there was less than five percent members of the Albanian community. (Czapliński, 2008)

170 | Considering that these measures failed to satisfy the Albanian community, in 1994 the Albanian community opened the University of Tetovo in the Albanian language. As one of the respondents stated, the University of Tetovo was founded on a civic initiative that originated in the municipalities of Debar, Gostivar and Tetovo⁶³. After the establishment of this university, the members of the Albanian minority insisted on its recognition as a third state university. However, the then Government of the Republic of Macedonia refused to recognize it and proclaimed it unconstitutional, according to some opinions for political rather than educational reasons. “Macedonians were afraid that the University of Tetovo could turn into a similar centre for the struggle against the state as the University of Priština was in the 1970s and 1980s. The reputation of the leaders of this initiative, among them many Albanian nationalists, only increased those fears. At the beginning the authorities were even trying to prevent its operation, inter alia trying to prevent the first university classes from being held in a private house on 17 February 1995. As a result one Albanian was shot dead by the Macedonian police and 26 persons were injured. The organisers of this initiative were arrested. However, later on, in order not to escalate the situation, the Government decided to tolerate the functioning of the University of Tetovo, but without recognising any credentials granted by this University.” (Czapliński, 2008:262)

At the onset, the University of Tetovo comprised 5 faculties. However, as our respondents emphasized, even though the establishment of this university provided an opportunity for higher education in the Albanian language, it failed to settle the dominant feeling of neglect and secondrateredness within the Albanian community. As one of the respondents stated, the stance of the Albanian community was that “the state ought to look after its citizens, ought to be proud of its minorities and enable them to feel good and contented in their state”.

63 In the municipality of Tetovo Albanians constitute 70.32% of the total population, in the municipality of Gostivar 66.67%, and in the municipality of Debar 58.06%.

The establishment of the University of Tetovo prompted the then Government to adopt certain measures aimed at improving the status of minorities within the higher education system. The quota system introduced in 1993 was revised and since the beginning of the academic year 1996/97, quotas are determined in proportion to the size of the minority in the country. Furthermore, the Government decided to resolve the issue of educating primary school teachers in the Albanian language – at the Academy of Pedagogy in Skopje, in February 1995, a course was launched in the Albanian language. A Faculty of Pedagogy was also established in the languages of minorities at the University of Skopje. A faculty with Albanian and Turkish as the teaching languages was opened in 1997. (Czapliński, 2008) In spite of the progress made, the problem was not solved. “From a political point of view, those steps were taken much too late. The failure of the Government to act and to find an early compromise proved to be a fatal political mistake as it created a vacuum which was first filled by Albanian radicals and led to the establishment of the Tetovo University and later on resulted in growing support among Albanians for its recognition. As over time the UT became not only an educational but a political issue, it was far more difficult to find a compromise. Since the parties concerned were virtually unable to reach any progress themselves, external assistance was virtually indispensable in order to address the problem of higher education in the mother tongue.” (Czapliński, 2008:263)

It became evident that the existing educational system did not satisfy the demand for higher education by Albanians, and no progress was made towards solving these problems. “The High Commissioner, Max van der Stoel, realised that the existing Universities in Macedonia were not able to fully accommodate the demand for higher education by Albanians and were reluctant to make any further progress in expanding teaching in the Albanian language. At the same time, the UT could not serve as a starting point for a solution because of the radicalism of its leadership and poor academic standards” (Czapliński, 2008:263)

It was clear that new solutions and a reform of the existing system were needed. Establishing a university with Albanian as the only language, was not feasible due to potential negative consequences on the stability of the society and because it would additionally deepen the discord between the Macedonian and Albanian communities. The Government’s position was that Albanians have to integrate into Macedonian society at some point, in order to participate in the public life with equal rights. There was a need to find a “balance between the need to preserve and develop the identity of persons belonging to national minorities and the necessity to equip young people with the skills, including the knowledge of the state language, which will enable them to function independently in society.” (Czapliński, 2008:264)

The Law on Higher Education in force at the time only envisaged the possibility of higher education in Macedonian, and the amendments of 2000 allowed for the establishment of a higher education facility in any of the minority languages, but only as private facilities. In the course of 2000, preparations begun for the establishment of a new higher education institution with the official name of South-East European University (SEEU), and on 20 November 2001, this university was officially opened in Tetovo. It comprised 5 study programmes: law, business administration, public administration, information and communications technologies, and teacher education. The University also had two centres: the language centre and the ICT centre. The goal of the University was to upgrade inter-ethnic relations, develop tolerance towards various ethnic groups, and with a view to achieving this goal, it was meant to ensure a multilingual and multicultural education. Yet, the first generation of students did not fully achieve that goal – out of 923 enrolled students 867 were ethnic Albanians, 43 Turks, 11 Macedonians, 1 Bosnian and 1 Roma. One of the reasons for these enrolment results could have been the riots in 2001 and the feeling of insecurity among the non-Albanian ethnicities in a predominantly Albanian city. Another likely reason is the fact that SEEU was seen by many as “a university only for Albanians”.

Still, the situation changed in the years to follow, “thanks to the consistent commitment to the multi-ethnic and multilingual approach to education and the strong role played by the representatives of the international community in developing this institution.” (Czapliński, 2008:266) Thus in 2005, out of almost 6,000 students, more than 25% were non-Albanians, i.e. 72% of the students were Albanian, 19% Macedonian, 2.5% Turkish, and 6,5% did not identify their ethnic affiliation. In the same year, 75% of the students studied in the Albanian language and 25% in Macedonian.

Although the number of students belonging to different ethnic communities is gradually increasing at SEEU, the creation of a multi-ethnic facility remains a challenge for this institution. As one of the respondents stated, “two streams of study have been created” – one in the Albanian and the other one in the Macedonian language, and they only rarely intertwine. However, the University continues to invest time and efforts to facilitate a flexible use of the languages and develop opportunities for the interaction and joint studying of different ethnic communities. Thus, SEEU students may study in their mother tongue, but are also required to take 2 semesters of the other language – Albanian is mandatory for the group of students that take courses taught in the Macedonian language, while Macedonian is mandatory for the group of students that take courses taught in Albanian. Furthermore, studying the English language is also mandatory for 4 semesters. The students may follow several elective courses in the English language, which is a good opportunity for the various ethnic groups to meet, and for developing a joint student life on campus. One of the respondents emphasized that “social and political background still play a significant role in dividing communities”, but also that “every student enrolling

into SEEU, leaves part of their past in front of its door". According to another respondent, "certain progress has definitely been achieved, but one must be realistic in making judgments and continue upgrading inter-ethnic relations".

Despite the establishment of SEEU and the hope that this would solve the problem of higher education for the Albanian community, the University of Tetovo did not shut down and only a small number of its students (about 200) transferred from to SEEU (Czapliński, 2008). Part of the respondents emphasized that it was very important for the Albanian community to have a "state university in the Albanian language". The opening of SEEU did not solve the issue of recognition of diplomas of students from the University of Tetovo. According to the leaders of the University of Tetovo, in 2001 the university had 13 faculties and around 13,000 students. However, certain authors, among which Czapliński, estimate that the University did not have more than 2,500 full time students and that most of the 13 faculties only existed on paper. (Czapliński, 2008) Part of the respondents confirmed that the number of faculties and number of students was inflated for the purpose of negotiating (on modalities for solving the issue of higher education for Albanians in Macedonia, editor's comment)".

A solution for the failure to recognize the University of Tetovo and the degrees acquired there was found in 2003, when the Law on Higher Education was amended. As one of our respondents emphasized, amendments to the law allowed for the establishment of a state minority-language higher education institution, when that minority constitutes more than 20% of the total population.

Hence, amendments to the law enabled the establishment of a minority-language state university and in accordance therewith, the State University of Tetovo was set up in 2004. The terms and conditions for the recognition of degrees were prescribed by special decision. When the State University of Tetovo was established, it comprised 4 faculties – law, economy, faculty of arts and humanities and faculty of natural sciences, and it also had a college of professional career studies. Today the University has 12 faculties and about 12,000 students. The State University of Tetovo provides instruction outside its seat, in departments in Kičevo, Struga and Skopje, and it also has a faculty in Kumanovo. Respondents from the State University of Tetovo emphasized that instruction is mostly conducted in the Albanian language, while certain lectures are held in Macedonian when Albanian language staff is not available. This was particularly the case in the beginning, when the University was just established and had few of its own staff members, whereas now there is an increasing number of those who graduated from the State University of Tetovo among the professors. The respondents from the University of Tetovo emphasized that there are around 1,000 students of Macedonian nationality at that university currently, as well as members of other minorities. According to them, Macedonian students mostly come from

the district of Tetovo, and know the Albanian language to some extent. Although the majority of the students are Albanian, one respondent stated that “the University is proud to enrol members of other communities as well”, because barriers between communities must be torn down and “cooperation” established.

Members of the Albanian minority in Macedonia in 2010 have the opportunity to study in their own language at the State University of Tetovo, or at the private South-East European University in the same city. Study programmes in languages other than Macedonian are also available at some other universities. For instance at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje, the Faculty of Philology offers study programmes in the Albanian language and culture and Turkish language and culture. As regards the number of students, there is a discernible increase in the number of most ethnic minorities in higher education, as shown in the following Table.

Table 28. Number of students by ethnicity

Year	Total	Macedonians		Albanians		Turks		Roma		Vlachs		Serbs		Others	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1992/93*	26,299	23,770	90.4	586	2.23	172	0.65	13	0.05	76	0.29	840	3.19	842	3.20
1993/94*	26,834	24,998	93.1	764	2.85	167	0.62	9	0.03	97	0.36	453	1.69	346	1.29
1994/95*	28,569	26,183	91.6	974	3.41	175	0.61	17	0.06	159	0.56	521	1.82	540	1.89
1995/96*	29,153	26,481	90.8	1202	4.12	219	0.75	18	0.06	212	0.73	528	1.81	493	1.69
1996/97*	30,441	27,302	89.7	1408	4.62	277	0.91	23	0.07	234	0.77	574	1.88	623	2.05
1997/98*	31,768	28,986	91.2	1308	4.12	245	0.77	35	0.11	287	0.90	518	1.63	389	1.22
1998/99*	34,850	31,095	89.2	1916	5.50	371	1.06	48	0.14	329	0.94	666	1.91	425	1.22
1999/00*	36,679	32,629	88.9	2028	5.53	409	1.11	71	0.19	374	1.02	717	1.95	451	1.23
2000/01*	40,075	35,396	88.3	2285	5.70	444	1.1	108	0.26	408	1.01	746	1.86	709	1.56
2001/02**	45,493	39,777	87.44	3040	6.68	601	1.32	127	0.28	417	0.92	822	1.81	709	1.58
2002/03**	47,798	40,778	85.31	4292	8.98	683	1.43	140	0.29	440	0.92	807	1.69	658	1.38
2003/04***	51,311	43,645	85.06	5335	10.4	608	1.18	100	0.19	359	0.70	701	1.37	563	1.1
2004/05****	61,556	48,900	79.44	9540	15.50	825	1.34	188	0.31	478	0.78	936	1.52	689	1.12

Source: Ministry of Education and Science

Source: The Table was taken from the publication publikacije Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Macedonia. 2006. Second Report of the government of the Republic of Macedonia on the Council of Europe. Framework convention for the protection of national minorities.⁶⁴

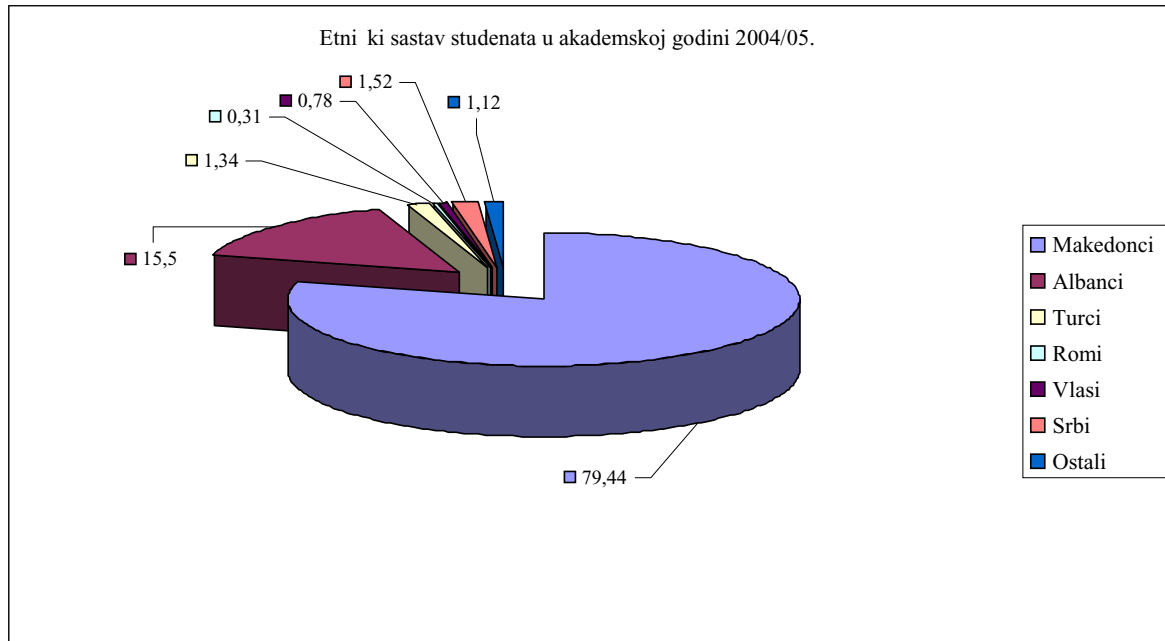
* Data for the period 1992/93 – 2001/02 only concern two state universities Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje and St. Clement of Ohrid in Bitola

** Data for the period 2001/02 – 2003/04 concern the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, St. Clement of Ohrid and the South East European University (established in 2001)

*** Data for 2003/4 concern the three universities that existed at the time - Ss. Cyril and Methodius, St. Clement of Ohrid, the South East European University, as well as the Faculty of Social Sciences in Skopje

**** Data for 2004/05 concern the universities of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, St. Clement of Ohrid, the South East European University, the Faculty of Social Sciences in Skopje together with the newly established State University of Tetovo (established on 1 January 2004)

Picture 9. Structure of students by ethnicity in the academic year 2004/05



All respondents unambiguously underscored that there are no more inter-ethnic tensions and conflicts in connection with the right of Albanians to higher education in their mother tongue. When asked whether they are satisfied with the current situation, the ethnic Albanian respondents responded that

they were satisfied, in principle, and that study programmes were being launched nationwide to give an opportunity to those students who cannot afford to study in the bigger cities. Such programmes were launched in Kičevo, where lectures are available both in Macedonian and Albanian, and in Struga, Kumanovo and Gostivar, while next year a course is scheduled to begin in Debar. Also, as one respondent emphasized, “the Albanian minority is studying at all universities in the country, and the quota system is still in force, to guarantee a certain number of places for minorities at all state faculties”.

Based on the interviews conducted, the impression is that the issue of higher education for the Albanian community is considered solved. The establishment of higher education institutions in the Albanian language greatly contributed to such a development of events. If we take a look at Table 5, we shall see that there is a slight increase of the share of Albanian students in the overall student body, from year to year. Still, it is evident that their share has grown at a faster pace since the academic year 2002/03, which is directly connected to the establishment of SEEU in 2001, while the biggest increase was recorded precisely in the academic year 2004/05 when the State University of Tetovo was recognized.

The Process of Establishing a Higher Education Facility – Experiences and Advice

One of the purposes of this case study and field research was to identify the kind of problems that founders of higher education institutions in the Albanian language have encountered in Macedonia, and the things that require special attention in this process. This is the reason why we asked our respondents to share their experiences with us in our interviews.

All respondents first of all emphasized the importance of strong administration and logistic support. They underscored the need for research to identify the best study programmes to be developed, the most attractive ones for the prospective students, but also the ones for which labour market demand is the highest. Several respondents suggested drawing on the knowledge and experience of universities that already underwent a similar process and finding some kind of “mentoring institution”. Also, members of the academic community and non-governmental organizations should be included in the development of the project, according to our respondents. They state that deciding which programmes should be implemented is important, just as solving staff related issues, and in particular, if there is lack of staff, figuring out where and how to recruit it. The respondents agreed that it was better to start with a smaller number of quality programmes, envisaging the possibility of their future expansion. They also agreed that a faculty of pedagogy is essential, because students that graduate from these programmes can teach at primary and secondary schools, but also continue their work at faculties. Other options

mentioned were the faculty of law and/or economy, and the faculty of natural sciences-mathematics. When asked if a university, or a faculty, or a higher education unit at some of the existing higher education facilities should be established, the respondents' answers varied: some believe that it is sufficient to establish a higher education unit which would have, at the beginning, several study groups, while others believe that a university should be established right at the start, with the number of faculties that are prescribed by law. The respondents assessed that good will on the part of the state and political communities to recognize the existing problem and seek a solution is crucial, and they particularly emphasized the need for cooperation between the representatives of the local government, the state and civil society.

Conclusion

Nowadays, most of the world's countries are multi-ethnic, either as a consequence of historical circumstances or recent migrations. The Republic of Macedonia is no exception to the rule in this respect, on the contrary, a fourth of the country's population belongs to some minority community. With a view to the composition of the population, from the moment it gained independence, the Republic of Macedonia faced the task of regulating relations between the majority population and minority communities. This particularly concerns the regulation of relations with the Albanian community which, owing to its numerical strength and concentration in a certain part of the territory, brought pressure to bear upon the Macedonian Government, in order to be granted the possibility to study in the Albanian language.

A question imposes itself: why was the demand for higher education in the Albanian language of such great importance for the Albanian community? Minorities in a majority society must invest special efforts to preserve their identity – language, culture and customs. The availability of schooling in one's mother tongue preserves the minority community's culture, and learning the language of the majority community enables the minorities to adjust and integrate into the wider society. Right to primary and secondary education in the minority language and higher education in the language of the majority community can be a satisfactory solution in certain societies. However, in the case of the Albanian community in Macedonia, this did not prove to be sufficient. Access to higher education was limited for the members of the Albanian community: only a small number of Albanian students managed to pass entrance exams and successfully continue their education in the Macedonian language. If young Albanians wanted to pursue a higher education, one of the options was to leave the country and study in one of the neighbouring countries, most frequently in Priština. However, in 1991 members of the Albanian minority could not study in Priština. Because of this, the Albanian community intensified demands for creating the possibility for studies in the Albanian language in Macedonia. After the conflict

in 2001, the relations between the Albanian and the majority Macedonian community were regulated by the Ohrid Agreement, and subsequently significant amendments to the law were made, which in the first place paved the way for opening a private university in Albanian, and later on for opening the State University of Tetovo.

The establishment of a university, in particular a state one, solved many of the problems of the Albanian community. Most importantly, the Albanian minority was granted the possibility to acquire higher education in its own country, and consequently better opportunities for employment and social progress. Besides personal progress, progress was achieved for society as a whole, as the fulfilment of these demands defused the conflicts between the Albanian and Macedonian community. The opportunity to pursue an education in their mother tongue contributed to the integration and acceptance of the Albanian community by the wider society. Following the establishment of higher education institutions in the Albanian language, the number of Albanians employed in the civil service and the economy also increased, which contributed to an even greater extent to making Albanians feel that they are equal citizens of Macedonia.

CONCLUSIONS

As may be concluded from the abovementioned, the development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac represents a challenging and demanding undertaking: specific characteristics of the region, different desires of the stakeholders and a consensus on the need to develop higher education in all areas results in great expectations and makes fast and exclusive conclusions both undesirable and unfeasible. Therefore, the aim of this study was not to identify a single solution excluding all others, but to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of all potential solutions, both regarding objective capabilities and limitations, as well as the desires of those to be (directly or indirectly) involved in this process. The conclusion thus provides certain general recommendations and proposes certain steps and/or ways to implement them.

The higher education development process in Preševo and Bujanovac is only starting. This case study aimed to outline potential development directions, but the greatest share of further planning will depend on the stakeholders – the Ministry of Education, the Coordination Body, academic community, municipal authorities, representatives of local communities, civil society and others. The cooperation of all stakeholders in this process will be vital for its success. The following may be proposed to this end:

- That the stakeholders establish a task force (as part of the Ministry of Education or the Coordination Body) with a primary task to plan further and implement the development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac. In addition to already mentioned stakeholders (the Ministry of Education, the Coordination Body, academic community, municipal authorities, representatives of local communities, civil society), the inclusion of international and local experts from the domain of higher education development is desirable;
- That a constant dialogue be instituted between the working group, the bodies it comprises and the members of the Albanian and Serbian community at the local level (through meetings, forums, discussions). This step is necessary to ensure a continued involvement and activities of all stakeholders in the process.

The process of higher education development in Preševo and Bujanovac should take place within the institutional framework of the Republic of Serbia. This framework has many advantages: in addition to providing for easier and faster integration, both in society and the labour market, it envisages greater potential for support to students in the process of obtaining higher education, making it more accessible. The following may be proposed to this end:

- That the development of higher education within the territory of Preševo and Bujanovac be part of an existing higher education institution founded by the Republic of Serbia. In addition to the University of Niš, options include the State University of Novi Pazar, the University of Kragujevac, but also universities in Belgrade or Novi Sad and/or faculties of these universities;

- The legal requirements and limits should be observed in this process. Even though the development of higher education within an existing institution somewhat reduces the duration of the establishment process, the current legislative framework prescribes obtaining an operating licence and the process of accreditation. Therefore, expert input by the legal and academic community should be integrated (particularly regarding accreditation experiences) in order to arrive at the fastest and simplest solution for implementing specific initiatives, once they are developed.

The development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac should be sustainable; study programmes developed in these municipalities should meet the demands of the labour market, but also carry a potential to initiate economic development. This means that the choice of areas wherefrom study programmes will be implemented in Preševo and Bujanovac should not be based solely on the express wishes of potential beneficiaries, but also on objective capacities and needs. Likewise, due attention should be paid to the potential for labour market “saturation”. The following may be proposed to this end:

- The development of study programmes for teachers, including teachers for the Serbian, Albanian and Romani languages. These occupations are in deficit in the region, being of significance both for the development of general and linguistic competencies, representing a prerequisite for successful interethnic communication. The development of study programmes for teachers could be undertaken with the cooperation of the University of Niš Teacher Training Faculty in Vranje, located in the relative proximity of Bujanovac. The development of study programmes for language teachers would involve cooperation with an institution with study programmes in Albanian, on the one hand, and the Serbian language and literature, on the other. The former exists at the University in Belgrade, while the latter exists at nearly any University in Serbia. As regards the Albanian language and literature, the possibility exists for developing joint study programmes with institutions in neighbouring countries. The key advantage of such study programmes is that, in addition to the possibility of finding employment in the education system (as professor and/or teachers of the respective language and literature), the graduates would be employable in public administration and other services where knowledge of several languages represents an advantage;

- The development of study programmes in law, economy and computer science, i.e. areas developing general competencies subsequently applicable in a wide range of professions. Particular need was expressed for legal experts speaking Albanian and Serbian, who could work in public administration in addition to the judiciary. Likewise, fields such as economy (particularly banking and management) and computer science offer competencies potentially applicable in various environments, from financial institutions to small and medium-sized enterprises. The latter two programmes have the advantage of being relatively “universal”, therefore teaching materials do not have to be tailored specifically to the environment, as is the case with law;

- The development of study programmes that would assist in the development of existing potentials in Bujanovac and Preševo, such as food technology, mechanical engineering, tourism and catering, etc. It is important to remember that the development of these types of programmes can only be undertaken in strong partnership with the business sector: to develop study programmes in industry-relevant areas before there is a strategy for economic development would not provide positive results in terms of employment. However, a strong partnership with the business sector would provide good motivation for both the educational as well as the industry sectors; these programmes can be developed as part of the strategies for the development of the Preševo and Bujanovac municipalities;

- The development of teaching staff to carry out the new study programmes. Higher education development in Preševo and Bujanovac must be integrative in terms of development of knowledge and competencies of the members of all communities. This entails developing study programmes both in the Serbian and Albanian languages and, ideally, in the Romani language as well. However, parallel instruction in multiple languages is not a solution in itself. Therefore, it is vital to develop joint activities, with some undertaken in the English language, in order to enable socialization and mutual communication between members of different communities. These activities should aim at developing knowledge of second (and third) languages used in Bujanovac and Preševo; one important point is to ensure good knowledge of the Serbian language as the official language among members of all communities, but also to have the members of the Serbian community to learn in Albanian, as well as the Romani language. This would facilitate mutual communication and also increase employment opportunities. Furthermore, knowledge of the English language should be fostered through potential joint academic and non-academic activities. However, the development of “parallel” programmes in each language should be avoided: higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac should be as integrated as possible, aiming to develop a common culture for the students and awareness of belonging to the same society. Thus integration should not only involve openness for members of all communities, but also the possibility for everyone to partake in decision making and shaping the future of Preševo and Bujanovac together. To this end, the following may be developed:

- Study programmes including instruction in Serbian, Albanian, and at least in some cases, Romani. Due care should be given to providing legal preconditions for this type of instruction, as part of the statute of the institution undertaking it. Curricula should aim for as much integration, or similarity as possible, in order to avoid developing “parallel” programmes with few common points. This entails joint development of curricula in all languages. This process would have to be implemented through discussions of the teaching staff;

- Human resources in terms of professors, teaching associates and administrative personnel. This issue is of particular importance since the existing teaching staff is overworked. In an ideal situation, the staff should speak at least two of the three languages of the communities in Preševo and Bujanovac. Indications that these types of resources exist in the region arose in the course of the study, therefore the issue should be examined properly. In cases where the teaching staff speak only one language of instruction, the persons teaching in the Serbian language could be employed through existing higher education institutions in Serbia (with the potential for expanding their capacities), whereas persons teaching in Albanian could be employed through higher education institutions with instruction in the Albanian language from neighbouring countries (similar to the agreement of the University of Montenegro with universities in Tirana and Skadar). It is possible that persons teaching in the Romani language could be contacted through local or international organizations tackling Roma rights. Key to this process, in addition to considering legal regulations relating to guest lecturers from local or international higher education institutions, is to develop good associate resources, potentially from the ranks of Preševo or Bujanovac doctorate students studying in Serbia or a neighbouring country. Teaching associates provide for constant contact with students and assist them in the course of their studies. Therefore, in a sense they are even more important than professors and teachers. On the other hand, supporting associate professors would provide a constant influx of young teaching staff.

- The learning of a second or third language of the community, as an elective or mandatory course. This would ensure the development of linguistic competencies, and the possibility of communication between members of different communities;

- The development of joint student activities, regardless of whether they are academic (e.g. guest professor lectures) or non-academic (sports, student organizations and clubs, parties). This would stimulate an informal integration of students.

The development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac must take into account the social dimension of education. On the one hand, this would mean paying special attention to access to education for members of various marginalized and vulnerable groups (women/girls, the Roma, persons with special needs). On the other hand, it should be made clear that the goal of higher education is not only personal and regional economic development but that it, along with other levels of education, serves to stimulate the potential for active participation in the social life and decision making in the

community. Therefore, the development of higher education should contribute not only to enabling employment, but also a wider range of social competencies such as the capacity for critical thought and problem analysis, care for oneself and others and participation in decision making. To this end, the following may be developed:

- Programmes to promote higher education in Prešovo and Bujanovac targeting vulnerable groups directly. These programmes should predominantly enable adequate information for vulnerable groups and the possibility of choosing study programmes;
- Support programmes for marginalized and vulnerable groups in terms of access and pursuit of higher education, either through the establishment of quotas, support during studies (one-off financial assistance, counselling) or scholarships which shall be needs-based rather than merit-based. These types of support programmes can only be developed at the state and municipal level, as well as in cooperation with international organizations; components of the education process and student life aimed at developing critical thinking, student participation, voluntary or charity work, better care of oneself and others, etc. This can be achieved through workshops, debates, discussions, student organizations and clubs, actions, etc. These types of activities, in addition to stimulating the integration of students, would contribute to an active contribution to their environment and their community, since these activities could target a community wider than the academic community.
- This could make higher education in Prešovo and Bujanovac an integral part of the community contributing and developing along with it.

The general conclusion that can be drawn is that higher education development in Prešovo and Bujanovac carries a lot of potential for economic development of the region but also – and perhaps more importantly – for developing social integration and better quality of life. Therefore this process should be approached with great care and consideration for the needs and capacities of the region, as well as the stakeholders. Only thus will higher education in Prešovo and Bujanovac be able to fulfil its goal – a common and better future for all citizens.



ANNEX: SCENARIOS

The purpose of this Annex is to define the “steps” or individual procedures in pursuing different “scenarios”, i.e. in elaborating the possible solutions for development of the higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac. The procedures have been described in accordance with the assumed logical or chronological sequence, although in certain cases it is possible to work concurrently on several tasks, or it is possible to adjust the timetable to the needs and opportunities. After each solution, an overview of the possible expenditures for implementing each of the solutions is given in the section titled as the financial aspect. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that specific solutions directly depend on the agreement reached by the stakeholders in the beginning of the project’s implementation and that it is impossible to make more accurate calculations before the solution to pursue is agreed upon.

Establishment of the Ministry of Education Task Force, to take over the operations pertaining to further development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac

1. Announce the intention to establish the task force, and submit the invitation to all stakeholders to delegate their representatives

2. Task force establishment meeting

- Adopt the action plan and the timetable of activities and responsibilities;

Select the members of the secretariat (executive board) of the task force, which will manage the practical aspects of further planning and implementation; it is advisable that the executive board of the task force should include up to five persons – representatives of public administration, academic community, civil society and experts in the field of education and economics.

Task force meetings, where the following is defined:

- Solutions for development of the higher education, which will be implemented in Preševo/Bujanovac;
- Expenditures related to plan implementation;
- Further steps.

4. Plan implementation

FINANCIAL ASPECT:

The minimum costs of the Ministry of Education Task Force, which will take over the operations pertaining to further development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac, include as follows:

- Task force operational costs (organisation of meetings, travel costs, drafting of documentation);
- Task force secretariat operational costs (hiring experts).

Institutional framework for the development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac

As previously stated in the analysis of the possible solutions, there are several possibilities and institutional modalities for the development of higher education in Preševo and Bujanovac. The prerequisites and steps for the development of each individual institutional modality have been described below.

Scenario A. University Founded by the Republic

1. Founding

- Founding act adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia;
- Election of the executive officer (Rector);
- Entry into the register and assignment of the Tax Identification Number.

2. Programme conception and development

- The development of the study programmes for courses in at least three fields, in three levels. A higher education institution has the status of a university if it delivers academic study programmes in all levels of study, in at least three fields and three areas. The levels of study are basic academic courses, diploma academic courses for a master's degree, specialist and doctoral academic courses. Scientific fields are: natural sciences and mathematics, engineering and chemical engineering, social studies and the humanities, medical science and arts, whereas the areas and more specific scientific fields imply the disciplines (e.g. sociology, philosophy).

- Indefinite-term work contracts of teachers and teaching assistants: in order to obtain an operating license, the institution is required to have at least 70% of teaching staff with indefinite-term work contracts, and at least 50% of them need to have PhD degrees.

- Part-time teachers and teaching assistants: if they have a contract with another high education institution, their employer has to approve their additional work engagement. Additional conditions are related to the scientific achievements of the lecturers in the doctoral academic courses. In order to be eligible to teach in the doctoral courses, the lecturers need to have produced internationally recognized publications, and in order to be mentors in the doctoral courses, depending on their respective fields, they need to have published papers (one or more) in one of the journals on the SCI list⁶⁵. These eligibility requirements are defined individually for each field.

- Preparing the application for operating license and accreditation

- Planning the number of students: this number is acknowledged by the operating license and after the license has been granted the higher education institution is allowed to enrol the maximum of 20% students more than in the previous year; if it wishes to enrol more students than that number, it needs to apply for a supplement to the operating license. That means that the number of students needs to be planned carefully, in accordance with the development plan of the higher education institution. In addition to the number of teaching staff and the premises (higher education institutions are required to have at least four square metres per one student, or two square metres if the institution works in two shifts, while the lecture halls, classrooms and laboratories need to have one chair for every student), the process of planning the number of students should also take into account the number of study programmes, as well as the prediction how many students will be self-funded and how many will have their studies financed by the Republic of Serbia.

3. Applying for operating license, which is the precondition for the institution to start working.

- The application is submitted to the Ministry of Education. The application includes the Founding Act of the institution and the evidence that the institution has met all the conditions to be granted the operating license and the accreditation of its study programmes. The Ministry of Education issues the operating license if the Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance gives a positive opinion about: the content, quality and scope of the study programmes; the required number of teaching

65 Science Citation Index (SCI) list is the international list of notable scientific journals compiled by Thomson Reuters, which is available on <http://science.thomsonreuters.com/cgi-bin/jrnlst/jloptions.cgi?PC=K>. Some researchers, especially in the social sciences and humanities, challenge the relevance and representativeness of this list, as they find it insufficiently adapted to the standards of these sciences.

and other staff with appropriate scientific and professional qualifications; adequate premises and equipment, in accordance with the planned number of students and the quality of studies.

4. Applying for accreditation of the higher education institution

- Applying for accreditation of a higher education institution entails submitting evidence that the institution meets the personnel, spatial and technical conditions for delivering academic courses. Every higher education institution must furnish the evidence of having met the prescribed standards. The standards are prescribed by the National Council of Higher Education, at the proposal of the Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance⁶⁶. The standards include:

- Documentation about the main goals and objectives of the higher education institution (accreditation standards require the existence of a clear, socially justifiable rationale for establishing a higher education institution);

- Documentation on planning and control (proof of the existing clear plans and methods for periodical quality control);

- Documentation on organisation and administration (mandates of the administrative body, executive officer and the Students' Parliament are defined in the Statute);

- Documentation on the studies (proving harmonisation of study programmes and students' qualifications, in all levels of studies);

- Documentation on scientific research and/or artistic work (a higher education institution featuring academic courses needs organised scientific or artistic projects);

- Documentation on the teaching and non-teaching staff, hired on full-time and part-time basis: the total number of lecturers must be sufficient to cover the total number of teaching-hours in the study programmes delivered by the institution; thus a lecturer totals in average 180 hours of active teaching annually, i.e. six hours per week. The total effort per one teacher cannot exceed 12 hours per week in the territory of the Republic of Serbia, whereas teaching associates deliver 300 hours annually, i.e. up to 10 hours of active teaching on weekly basis in the territory of the Republic of Serbia. A higher education institution with up to 500 students is obliged to employ with indefinite-term contract

⁶⁶ Some of the described documents and procedures are available on the webpage of the Commission for Accreditation and Quality Assurance www.kapk.org.

at least one librarian with higher education degree, and if there are more than 500 students, it needs at least two librarians. A higher education institution with up to 500 students is obliged to hire at least two officers for the Students' Service, an additional officer for the next 500 students and an officer for each 200 additional students. Moreover, a higher education institution is required to hire at least one employee with higher education degree to handle the information system and a jurist to occupy the position of the secretary;

- Documentation on the students: the number of students must be compatible with the staff and technical capabilities; students' knowledge is continuously examined;
 - Documentation on the premises and equipment: a higher education institution must have adequate premises – classrooms, practice rooms, library, reading rooms etc. – with adequate equipment for teaching. Accreditation standards stipulate that the institution must have at least four square metres per student, or two metres per student where the institution works in two shifts; the lecture halls, classrooms and laboratories need to have a seat for each student. There should be at least two rooms to be occupied by the Students' Service and the Secretariat, as well as adequate rooms for the teachers and associates;
 - Documentation on the library, textbooks and IT support. Accreditation standards envisage that an institution should have a library available to all students for at least 12 hours every day, with sufficient qualified employees. Furthermore, a higher education institution passes a general regulating document on textbooks and systematically monitors and assesses their quality and contents. In addition, a higher education institution is obliged to provide at least one IT designated classroom with 20 computers and Internet access;
 - Documentation on the sources of funds;
 - Documentation on the internal mechanisms for quality assurance: accreditation standards stipulate that a higher education institution must have established mechanisms for periodical quality assessment, with equal participation of students in the assessment;
 - Documentation on transparency in operation.
- This means that a higher education institution needs to have successfully addressed all of the above issues before it can apply for accreditation.

5. Applying for accreditation of the study programmes

• Applying for accreditation of the study programmes entails submitting documentation with regard to the content of the study programmes. Below is the list of standards related to the contents of study programmes:

• Structure of the study programme (every study programme must include the title and objectives, type of study and outcome of the learning process, conditions for admission to the programme, conditions for transfer from other study programmes, credits earned in the programme (ECTS) etc);

• Purpose of the study programme (the purpose of delivering a study programme must be clearly formulated and in accordance with the overall goals of the implementing institution);

• Objectives of the study programme (related to the development of competences and skills);

• Competences of graduated students (declaring the capacities that students acquire by completing the study programme);

• Curriculum (which must include the table of subjects and modules by semesters and ECTS credits; elective subjects must account for at least 20% of the total number of ECTS credits in the basic courses and at least 30% in the academic courses);

• Quality, contemporaneity and international compatibility of the study programme (commensurability with the latest developments and European trends in a particular scientific area);

• Enrolment of students (the number of students corresponds to the spatial, personnel and technical capacities);

• Evaluation and advancement of students (students' knowledge is continually monitored; students complete the work in a particular subject by taking the examination, and the grade they receive in the examination is also influenced by their active engagement in the classes);

• Teaching staff: the total number of teachers must be sufficient to cover the total number of teaching-hours in the study programmes delivered by the institution; thus a lecturer totals in average 180 hours of active teaching annually, i.e. six hours per week. The total effort per one teacher cannot exceed 12 hours per week, whereas teaching associates deliver 300 hours annually, i.e. up to 10 hours of active teaching on weekly basis. The qualifications of the teaching staff must be commensurate with

the study programme, i.e. with the subjects they teach, and their curricula vitae, decisions appointing them to the position of teachers and references must be available for the general public;

- Organisational and material resources: accreditation standards stipulate that the space required per student must be at least four square metres, or two metres per student where the institution works in two shifts; the lecture halls, classrooms and laboratories need to have a seat for each student. The library must have at least 100 units, i.e. books, journals and other teaching material related to the study programme delivered, with available textbooks and IT support necessary for delivery of the study programme;
- Quality control: the quality of study programmes is continually monitored and evaluated;
- Standards with respect to distance learning (in cases where this modality of delivering the programme is feasible): computer literacy of the teaching and administrative staff, availability of equipment.
- In addition to the founding act, an institution is under obligation to complement the application with the document appointing the executive officer and the statute, as well as with the operating license or the document verifying that the institution has fulfilled the conditions to start its activities, issued by the ministry competent for higher education (Ministry of Education).

This means that an institution can start the procedure of acquiring the accreditation of study programmes only after it has secured the operating license.

Where an institution already includes accredited units or study programmes, the documents related to their accreditation are also submitted with the application. However, each study programme goes through the accreditation process. Accreditation of study programmes in the diploma academic and doctoral academic courses also entails the verification whether the conditions for conducting scientific research and/or artistic work are satisfied. That means that the teachers in these courses meet the conditions to engage in scientific work, as well as that adequate premises and equipment to carry out scientific and/or artistic work are in place.

6. The higher education institution applying for accreditation bears the costs of the accreditation process.
7. Issuance of the operating license (accreditation)

- Operating license specifies: the titles of the approved study programmes, the number of students for which the study programme is approved, the number of teachers on full-time basis and the facilities wherein the activities are to take place, as well as the licence, if any, allowing the higher education institution to operate outside its seat.

It is vital to underline that the operating license and accreditation are equally important elements of the accreditation process. Before it has obtained the operating license, an institution cannot start its activities, whereas it is possible to carry out study programmes even before the license for the study programme is obtained. However, if a higher education institution has been denied accreditation of a study programme, the operating license is valid for one more year, but the institution is not allowed to admit new students to that study programme.

8. Determining the number of students in the first year of studies, whose education is financed by the state (decision by the Government of Serbia, according to the opinion of the National Council and the higher education institution)

9. Call for applications.

- The call for admission applications is announced at least five months before the beginning of the academic year. The call for applications specifies the number of students to be admitted to individual study programmes, the admission conditions, the criteria for establishing the candidates' ranking list, the procedure for conducting the admission competition, the manner of and deadlines for appealing, the amount of tuition fees payable by students whose education is not financed by the state.

10. Entrance examination and ranking list

11. Commencement of delivery of the study programmes

12. External quality control after the first year of delivering the study programmes

FINANCIAL ASPECT:

Depending on the manner in which a higher education institution is founded, it is possible to estimate the corresponding minimum costs of founding and starting the operation.

In the first period, especially when a department, a faculty or a university is lacking sufficient of its own financial means, it is crucial for the decision about the modality of hiring the teachers and associates to know what the budget of the institution is, considering that the salaries of teachers and associates depend on the titles they hold.

If the total amount of funds are allocated in the beginning of the process of founding the institution, it is then possible to manage the process more efficiently, because certain positions can be filled by persons hired with fixed-term contracts. In the next period, in accordance with the admission of students (state-funded and self-funded), it is possible to pursue a more long-term policy of recruiting the teaching and non-teaching staff, according to the needs. It is important to stress that managing an institution is far more flexible if the institution's own financial means make up a significant share of its total revenues.

On the other hand, the budget will entirely depend on the number of enrolled students and on the normative group to which the study programmes belong.

In this case, two possibilities should be distinguished:

a) Founding a university consisting of faculties which have the capacity of legal persons

In this case, the costs of running the university and managing the work of teaching and non-teaching staff are considerably higher than in the case where faculties do not have the status of legal persons.

Namely, each of the faculties needs to organise administrative services (legal, financial, international cooperation etc) and provide for the salary supplements for the dean and the vice-deans, pursuant to the Regulation on the Norms and Standards Pertaining to the Working Conditions of Universities and Faculties in the Fields Funded from the National Budget (2005). Moreover, the teaching staff is employed by faculties and it is more challenging to achieve optimal workload of the teachers in case they work in several faculties (in this case, their work in other faculties is additionally paid, under the contract for retaining their services and according to the number of lessons delivered, the title they hold and the capacities of the faculty to pay for the lessons).

The work of the administrative services and the number of staff they employ depends on the number of students being admitted and on the approval of the Ministry of Education to increase the number of staff and the number of services. However, the institution is entirely at liberty to hire as many officers as suits its needs under service or work contracts using its own financial means (revenue from tuition fees and other income generated from services provided to students, resulting from the cooperation with economic entities or funds from projects).

In this case, the minimum costs include:

- Construction or adaptation of a building for the purposes of teaching (classrooms, library, laboratories, sanitary facilities);
- Development of the library and IT networks (procurement of books and other resources, procurement of computers, internet access);
- Salaries of the rector and vice-rectors;
- Salaries of deans and vice-deans;
- Salaries of teachers and associates;
- Salary of the secretary;
- Salaries of the financial service staff;
- Salaries of the students' service staff (the minimum number depends on the number of students);
- Salaries of the library staff (the minimum number depends on the number of students);
- Salaries of non-teaching support staff.

b) Founding a university consisting of faculties which do not have the capacity of legal entity

It is far more economically efficient to found this type of university in comparison with a university the faculties of which have the status of legal persons. Namely, all administrative services can be organised on the university level, and it is particularly significant to underline that the teachers are employees of the university and that it is the rector who assigns them to particular faculties (without the status of a legal person) or departments, as needed. Thus, the teachers fill their quotas of lessons on the university level, and teaching resources can be managed quite efficiently if the students of different departments attend lessons in certain subjects together.

In this case, the cost-incurring items are the same, but the number of staff can be smaller.

Scenario B. University founded by a legal entity or a natural person

The Law on Higher Education stipulates that an independent higher education institution, in addition to the Republic of Serbia, may also be founded by a legal entity or a natural person. The founding procedure would, in this case, entail the founding meeting, where the founding act is adopted (whereas in the case of a university founded by the Republic of Serbia, this document is adopted by the Government of Serbia). Another difference is that a higher education institution founded by a legal or natural person is obliged to furnish, in addition to the application for the operating license, bank guarantees, commensurate with the planned number of students, providing for continuation and completion of studies in case the institution concerned ceases its activities or a given study programme is terminated.

1. Founding

- Founding meeting;
- Adoption of the founding act;
- Election of the executive officer;
- Entry into the register of institutions and assignment of the Tax Identification Number.

2. Programme development

Includes the same steps as in the case of universities founded by the Republic of Serbia.

3. Applying for operating license

- Provision of the founding act;
- Provision of the proof of fulfilled conditions for operation;
- Provision of the bank guarantees.

4. Applying for accreditation of the institution

Includes the same steps as in the case of universities founded by the Republic of Serbia.

5. Applying for accreditation of the study programmes

Includes the same steps as in the case of universities founded by the Republic of Serbia.

6. The higher education institution applying for accreditation bears the costs of the accreditation process

7. Issuance of the operating license

The principles and contents are the same as in the case of a higher education institution founded by the Republic of Serbia.

8. Determining the number of students to be admitted to the study programmes.

- The maximum number of students is already specified in the operating license, and the decision with that regard is made by the university senate, observing the maximum number provided for in the accreditation.

Considering that this is a higher education institution founded by a legal or natural person, the students' education may not be funded from the national budget of the Republic of Serbia. However, a higher education institution may exempt certain students from paying tuition fees or offer them scholarships. In that case, the rules and procedures are regulated by the higher education institution's internal instruments.

9. Call for admission applications.

- The call for admission applications is announced at least five months before the beginning of the academic year. The call for applications specifies the number of students to be admitted to individual study programmes, the admission conditions, the criteria for establishing the candidates' ranking list, the procedure for conducting the admission competition, the manner of and deadlines for appealing and the amount of tuition fees payable by students.

10. Entrance examination and ranking list

11. Commencement of delivery of the study programmes

12. External quality control after the first year of delivering the study programmes

FINANCIAL ASPECT:

The operating costs of a higher education institution founded by a legal or natural person are similar to the costs in the case where the institution is founded by the Republic of Serbia. However, a significant difference is that a legal or natural person founding an institution is obliged to provide bank guarantees, commensurate with the planned number of students, for continuation and completion of studies in case the institution concerned ceases its activities or a given study programme is terminated. Furthermore, as indicated above, the Law on Higher Education does not foresee that the Republic of Serbia should provide funding for higher education institutions which it did not found, irrespective of whether the funds are intended for the running costs, staff salaries or other expenditures. The Law on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities envisages the possibility of granting certain relief or incentives to private higher education institutions providing education in the languages of national minorities, or bilingual education. At the same time, such institutions are free to secure funds through foundations, projects and the like.

Scenario C. Higher Education Unit with Legal Personality (Faculty)

Pursuant to the Law on Higher Education, any university or other higher education institution with legal personality is entitled to establish other higher education units as forms of internal organization, in accordance with its statute. The legal status, management and decision making process, as well as disposition of funds by higher education units are defined in their founding act. In order to establish a higher education unit with legal personality, the university is required to submit an application for amendments to its operating license. A faculty may acquire legal personality if it has at least three accredited programmes of study. In that case, the steps are as follows:

1. Defining and developing a minimum of three programmes of study within the existing university
 - Development of programmes of study;
 - Ensuring the required teaching and non-teaching staff, in accordance with accreditation standards;
 - Planning the number of students.
2. Submitting an application for amendments to the operating license of the higher education institution (university) establishing a higher education unit with legal personality (faculty)

The procedure for submitting an application for amendments to the operating license is the same as the procedure for submitting a request for an operating license, which has already been described.

3. Submitting an application for the accreditation of the programmes of study

The steps for the accreditation of study programmes have already been outlined.

4. Procuring a license for the implementation of the programmes of study

5. Defining management, decision making and finance mechanisms, in agreement with an independent higher education institution (university), of which the unit is a part

- Adopting the founding act (also regulating the relationship with the university, i.e. the management and decision making mechanisms).

6. Call for applications

- The call for applications to enrol is published at least five months before the beginning of the academic year. The call for applications contains the number of students that will be admitted to certain study programmes, the requirements for admission, the criteria for determining a ranking list, the procedure for admission, the terms and conditions for filing an appeal, the tuition fee for students whose studies are not funded from the budget.

8. Entrance exam and formation of a ranking list

9. Launching implementation of the programmes of study

10. Implementing external quality control after the first year

FINANCIAL ASPECT:

It is important to note that the freedom of a faculty to manage the funds that it acquires independently depends on whether or not it has the status of legal entity. The relation between the university and faculty can be defined by the university statute, in accordance with the modality chosen for defining mutual relations.

The status of legal person allows the faculty greater flexibility to carry out an independent development policy and investments into infrastructure, which can, but does not have to, match the university's policy. However, in that case, there is a chance that resources will not be used optimally (e.g. the construction of two amphitheatres for two faculties which could use just one and instead allocate the remaining funds to purchasing additional equipment). A more detailed definition depends on the development policy of the institution.

In this context, minimum costs include:

- Construction or adaptation of the facilities for teaching purposes, (space, library, laboratories, sanitation);
- Development of a library and information network, (procurement of books and other resources, procurement of computers, connecting to the internet);
- Salaries of the Dean and Deputy Dean;
- Salaries of the professors and associates;
- Salary of the secretary;
- Salaries of financial department staff;
- Salaries of student service staff, (minimum number depends on the number of students);
- Salaries of library staff (minimum number depends on the number of students);
- Salaries of non-teaching staff engaged in maintenance of facilities.

Scenario D. Higher Education Unit without Legal Personality

A higher education institution can also establish a unit outside its seat, which does not have legal personality. In that case, the procedure is as follows:

1. Planning and development of a programme of study, (or programmes of study), which will be conducted outside the seat

- Development of curricula;
- Recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff, pursuant to accreditation standards;
- Determining the number of students.

2. Submitting an application for amendments to the operating license

The procedure for submitting an application for amendments to the operating license is the same as when applying for an operating license.

3. Submitting an application for the accreditation of a new programme of study

According to the procedure already described herein.

4. Call for applications

- The call for applications to enrol contains the number of students that will be admitted to certain study programmes, the requirements for admission, the criteria for determining the ranking list, the procedure for admission, the terms and conditions for filing an appeal, the tuition fee for students whose studies are not funded from the budget.
- The call for applications is published by the independent higher education institution and not the unit without legal personality

5. Entrance exams and formation of the ranking list

6. Launching implementation of the programme of studies

FINANCIAL ASPECT:

Establishing a department of an existing faculty requires amendments to the faculty's statute to that effect, which may regulate mutual relations, (although the department does not have and cannot have a legal personality). The key issues are how own revenues will be distributed, i.e. the revenues generated by the faculty's department, and how the professional services of the department will be structured (the possibilities span from the department having a very small number of non-teaching staff – in charge of, for instance, hygiene and the functioning of the facility – to having a large number of staff members). However, regardless of whether certain professors and associates carry out teaching at the

department only or also on the level of the faculty, they are employed at the faculty and where they will teach depends on the Dean's decision.

In this sense, minimum costs include:

- Adaptation of facilities, i.e. adjustments geared to carrying out the programmes of study;
- Development of a library and information network and resources (purchase of books, computers, connecting to the internet);
 - Salaries of the teaching staff engaged in study programmes, if 100% of them are not recruited from the mother institution's existing teaching staff;
 - Salaries of staff engaged in management/coordination of programmes;
 - Salaries of library and student service staff, (if the higher education unit is dislocated from the mother institution, at least one person for each of these departments should be hired here).

THE AUTHORS

Jana Baćević was born in 1981 in Belgrade. She is a Doctor of Anthropology (University of Belgrade 2008, a recipient of OSI/FCO Chevening scholarship for doctoral research at Oxford University, United Kingdom, 2007-2008), and Associate Professor in courses related to policies and development of transition and post-conflict societies (Communications and Media Faculty, University of Singidunum, Belgrade). She is an associate of the Centre for Education Policy in Belgrade and the Centre for Gender and Policies of the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade. She has been engaged in researching and developing higher education for minority communities in the region, within international organizations, as well as in educational reform, student participation, debate and development of critical thinking. From 2006 to 2009 she was Programme Manager for Socio-Cultural Anthropology at the Petnica Research Station, and from 2004 to 2007, an associate in teaching methodology at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade.

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Slobodan Bošković graduated from Nottingham Trent University, at the European School of Economics in Rome, Department of International Political Studies, with the thesis "Security and Civil Freedoms: Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans", and acquired his Master's Degree in Democracy and Human Rights in South East Europe (ERMA) at the University of Bologna and the University of Sarajevo with the thesis "Human Security in Bosnia and Herzegovina: from Policy to Implementation". He worked as researcher, project assistant and project manager in several NGOs, (Forum for Ethnic Relations, Human Rights Centre of the University of Sarajevo and Centre for Nonviolent Resistance), as a consultant in international organizations (Ethnobarometer – project of the Consiglio Italiano per le Scienze Sociali and the World Bank office in Serbia) and as a private sector consultant (Billiter Partners Ltd).

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Ana Luković is a journalist and project coordinator at Ebart Media Documentation. She completed all coursework at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade. As of 1996 she worked as a journalist for the daily paper Dnevni telegraf, the NIN weekly, BETA news agency, daily paper Politika and the Portal for South-East European Culture SEEcult.org, to which she still contributes. As a journalist, she reported

on internal political and social issues, (primarily education), and in the last years mostly on culture and arts. She was a PR consultant for several arts events and civil campaigns and lecturer at several expert conferences, she managed training programmes for journalists, researchers and workers in the field of culture and educational institutions, for the use of electronic documentation for research purposes.

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Danijela Nenadić graduated in Journalism from the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade, and acquired her MA at the Central European University in Budapest with her thesis "From Social Movement to Political Organization: The Case of Otpor". From 2003, she has been working at the Institute of Political Studies in Belgrade, as a scientific researcher. Since 2008 she is advisor to the Director of the Coordination Body for the Municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa, and since 2010, Deputy Director. She managed and implemented dozens of projects in the area of public policies, human and minority rights and civil society, in the role of manager and associate of several non-governmental organizations, (Centre for Nonviolent Resistance, Forum for Ethnic Relations, Centre for Democratic Culture, Ethnic Relations Project, NGO Jelena Anžujaska etc.). Since 2004 she has been a correspondent for the Italian organization "Balkan Monitor" (Osservatorio Balcani, Rovereto), reporting on political, social and economic developments in Serbia. She has published dozens of papers.

Paola Petrić was born in 1975 in Belgrade. She graduated from the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, Department for German Language and Literature, which is also where she completed master's studies. In 2005, she completed the Diplomatic Academy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia and Montenegro. She attended a one-year professional specialization programme at the University of Hanover in Germany. Currently, she works as Project Coordinator at the Heinrich Böll Foundation, and as Assistant Professor for the German language course at Union University's Law Faculty. She is also involved in translation work.

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Romana Radulović was born in 1982 in Pakrac. She graduated from the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade (study group for Serbian Language and Literature) in 2006, and in 2008, she completed her master's studies at the same faculty a 2008. During her studies, she was the holder of a scholarship of the Foundation for Development of Young Scientists and Artists of the Republic of Serbia and of the Assembly of the City of Belgrade. She is a Professor of Serbian Language and Literature. She also undertakes writing, proofreading and translating.

Rahim Saljihi was born in 1989 in Vranje. He is a second year student of Political Sciences at the South East European University of Tetovo. He was the coordinator of several projects implemented in South Serbia, in the municipalities of Preševo and Bujanovac. As one of the first generation of participants in the A-SMYLE exchange programme, he spent sixth months in Pennsylvania, USA. He speaks English, Serbian and Albanian.

Gazmend Seljmani was born in 1986 in Preševo. He is a graduating student at the Law Faculty of the South East European University of Tetovo. As a scholar of the US Government's Youth Leadership Exchange programme for Serbia, in 2003 he spent one month in the US. During the summer of 2008, he spent two months on an internship at the Belgrade-based office of the Youth Initiative for Human Rights, getting acquainted with the work of this organization and studying the Bosnian, Croat, Montenegrin

and Serbian languages. He completed his internship at the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia in The Hague, from February to June 2009. He is employed as a researcher at the Youth Initiative for Human Rights in Preševo.

Jasmina Selmanović is an external associate of the Centre for Educational Studies in Belgrade. She has several years of professional experience in working with media, in the field of education and human rights. From 1999 to 2001, she worked for international organizations based in Kosovo, as regional and local project coordinator for the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) and for the English Language Teachers' Association (ELTA) and she also participated in several British Council projects in Serbia. In addition to studying English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, Jasmina specialized in independent journalism, human rights and transition justice at various courses.

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Ivana Stanojev is a graduating student at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, at the Department of Sociology. She attended the School of Human Rights and a one year course in Peace Studies. Since 2007, she is employed as project coordinator with the Centre for Nonviolent Resistance and since 2008 as Serbia's representative in the US organization Project for Ethnic Relations.

Norbert Šabić completed his bachelor's studies in the field of social pedagogy in Sweden (University of Jönköping). He completed his master's studies in the area of higher education policies development, within the framework of the Erasmus Mundus programme at the University of Oslo (Norway), Tampere (Finland) and Aveiro (Portugal). Within the framework of this programme, in 2009 he acquired his Master's degree, with his thesis on "Disciplinary Differences in Entrepreneurial Transformation of Universities – Case Study of the University of Novi Sad". He is a Technical Manager at the College of Professional Career Studies in Subotica and takes active part in research projects of the Centre for Education Policy in Belgrade.



ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS

CENTRE FOR NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE (CNR)

The Centre for Non-violent Resistance (CNR) is a non-governmental, non-partisan and non-profit organization from Belgrade. CNR was established in 2004 with the aim to promote democratic political values in Serbia and encourage citizen participation in the social and political processes in the country through activism, scientific research work and development of public policies.

Through informal education and the promotion of universal values, the CNR is endeavouring to contribute to the active inclusion of youth into the wider community, focusing its activities primarily on secondary school students from multi-ethnic societies. Through its projects, the CNR encourages young people to invest into themselves and empowers them to become the agents of changes in society. The Centre participated in the development the Youth Strategy adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia in 2008.

CNR accomplishes its goals by creating public policies, conducting research and implementing projects that encourage youth activism in local communities.

The Centre has published three publications – “The Needs of the Serbian Community” (Centre for Non-violent Resistance, Belgrade, 2006), “Divided Local Communities: The Present and Future of Preševo and Bujanovac” (Centre for Nonviolent Resistance, Belgrade, 2007) and “Decentralization in Kosovo and Metohija: Regional Experiences, Collection of Works” (Centre for Nonviolent Resistance, Belgrade, 2007), as well as several studies and analyses of social phenomena, with emphasis on inter-ethnic relations.

More than 300 young people from multi-ethnic regions in Serbia participated in “Overcoming Differences: from South to North”, a project of the Centre for Nonviolent Resistance implemented over a period of several years, as well as in international youth exchanges, within the framework of the “Youth in Action” programme. As of 2004, the CNR takes part in the projects of the Italian Peace School Foundation of Monte Sole, promoting peace education of youth. As part of the project “Strengthening the Integration Process”, CNR organized workshops and trainings for youth, for representatives of local government and other institutions in South Serbia and in Kosovo. With the desire to restore Belgrade’s youth rights to public space, the CRN drew public attention to the deterioration of the Tašmajdan Stadium’s in 2009 with the project “Taš is Ours”, and organized a series of activities with the aim to reinstate the Stadium to its former use.

The Centre developed a network of local partners in the country and in the region, through which it carries out its initiatives and projects, as well as numerous partnerships with European youth organizations within the framework of which it implemented several youth exchange programmes and contributed to developing a network of youth from across Europe.

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CENTRE FOR EDUCATION POLICY (CEP)

The Centre for Education Policy was established in 2007 as an independent organization, whereas since 2005, it was part of the Alternative Academic Education Network.

The mission of the Centre for Education Policy is to improve the education system in Serbia, by providing expert support in formulating education policies. CEP's vision is a quality, effective, efficient, open and democratic educational system in Serbia, which fully contributes to Serbia's development in the social, cultural, political and economic sense.

The basic idea behind establishing CEP was that the formulation of reform educational policies and the continuous improvement of quality, efficiency, effectiveness and openness of the educational system requires the availability of reliable information on various aspects of education, both in Serbia and globally.

Until present, CEP carried out a series of studies in Serbia and the region focusing on the development of competencies for knowledge society, as well as on economy and governance of knowledge.

CEP is a member of the Network of Education Policy Centres (NEPC), a network of centres that engage in research and analysis of educational policies, and have developed cooperation with similar centres across Europe.

To date, CEP has published the following publications:

- Predrag Lažetić, Bojan Komnenović, Martina Vukasović: National Framework of Qualifications, Belgrade (2010)
- Martina Vukasović (editor), Mihajlo Babin, Vanja Ivošević, Predrag Lažetić, Klemen Miklavič, Funding Higher Education in South-East Europe: Albania, Montenegro, Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia, Belgrade (2009)
- Nataša Pantić (editor) Co-ordinating the Harmonization of Education Programmes for Teachers in the Western Balkans, Belgrade (2008)
- Zoran Grac (editor) translation: Jelena Kleut and Dušan Spasojević Research in Education and Formulation of Education Policies, Belgrade (2008)
- Alkesandar Baucal, Desanka Radunović, Panta Kovačević: Entrance Exams for Enrolment into College: Proposal for Integrated Entrance Exam, Belgrade (2007)

- Jadranka Dimov: Secondary Vocational Education and Labour Market Needs in Belgrade, Belgrade (2007)
- Martina Vukasović: Development of Higher Education Curriculum, Belgrade, 2006.
- Jelena Kleut: Regional Harmonization of Curricula – Towards the European Higher Education Area, Belgrade (2006)

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