

SOUTH EAST EUROPE EDUCATIONAL COOPERATION NETWORK

DECENTRALIZATION OF EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN SEE

MAY 2003

FOREWORD

Every four months KulturKontakt in consultation with the Task Force identifies a priority *area of interest*, which represents the guidance to the SEE-ECN in collecting related documents and information. Based on the needs of the "SEE-Educational Development Implementation Initiative" of the Task Force Education and Youth (new strategic approach of the Task Force from 2003 onwards) the first specific priority area of interest was: *Decentralization of education systems*.

The following are country reports on decentralization of education system prepared by SEE-ECN country nodes, except in the case of Serbia where the report was provided by the Ministry of education and sports. The reports were prepared during the period of March, April and May 2003.

Ljubljana, 23 May 2003

Igor Repac
Program Coordinator

BULGARIA

The decentralization process of the Bulgarian educational system begins and still continues along with the decentralization of the state governance, on the one hand, and, on the other, along with the reformation of the educational system itself. Therefore, the decentralization in the field of education is part of both political and economical reforms implemented in the country.

The distribution of the authorities and responsibilities between the state and the municipal authorities in general is still a matter of discussion in the country. Practically, one can talk about limited decentralization in the education, although there is a tendency towards increasing the rights and responsibilities of lower governing levels. According to the distribution of the authorities, the governing levels of the general education are four: a national one, a regional one, a local one, and a school one.

1. The National Level:

The *Council of Ministers* executes the national policy in the educational system. The *Ministry of Education and Science* is a special governmental body taking part in the formation of this policy. The *Ministry* elaborates:

- National strategies, priorities and programs developing the system of public education;
- State educational requirements for the system of public education;
- Programs for qualification of the personnel in the system of public education;
- Programs for international co-operation related to the system of public education, and/or coordinates their realization.

The *Ministry of Education and Science* realizes the state policy in the following way:

- Ensures conditions for functioning and developing of the system of public education;
- Coordinates the interaction between the institutions in the system of public education, state institutions, non-governmental organizations and the social partners;
- Controls the activity of the Inspectorates of Education, of the kindergartens, schools and services.

The *Minister of Education and Science* directs, coordinates, and controls the realization of the national policy in the education. One of his main functions is to submit draft public regulations and to issue rules, regulations, instructions, and ordinances.

2. The Regional Level:

The *Educational Inspectorates* are the bodies representing the *Ministry of Education and Science* at a regional level. Their function is to manage and to control the system of public education on the territory of the administrative regions. Their main function is to control whether the schools and kindergartens apply the state educational requirements. They coordinate the interaction between the institutions within the system of public education, as well as the interaction with the regional state institutions and non-governmental organizations.

The *Minister of Education and Science* issues a rule concerning the structure, the functions and the region where the *Educational Inspectorates* operate. Moreover, the *Minister* concludes and ceases official relations with the directors of the *Educational Inspectorates* and with the experts there.

3. The Municipal Level:

In each municipality there is an *Education Department*. In this way the municipalities are responsible for elaborating projects concerning the development and the change of the school network in the respective district. Due to the fact that 90 % of the schools in Bulgaria are municipal, the municipalities are the main distributors of the financial resources in the system of public education. With relation to the process of education the duties of the municipality are

generally in the field of ensuring financial resources, in order the training in both general and professional education to be well organized. They are also responsible for ensuring the compulsory education of the pupils, which in Bulgaria is until the age of sixteen.

4. The School Level:

At this level the responsibilities concerning the educational process are shared between the *Director*, the *Pedagogical Councils* and the *School Boards*

a) The Director:

The *Director* organizes, controls, and is responsible for the entire activity of the school. He is responsible so that the state educational requirements to be applied and observed. He also ensures secure conditions for education, training and labor. The *Director* represents the institution before bodies, organizations and persons, and concludes contracts with physical and juridical persons according to his authorities. *The Director* governs the budget resources, concludes and ceases contracts with deputy-directors, teachers, supervisors, servants and workers in the state and municipal kindergartens and schools in accordance with the *Labor Codex*. He organizes the acceptance of children and pupils, as well as their training and education according to the state educational requirements. He signs and seals the documents for removing of pupils, for finished courses and educational degrees, or a professional qualification. He preserves the seal with the national coat of arms. The *Director* controls and is responsible so that the mandatory documentation to be preserved correctly and he keeps the school documentation. He ensures hygienic and prophylactic conditions in the kindergarten or school.

The *Ministry of Education and Science* could reconsider the decisions of the directors of the state schools. The *Director* of the respective *Inspectorate* can reconsider the decisions of the directors of the municipal schools. The mayor of the settlement can reconsider the decisions of the directors of the municipal kindergartens.

b) The Pedagogical Council:

The *Pedagogical Council* of the school is a special inspection body, which solves general pedagogical issues. It accepts *Rules* for the school activity and the curricula of the school. It chooses the educational forms, discusses and takes decisions regarding the results of the education. The *Council* also defines the way by which pupils will be accepted in the school in accordance with the requirements of the public regulations. The *Council* also approves individual curricula, defines the activities out of the state educational requirements and accepts programs for their implementation.

The *Pedagogical Council* consists of the deputy-directors, the teachers, the supervisors and the other pedagogical professionals. The Director convokes it at least once in two months. The *Director* of the *Educational Inspectorate* or the *Pedagogical Council* itself with a qualified majority (two thirds of the members' votes) can cancel these decisions.

c) The School Boards:

The *School Boards* are public bodies supporting the activity of the schools, kindergartens or the school services. The *Minister of Education and Science* issues *Rules* for the structure and the activity of the *School Boards*.

Schools are either state or municipal depending on their main financial source. State schools, including schools for special care, art, and professional schools, are financed directly by the *Ministry of Education and Science* or by other ministries. There are three sources of financing the municipal schools:

- a) within the framework of the municipal budget for social needs, including the education, granted by the state budget;
- b) a part of the municipal incomes;
- c) out-of-budget- sources collected by the schools.

More than 90 % of the schools in Bulgaria are municipal.

The *Government* gives to the municipal authorities financial resources in order to cover the expenses for appointing teachers and other personnel. In general, the municipalities are

free to distribute the budget resources according to their priorities. However, in fact the authorities of the local governing bodies are limited by national instructions regarding the maximum number of pupils per class and the requirement for the number of the teachers in one class. Another limitation is the fact that the *Ministry of Education and Science* elects and appoints the directors of the schools regardless the representatives of the municipality in the committees selecting the personnel.

All these decrees restrict the possibilities both of the local educational authorities and schools directors to manage the financial resources according to the local needs, preferences and saving.

In 1998 a system of delegated budgets was introduced in 104 schools of 4 municipalities. It was a pilot project of the *Government* implemented with the support of PHARE Programme. The system is a positive step towards achieving a financial decentralization. According to the program, the schools involved receive a global budget sum based mainly on the number of the pupils. The directors are freer in resource spending. Later on, the application of the delegated budgets system was broadened within the framework of the *Education Modernization* Project supported by the World Bank.

According to the estimation of the experts, the pilot project achieved positive financial results; therefore, nowadays 20 % of the municipalities in Bulgaria apply this system.

In the field of higher education, the higher education institutions have a conditional autonomy. They are autonomous organizations which can reach independent decisions as to their internal organization and the management of their resources, the teaching and research they undertake, and the selection and promotion of staff.

Although all these rights are mentioned in the Higher Education Act, the State has laid down a number of rules and requirements which must be taken into consideration by the higher education institution so that the degrees and diplomas they award remain valid. There is accreditation procedures, implemented by National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency, and private higher education institutions are under this form of control, too.

The main problems regarding the management and financing of the educational system are, on the one hand, the difference between the authorities of the different levels of governance and their financial competencies, and, on the other, the insufficient training of the personnel at the different levels.

Although there is a regulated way through which each school and respectively each municipality could declare its financial needs for the education before the national authorities, practically, in the conditions of financial restrictions, municipalities receive limited resources from the *Government*, whose subsidies are the main financial source of the municipalities. In this respect, decentralization of the educational system regarding its financial aspect should follow the political decentralization.

SEE ECN can help by the traditional means used by it for co-operation in the education at a regional level. More specifically, in the framework of the network can be implemented initiatives aimed towards increasing of the administrative capacity in the educational systems, spreading of good practices, intensifying of the dialog between representatives from different countries.

Organizing of the training seminars and workshops on specific topics can be aimed to those who are involved in the development, planning and implementation of the schools activities in the most direct way - directors, teachers and representatives of the local self-government in the countries of South-Eastern Europe.

Deyan Pilev
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KOSOVO

Kosovo -Education Participation Improvement Project, Project appraisal document

Europe and Central Asia Region, ECSHD

Responsible agency: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

Project implementation period 2003-2006

New project appraisal document (IDA grant for post-conflict). The expected effectiveness date of this project was 1 March 2003, but it has been delayed. It should start at any moment...

I didn't have time to go through the proposal properly, but from my opinion that is the most relevant document about the developments in regards the decentralization in Kosovo.

Would World Bank project proposal be of your interest?

Kosova Education Centre

Strategy for the period from 2003-2005 (Part 2. Problem description.)

Although it concentrates in KEC's work, it includes a good description of the problems faced in the decentralization process.

1. Decentralization process in 2002

The most relevant publications in Kosovo are already published in the web pages:

- ***"Handbook on Municipal Education Governance" and***
- ***"Kosovo school Funding Handbook –Financial Management Information for Municipal Education Directors and School Directors"***

2. Developments in decentralization process in 2003 (WB)

Information about the previous process:

"The World Bank has been heavily involved in helping the UNMIK and Kosovar authorities to establish a new educational and governance and financing system. Efforts have been directed towards decentralizing authority and funding to Kosovo's 30 municipalities. ... The education governance and funding system created by UNMIK with World bank support provides the framework for the devolution of about 80 percent of the education resources to municipalities on the basis of a per student funding formula. Local authorities are responsible for budgeting, expenditure control and personnel management for teachers, school directors and non-teaching staff, while the MEST focuses on monitoring performance and targeted development programs."

Recommendations for the future, the school grant theme

"Since the first Education Project helped to decentralize education financing and administration, the proposed project will continue the process by addressing the above challenges locally. Financial incentives to schools will be provided using a school grant theme. It is expected that these incentives would motivate school management to engage in activities that help improve access and attainment."

*"Recently the Bank has also assisted international and Kosovar authorities to begin defining sector priorities and a medium-term strategy, by preparing a medium term expenditure study that makes recommendation for improving effectiveness and efficiency, and ensuing fiscal sustainability in the education system (**reports are available upon request**)."*

“International donors need to continue building adequate legal and institutional planning, monitoring and management capacities at central and local levels, the objective being to help focus on effective service delivery, education quality, the efficient use of public resources, as well as promote equity in access and attainment.”

3. Problematic issues

Lack of deficient education policy and cooperation

“Education has hardly ever been a main concern neither for UNMIK nor for the Kosova Government. ... Kosova is still deficient in mechanisms, which would coordinate the activities of numerous governmental and non-governmental organizations, both international and local. The lack of clear strategy for reforms in education has disabled the cooperation between the relevant factors in this process.”

The roles and responsibilities of municipalities, schools and teachers and lack of public awareness

“It is quite alarming to see that municipal authorities, in spite of the actual decentralization, are largely dependent on the finances received by MESHT. Bureaucratic procedures of financial management in municipalities have caused for the school budget to be administrated by the Municipal Offices of Education, on behalf of schools, therefore resulting into pointless centralization of the relation municipality-school, within the newly decentralized environment.” (KEC)

This was well-noticed fact in World Bank. Some municipalities work well, but some do not work the way they are advised in the trainings, and what are the guidelines in the handbooks.

“However school budget allocations are often made on case by case basis with insufficient control from the Ministry (MEST). Municipalities are not monitored sufficiently. Overcrowded schools represent a significant saving for municipalities, who have no strong interest in addressing the issue as is considered to be expensive and politically sensitive.” (WB)

“The educational staff, they are justly discontent with their social status, which does not motivate them to accept and implement innovations in education.”(KEC)

(One teacher was worried, what happens if the municipalities can decide upon the salaries. The salaries are set up by MEST and will be same in all municipalities. In my opinion this fear, together with the concern of the possible corruption, reflects the mistrust for municipal authorities and the lack of information about the process.)

“The information on changes is described insufficiently and inappropriately to the public opinion. ... Both electronic and printed media do not treat education as a priority. In many cases the meaning of change in education is not comprehensible for the education staff either, and moreover pupils, parents, and the community are only symbolically integrated in the process. This result into lack of will and determination for change admit those who have to apply change, therefore the reform process is slow and inferior.” (KEC)

Financial circumstances hinder the application of reforms

“A successful implementation of changes in education requires for a stable budget, which would cover the increased expenses in infrastructure, equipment and services.” (KEC)

“Donor funding has seriously declined and is expected to decline in the near future. Meanwhile, the fast growing student population and the status quo of the education infrastructure suggest that in the near future, Kosovo will have increasingly overcrowded schools.” (WB)

A short summary that covers the most problematic issues:

Dysfunctional governing of the education system.

“The insufficient decentralization, alongside with the obvious difficulties of integrating a few minorities in Kosovar society, the lack of standards in education and the low level of cooperation between existing institutions, may be considered as the direct cause of a worthless governance in the education system.

Some apparent effects of such environment are:

-Bureaucratic procedures within education institutions causing further a bureaucracy of education administrators as well as bringing out rigidity in the process of positive changes within the system;

-Lack of transparency, which has brought changes in education produced by administrative procedures, without consulting relevant factors;

*-Lack of motivation for work in both teachers and administrators of the education institution.”
(KEC)*

Johanna Lampinen
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MACEDONIA

Operative Program for Decentralization of the Government 2003-2004

With the new local autonomy law from January 2002, conditions have been created for enlargement of the process of decentralization of the local autonomy in the Republic of Macedonia and setting a stable law frame for building a system of local autonomy according to the European standards, appropriate for the needs of the Republic of Macedonia.

The operative program has a goal to define the activities of the decentralization, according to the law of local autonomy or to make a transfer of some parts from the influence of the government to the separate parts in the city, so the system of local autonomy starts working. According to the operative program for decentralization of the government, the Ministry of education and science is working on the changes and filling the gaps of the law for primary and high school education, pupil and student's standards in the part of the Foundation of the administration.

The Ministry of education and science is working on that plan with the support and help of the U.S.A.A.I.D. There have been made many seminars, workshops, especially in the part of the open questions, which regard to the part of depoliticization of the act to choose and solve the problems of the school directors and putting together the school councils.

Also the Agency for State servants in the cooperation with the embassy of the Republic of France in the frames of the proceeding project of three years “The High Administrative Training” for the working group created from the government of R.M., organized a special seminar-workshop on the subject: law and financial control of the transferred responsible government organs.

The part about financing will be changed in the predicated law with the Operative program. After the new law about the Financing the local autonomy from the Ministry of finances, The Ministry of education and science is intensively involved so that an analytic unite is formed which has an assignment to take care of the documents.

After that, a formula will be made for the decentralized financing.

For all of this to be realized there has to be a notice that this is not a certain attitude in a certain time, but a real process.

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MOLDOVA

The main problems in the field of decentralization for Republic of Moldova are:

1. Educational management at deferent levels: school unit, local and central government
2. Assessment and accreditation of primary and secondary schools
3. Quality assurance in primary and secondary education
4. Staff recruiting for educational system
5. Teacher training
6. Small schools in rural area
7. Educating tolerance in multicultural societies

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MONTENEGRO

In the framework of full reform of educational system in Montenegro a number of changes, concerning decentralization, de-concentration and deregulation of existing system, were adopted.

With adoption of the Book of changes (2001), new laws on education (2002), Starting points for reform of curriculum and programs (2002) and Strategic plan of reform (2003) the solutions, which will led to shifting the decision-making and accountability from central towards local and institutional and from political towards expert level respectively, were adopted.

Decentralization will be manifested in:

- Shifting of founding rights from central level to municipal community (fro pre-school institutions, elementary art school, adult education and part of primary education – envisaged adoption from 2004 on),
- Establishment of new institutions and advisable bodies on central level (National board of education, Center for vocational education, Councillorship for general education, Councillorship for vocational education and Councillorship for adult education – envisaged adoption on May 2003),
- Managing educational institutions (new structure of school board, new school director election procedure – envisaged adoption until the end of 2003)
- Professional autonomy of school and teachers (new curriculum envisages increased autonomy and accountability of school and teachers – adoption envisaged until the end of 2003)
- Possibility of school and municipal community to take part in planning of (about 20% - adoption envisaged on school year 2004/2005).

Besides clear financing difficulties, the basic problems in implementation of solutions concerning the decentralization are:

- Lack of expert human resources on all levels (distinctive need for teacher training, headmaster training, evaluator-inspector training and training of all future employers in National board of education and in Center for professional improving.)
- Significant lack of ICT (certain number of computers for stated institutions in establishment are urgently needed).

Goran Terzic
School Inspectorate

ROMANIA

Decentralization and management

- the creation and consolidation of the institutional autonomy of schools, high schools and education inspectorates;
- the organization and functioning of the national system for the training, and improving the standards of, the managing, guiding and control staff in the primary and secondary education system: the approval of the criteria for training the managers in the primary and secondary education system.

Education funding

Education funding amounts, in conformity with the law, to 4% of the gross domestic product. The funding of pre-university level is achieved in conformity with institutional decentralization and autonomy. By the Emergency Ordinance of the Romanian Government no 66/1998, the global funding of higher education institutions is introduced. In conformity with Education Act completed and modified by Act 151/ July 30 1999, the expense for the funding of education is covered from the national budget.

Before 1998, in accordance with Budget Act no 10/1991, the Ministry of Education and Research established the budget of every institution. The Ministry of Education and Research then distributed the approved budgets to the institutions under its authority and to the county education inspectorates. The latter further distributed the money allotted from the budget to the educational institutions under their jurisdiction.

Local authorities use the funds they get from the Government, the local budget and their own resources. They will also use, starting with the 2002 school year, the funds needed for paying the teachers' salaries, and the administrative and auxiliary staff's salaries.

In the pre-university educational system, education institutions can also use extra-budgetary resources that can come from permanent training services, distance learning, consultancy and other activities that correspond to the specific of educational activities (OM no 3412/March 30, 1999).

As in the case of pre-university education funding, the financial resources allotted from the national budget represent the main source of funding for higher education. In conformity with the Law of Education, regarding core funding, global budget allowances are granted to state universities depending on student numbers. The recurrent grant implies the distribution of other resources, according to specific procedures, to meet the needs of each institution and will be managed by the latter.

Among extra-budgetary sources, the special services the institutions provide for the market have greatest weight. Supplementary funding is drawn from the application of certain administrative taxes stipulated in education Act (e.g. entrance examination taxes, registration taxes, resit taxes, extracurricular activities taxes, etc.). The amounts of these taxes are established by the university senate.

An important element of education funding at university level is represented by the external funding sources (international bodies, such as World Bank or European Commission -PHARE, Universitas 2000, the TEMPUS, SOCRATES, LEONARDO and YOUTH FOR EUROPE Programmes).

Legal Framework for Decentralization

The 1991 Constitution stipulated that responsibility for managing local affairs, including the initial years of formal education, was to be transferred to local governments, but it was not until later, in the decade that the enabling legislation was passed. The transfer of responsibility happened in stages:

The 1995 Education Law

This law transferred the responsibility for maintenance of pre-university education (pre-school, primary and secondary schools) to local authorities.

Responsibility for management and financing of all other educational inputs, including teacher salaries, textbooks, and other educational materials, remained centralized under the Ministry of Education and Research (MER) and its county-level inspectorates.

The 1998 Law on Local Public Finance

This law made local councils (municipalities, towns and communes) responsible for financing most educational inputs, in pre-university education schools, except teachers salaries and benefits, textbooks and students scholarships, which remained centralized under the MER.

The Emergency Ordinance, adopted by the Government on 26 Feb. 2001, amends the 1995 Education Law and calls for all operational expenditures for pre-university education to be made from local council budget, and stipulates that public financing of education in the aggregate total at least 4% of GDP. The Emergency Ordinance called upon the MER, the Ministry of Public Administration and the Ministry of Finance to issue detailed „methodological norms“ on the implementation of the Emergency Ordinance.

The Methodological norms for Financing State Pre-university Education, adopted on June 7, 2001:

- Provide for financing the largest items of education expenditures: teachers salaries and benefits, textbooks and students scholarships, from locally-collected value added, tax (VAT), revenues which otherwise would be remitted to the state budget.
- Provide three types of pre-university school expenditures under local budgets, differentiated by sources:
 - Central financing (financing according to proportional (per-student) financing norms)
 - Complementary financing (complementary financing for educational materials, other than textbooks and other „service cost“ of schools, including maintenance, rehabilitation and utilities).
 - Own financing (school's own extra-budget revenues)

Curriculum Decentralisation

Core-curriculum and school-based curriculum

Starting with the school year 1998-1999, the National Curriculum covers two divisions: the *core-curriculum* and the *school-based curriculum*.

(a) The *core-curriculum* corresponds to the minimum number of periods (hours) a week for each compulsory subject included in the curriculum framework. Consequently, the new subject curricula contain attainment targets, reference objectives, learning syllabi and curricular standards of achievement (grades I-VIII) and general competencies, specific competencies and correlated relevant syllabi, values and attitudes (grades X-XII), which are all compulsory for all students and schools. Thus equal opportunities are ensured at the level of state education. The core-curriculum represents the single reference system for the various types of assessment and for the national external evaluation.

(b) The *school-based curriculum* covers the difference in terms of time allocation between the core curriculum and the minimum/maximum number of hours per week, stated in the curriculum framework.

More precisely, to complete the core curriculum, schools may choose one of the school-based curriculum versions, respectively in-depth core curriculum, extended curriculum, other types of optional courses. **The school timetable must include at least two optional courses in lower secondary education and one in primary schools. At the level of the upper-secondary the possibility of option multiplies.**

PROPOSED ACTIONS

- Raise the level of aggregate spending on education
- Align responsibilities of participants in delivery of education
 - Individual schools should be free to raise and spends funds for their own educational purposes, at the discretion of the local School Board.
 - County Councils should be free to set teachers salaries within a nationally negotiated range
 - Local School Boards – including the principal and representatives of teachers, parents, students, and the local business community – should set the goals for their schools' performance (consistent with national education policy), and prepare the annual development and improvement plans and budget for the school. These plans should be reviewed and agreed with the local authority and the County Council, and implemented by the local authority on behalf of the local School Board.
- Establish a targeted instrument to meet the needs of educationally deprived groups
- Adjusting the size and composition of the teaching force to needs

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*Extracts from the World Bank Report on Romania Education Policy, October 2002
and from the Romanian Education System, National Report, MER, 2001*

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SERBIA

CONTEXT

1. The fundamental goals of the Serbian society, that is developing a market economy, creating a stable democratic order and integration into the European Union have clearly been formulated.
2. In harmony with these goals, *decentralisation* as a key policy objective has been adopted in several public sectors, including education. The reform strategy document of the Serbian Ministry of Education and Sport (MoES) mentions as the first on the list of the changes required for accomplishing the reform goals the "*decentralisation of the system through a redefined role of the central administration, regional and local educational authorities*".
3. In this moment, although the process of preparation has begun, new Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, which will provide legal framework for the new system and assuring its balanced operation has not yet been adopted.
4. From the point of view of regional level administration and governance of education one of the most relevant features of the current educational reform in Serbia is that decentralisation in the education sector has been started before the final shape of the overall system of governance and public administration would have been given by the fundamental laws. In other words this sector may become one of the forerunners in the overall reform of public administration.
5. One of the most important implementation instruments of the reform program, the new 10 million USD World Bank loan sets as integrating principle the goal of supporting decentralisation (*World Bank, 2002*). Most of the running and planned bilateral

developmental programmes also have components that support directly or indirectly this reform line.

6. A new law on the foundations of education system, in line with Serbian education reform, is in the preparation phase.

CONCEPT FOR DECENTRALISATION AND RESPECTIVE ACTIVITIES

In order to ensure the education system that is governed in a decentralized way and managed economically and efficiently and the financing and administration of which are transparent and based on real indicators, that includes parents and teachers and students into the decision-making processes and nurtures the atmosphere of tolerance and constructive communication, the following steps have been, are being and will be taken to realize the following basic concept for decentralization:

Current Concept for Decentralization

Level	National	Regional	Municipal	School
Education area				
	Framework	Support for Implementation	Cooperation in the preparation of the school curriculum	School curriculum
Teacher prof. Development	Accreditation Licensing	Support for the Coordination, Support	Funding	Selection Implementation
Evaluation and assessment	Assessment system, Monitoring	Coordination Support		Implementation
Quality assurance – inspection	Guidelines	Implementation		Self-evaluation
Legal inspection	Second level	Coordination, Support	First level	
Information system	Development Use	Implementation	Implementation	Implementation
Funding by pupil	Formula Guidelines		Implementation	
Facilities			Ownership, Maintenance	

THE NATIONAL LEVEL¹

Main reform activities at this level are directed towards institution and capacity building.

- Council for Reform is set up and functioning, having regular monthly or biweekly sessions to discuss and endorse the current reform issues.
- NAFOS (National Forum for Education for All) is set up in the framework of UNESCO Education for All initiative
- Presumably, three councils will be established after passing the new law: Educational Council (for the development of preschool, primary and secondary education), Council for the development of vocational and adult education and Council for the harmonization of educational matters.

¹ The law on Establishing certain Jurisdictions of Autonomous Province, adopted in 2002, entrusted Autonomous Province of Vojvodina with some responsibilities in the education area. Among others, the most important are: establishing network of schools, establishing secondary schools, approving textbooks on languages of national minorities, designing school calendar, conducting second-level legal inspection etc.

- National level education development centers are being established, namely
 1. Center for Evaluation and Assessment, the third component of the Education Improvement Project funded through WB IDA credit proceeds.
 2. Center for Professional Development of Teachers, supported by SDC
 3. Center for Vocational Education and Training
- Four centres more are planned to be established within one year period (for accreditation, for artistic education, for textbooks and school curriculum development and for education of persons with special needs.
- Establishing of a unique Education Information System (EIS) is a task of a third project component funded through WB IDA credit proceeds. A German consultant firm GOPA (with regional and local partners) was contracted to develop a software and establish the system. The system is to be fully operational by spring 2005 and will serve as an important tool for decentralized decision-making.
- Internal MoES structure is re-organized and strengthened to ensure the organizational structure and appropriate capacities to contribute efficiently and effectively to the initiation and implementation of the education reform process through setting up below listed units.
 - Education Policy Unit
 - School infrastructure Unit
 - Media Unit
 - Education Reform Coordination Unit

THE REGIONAL LEVEL

Main activities are directed towards strengthening the role of the middle layer – regional education administration and building their capacity for the regional policy development.

The regional administration of education is now assured by 12 Regional Departments of MoES whose main function from the beginning of 1990s until recently has been the educational inspection. Their role and internal structure has been changing through:

- Strengthening the developmental role by involving them into the coordination of reform Implementation, cooperation in the development of new policies, procedures and activities,
- Introducing new job profiles and capacity building for the new tasks, such as school development planning, in-service teacher training coordination, quality assurance, education information system, regional and municipal development planning,
- Introducing the new methods of work coordination such as network management for which the training will be provided through the World Bank decentralization component and Twinning project,
- Intensifying international contacts and experience exchange through WB Projects – School Development in Serbia, EIS and “Twinning Project”. The basic concept of the twinning project is to strengthen the regional departments by cooperating with international partners on the jointly developed projects in the different reform areas that would build the necessary but lacking or insufficiently developed capacities of the RDs. The results will be shared and disseminated between all RDs and give the basis for the MoES regional policy. The international partners have been identified and are already preparing the joint projects with 8 RDs selected for the pilot phase.

THE MUNICIPAL LEVEL

- The Law on Local Self-Government, adopted in 2002, entrusted local self-governments with the responsibility for primary education (establishing institutions and organizations in the field of primary education, monitor and provide their functioning).
- Legal inspection was transferred to the municipal level through amendments to the Law on primary school and Law on secondary school, passed in spring 2002.

- The same legal act prescribes that members of the school board are to be appointed or dismissed by the municipal or city legislative body, as well as three out of nine members of school boards to be from local self-government.
- Strengthening the role of the municipalities for their tasks related to the school management, teacher professional development, legal inspection and maintenance and building of school infrastructure through the corresponding trainings will be provided under the WB project and by the Ministry
- At the moment the property of public education institution is owned by the state and envisaged shift of ownership to local self-governments is connected with overall public administration reform.

THE SCHOOL LEVEL

- New structure of the school boards is set up and regulated by the amendment to the Law on Primary and Secondary School. The board consists of nine members, three representatives of the parents, three of teaching staff and three of the local community administration.
- The new procedure for selecting the principals is introduced with the school board responsible for the selection procedure. The Minister only formally approves the selected candidate.
- The training program for school board members and principles to build their capacities for the new roles is prepared under the Decentralization component of the Education Improvement Project funded through World Bank IDA credit proceeds World Bank supported Education Improvement Project and is expected to start in October, 2003.
- School development planning and School grant, as another component of the Education Improvement Project funded through WB IDA credit proceeds, is being implemented. The pilot phase has started on the 1st February 2002 with the support of the Swiss Agency for the Development and Cooperation and KulturKontakt, Austria. The main phase, supported through the School development component of the World Bank has started in November 2002 involving 70 schools (primary and general secondary) from 12 regions. Generally, project comprises support for development of the school development programs through education and assistance in self-evaluation, strategic planning, team work, initiative conception, making school development plan, school project proposals and their realization.
- The new curriculum organization manner is fully adapted to the demands of a decentralized system and increased school autonomy. On the one hand, the national framework curriculum, that is, common core and same standards of expected achievement in respect of basic knowledge, skills and values, which will preserve system cohesion, will be defined at the national level. On the other hand, while creating the school curriculum, schools will be able to tackle the peculiarities of the environments they operate in, the characteristics and demands of their students (in respect of both determining the maximum number of classes and the contents of the school curriculum, as well as the method in which the set standards are attained in the particular school). Implementation of new curriculum starts in September 2003 for grade 1 of primary schools. Training of about 7000 teachers to implement new curriculum has started in February 2003.
- An accreditation system for teacher training programs is set up and functioning (The first Catalogue with 120 accredited teacher training programs is published and available in every school.) The schools are free to choose any program for their staff.

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