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CCNM/DEELSA/ED(2001)6/REV1



Organisation de Coopération et de Développement Economiques
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

English - Or. English

**CENTRE FOR CO-OPERATION WITH NON-MEMBERS
DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**CCNM/DEELSA/ED(2001)6/REV1
Unclassified**

THEMATIC REVIEW OF NATIONAL POLICIES FOR EDUCATION - KOSOVO

Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe

Table 1: Task Force on Education

English - Or. English

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FOREWORD

This report on education in Kosovo has been prepared within the framework of the Centre for Co-operation with Non-Members (CCNM) of the OECD as part of its programme of co-operation with the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe was originally published in 2001. Following a joint UNMIK, Ministry of Education and Science and OECD conference in June 2002 the report has been revised to reflect recent changes. The Secretariat, as Co-ordinator for General Education Policy and System Change of the Task Force for Education on Table 1 of the Stability Pact, has carried out a Thematic Review of Education Policy of the region with sections on Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYROM, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and a chapter on regional issues. The themes covered are teachers, curriculum, governance, and early childhood education and care. Each section provides an overview of the education system, issues and barriers to reform, and recommendations. The recommendations are designed to be of use for national policy makers and to assist Stability Pact donor countries and institutions target regional assistance. In addition, the reports can serve as the basis for more detailed analysis of individual education sectors.

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

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

The Thematic Reviews of Education Policy in South Eastern Europe were made possible by grants from Austria, Finland, Greece, Switzerland and UNICEF. Additional assistance was provided by the British Council, Bureau CROSS (The Netherlands), the European Training Foundation (ETF), New Zealand, the Open Society Foundation, the World Bank and the Centre for Educational Policy Studies (CEPS, University of Ljubljana).

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

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KOSOVO

General Data

Area:	10 887 sq. km. (One-third the size of Belgium).
Number of inhabitants:	2.1 million (1998 estimate). Population growth is about 20 000 per year. Average household size estimated at 6-7 persons. The population is the youngest in Europe, with an average age of 25 and approximately 50% under 20 years old. Highest birth rate in Europe (23.1 per 1 000) but also highest infant mortality rate (27.8 per 1 000 live births).
Population density:	193 per sq. km. Urban/rural distribution (pre-war): 30% urban, 70% rural. ¹
Ethnic composition:	The most recent (1991) census estimated ² a total population of 1.975 million, 82.2% Kosovo Albanian, 9.9% Kosovo Serb, 1% Montenegrin, 2.9% Muslims, 2.2% Roma, 0.5% Turks, 0.4% Croats, and 0.7% others. Prior to the 1998 and 1999 conflicts, the total population was estimated between 1.8 and 2.1 million, of which around 90% were Kosovo Albanian, 7% Kosovo Serb, and the remaining 3% Montenegrin, Bosniak, Turkish, and Roma. (Because during the recent conflict many people became refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs), and more than 100 000 Kosovo Serbs left Kosovo after the end of the conflict, these percentages are <i>not</i> reliable as of January 2001).
GDP (2001):	Estimated at EUR 950 per capita. 10% real growth rate ³

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1. Considerable 'urban drift', especially to Prishtina, has taken place in the aftermath of the war for reasons of security, employment, and basic services; the present urban/rural distribution is therefore uncertain. The many returnees and IDPs along with an important urban drift make it difficult to estimate. Primary schools (January 2000) have approximately 280 000 pupils, compared with 266 000 in 1999 and 305 000 in 1991.
 2. The total population of Kosovo is difficult to assess, as the Kosovo Albanians boycotted the most recent census in 1991. According to the *previous* census (1981) of a total of 1 585 000 inhabitants, 1 227 000 (78%) were Kosovo Albanians and 210 000 (13%) Kosovo Serbs.
 3. UNMIK, Fact Sheet Kosovo, June 2002.

Unemployment:	57.8% (registered in March 2002)
Levels of education governance:	Notionally, four: central Department of Education and Science (DES); five regional administrations (Prishtina, Mitrovica, Gjilan, Peja and Prizren ⁴), 30 municipalities with 1 500 villages and schools. (NOTE: Municipal elections were held successfully on October 28, 2000. Kosovo-wide elections are expected in November 2001. A recently established (2000) Department of Education and Science within the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) serves as <i>de facto</i> ministry, with a joint UNMIK/Kosovar arrangement with two ‘co-heads’, one international and one Kosovar. After elections in 2001, it is expected that a formal Kosovo Ministry of Education will be created out of the current UNMIK/Kosovar joint authority).

Introduction and Context

The purpose of this report is a narrow one, restricted to a survey of education systems in SEE countries and their present status and needs. Also, the background literature on the Kosovo conflict is prolific, and therefore no detailed discussion on the origins of or political issues around the conflict is necessary except as they affected, and still affect, Kosovo’s education system. A brief overview of the historical background will therefore suffice.

Before World War II, there were only 252 schools in Kosovo, all with Serbian as the language of instruction. When the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) was created in 1945, there were 392 schools; all had Serbian classes, but 292 of them also had Albanian-language classes, taught by some 300 Albanian teachers, 50 of them imported from Albania. A 1948 survey showed that 74% of Kosovo’s Albanian adult population was illiterate. Through subsequent provision of Albanian-language (and some Turkish-language) schooling on a large scale, enrolments rose steadily until by the late 1970s when 72% of the Albanian-speaking school-age group was enrolled. By the end of the 1980s, illiteracy is said to have dropped to as low as 10%,⁵ although it is now rising with returnees who encounter difficulties reintegrating.

By the time it was dissolved in 1991, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) consisted of six republics (Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina) and two autonomous provinces (Kosovo and Vojvodina). The SFRY Constitution of 1974 granted the two provinces similar⁶ rights to those of the six republics; they had their own parliamentary assemblies and seats in the Federal Parliament, although technically they were part of the Republic of Serbia. When the SFRY broke up in 1991, however, the international community recognised only the statehood claims of the republics; Kosovo and Vojvodina remained within Serbia and formed – with Montenegro – a ‘rump’ Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY).

Conditions for Kosovo Albanians then deteriorated rapidly. Already in 1989, the government of Serbia had begun to take steps to remove Kosovo’s autonomy and reinstate direct control from Belgrade.

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4. Education officers stationed in these five regions represent the UNMIK/DES. They meet with municipal directors of education to ensure implementation of UNMIK education policies.
 5. Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History*. London: Macmillan, 1998, p. 326.
 6. But not identical. There were differences in official language and self-determination rights.

The largely Kosovo Albanian population responded with protests and demonstrations, which were met with a declaration of a 'state of emergency' and repression by Serbian police. Over the following months and years, all power passed into the hands of Kosovo Serbs and others from Serbia itself; Kosovo Albanian managers, professionals, teachers, doctors and academics were removed from their posts or left the province. One of the main features of Albanian reaction to deterioration of their position in the nineties, was peaceful and mainly non-violent resistance.

The recent 'Kosovo conflict' itself had two distinct phases: February-October 1998, and March-June 1999. By 1997, the attitudes of much of the Kosovo Albanian population had hardened. A group calling itself the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) launched a series of attacks on Serb police stations and other targets; the police responded harshly. A significant flash point came in late February 1998 when Serb security forces mounted an operation in the Drenica region, which resulted in the deaths of many civilians including women and children. This further radicalised the majority population and swelled the ranks of the KLA.⁷ Despite international condemnation and the imposition of an arms embargo on the FRY by the UN Security Council, operations and attacks continued between March and October 1998. At this time the Serbian authorities announced that all 'anti-terrorist activities' in Kosovo had been completed, after the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1199 calling for an immediate cease-fire and the presence of international monitors in Kosovo. At that time, the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that more than 294 000 Kosovo Albanians had been displaced from their homes, although most remained within the province.

The presence of the OSCE monitors did not prevent the Serb authorities from further troop movements and clashes with the KLA. Despite political and diplomatic initiatives in early 1999, the OSCE monitors had to be hurriedly withdrawn on 20 March, and NATO issued an ultimatum demanding Serbia's adherence to the cease-fire agreement. On 24 March 1999 NATO forces began its aerial bombardment of FRY targets as Serbia declared a state of war. Within Kosovo, fighting between the KLA and Serb forces (although on far lower level) continued throughout the period of NATO air strikes, with attacks on civilian populations reaching a new level of intensity; civilians were expelled from their homes in a swift wave across the province. By 9 June 1999, approximately 862 000 Kosovo Albanians from towns and villages had left the province for neighbouring countries (Albania and Macedonia). Thousands more remained internally displaced. Images from the border points and from the refugee camps in these countries were shown daily in the international media. Finally, on 10 June 1999, an agreement was signed; the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1244 authorising an international security presence in Kosovo as well as the appointment of a Special Representative to establish a parallel international civil presence (UNMIK) to serve as Kosovo's *de facto* interim government. NATO air strikes were suspended, and two days later NATO forces (Kosovo Protection Force or KFOR) took up positions in Prishtina to oversee the complete withdrawal of FRY/Serbian forces from the province.

The return of refugees from Macedonia and Albania was swift. Within three weeks, half a million had returned to Kosovo; by November 1999, UNHCR estimated a figure of more than 800 000. At the same time, more than 180 000 people – mostly Serbs but also Roma – had been driven out or had fled, and several hundred died. An autumn 1999 KFOR survey estimated that fewer than 100 000 Serbs (5% of the population) remained in Kosovo, often in KFOR-protected enclaves and in divided towns such as Mitrovica where Serbs live to the north of the River Ibar and Albanians to the south. (Because it adjoins Serbia, the Serb part of Mitrovica has, in effect, become an adjunct of Serbia proper.) Clashes here are frequent, and KFOR troops patrol the bridge that connects the two communities.

7. International Crisis Group, *Reality Demands: Documenting Violations of International Humanitarian Law in Kosovo 1999*. Brussels, 2000, p.49.

The Education System

- Age at which compulsory education starts: 6 (from September 2000; UNMIK regulation 2000/51).
- Age at which compulsory education ends: 15
- Structure of general educational system: Primary 5 years (from 09/2001) + Lower Secondary 4 years (for a total of 9 years basic compulsory education) + Upper Secondary 4 years.⁸
- Structure of vocational education system: 3 or 4 years after basic school; *definitiva* exam after 3 years; ‘Maturate’ or final exams after 4 years of technical or vocational education.
- Examinations/transition points: No formal exams at end of grade 5; internal school-leaving tests with certificate of completion after grade 9; entrance exams into upper secondary (vocational or general), grade 10; ‘definitive’ exams after 3 years of vocational secondary, or ‘Maturate’ exams (school-based) at end of grade 13; faculty-set entrance exams into university.

One extraordinary feature of the Kosovo education system was the existence, between 1992 and 1999, of two separate systems – one (official, small) for Kosovo Serb children and one (unofficial, large) for Kosovo Albanian children. As of March 1991, the financing of all Albanian-language schools ceased and companies publishing textbooks in Albanian were closed. In 1992, the Serb authorities sacked 23 000 Kosovo Albanian teachers on the same day and imposed a unified Serbian curriculum, effectively closing down Albanian-language education altogether.

Between 1992 and 1998, a self-financed shadow or ‘parallel’ Albanian system of education existed alongside the Serb system.⁹ Primary school children could, in some cases, continue to use their schools but if Serbian children also attended, the buildings were divided in half or a shift system was worked out. Most secondary and all university students, however, had their lessons in private locations. In 1998, there were 266 400 primary, 58 700 secondary and 16 000 university students in the parallel system. Money to pay teachers came from a 3% ‘income tax’ the shadow tax authorities representing Provisional Government of the Republic of Kosovo collected as best they could from families, businesses and the Kosovo Albanian diaspora. (The shadow state Fund for the Republic of Kosovo raised donations in almost all Western countries, and accounted for some 30% of the shadow state’s budget.) The ‘parallel’ schools, although openly conducted and to some extent tolerated by the Serb authorities, were also subject to repression and intimidation. Quality inevitably suffered and numbers decreased, especially among girls.¹⁰ By 1996, primary school enrolment was down by nearly 12%; secondary school enrolment by 21%; and university enrolment by nearly half. Books were a chronic problem, especially in teaching science to older students or medicine at university level.

Politically, the ‘parallel’ system had (and still has) tremendous symbolic power. For example, school papers were all stamped as being issued by the ‘Republic of Kosovo’, in open defiance of the Serb

8. Until September 2001, the actual structure is still 4+4+4.

9. This was not the first time in Kosovo’s history that schools became an instrument of resistance. After Serbian troops reoccupied Kosovo in 1918, Albanian language schools were closed. Then as in 1992, the policy backfired: schools continued to exist unofficially, and became centres of underground Albanian nationalism and education. Books were smuggled from Albania, and teachers were paid from private sources. See Tim Judah, *Kosovo: War and Revenge*, 2000, pp. 21-22.

10. Lynn Davies, “Education in Kosova: Report to the British Council”₂ University of Birmingham, UK. August 1999 (unpublished paper). While some students stopped attending, the greatest drop was due to emigration, especially among university students.

authorities. (Certificates of this kind were not, of course, recognised by the authorities, but were accepted by a number of other countries.)

Other issues

- *Extreme material impoverishment* of the education infrastructure, due not only to destruction during the 1998/99 crises but also to the 7-8 years of under-resourcing while the parallel system struggled to keep the Kosovo Albanian system going. In addition, of the total number of school buildings in Kosovo (approximately 950, used mostly by Serb students) nearly all had poor facilities; 15% had no toilets of any kind; only 20% had a water supply inside the building. Therefore it is not just a question of Albanian students moving into reasonably well equipped Serb schools: *all* are seriously deficient.
- *Serious disruption of education for many children and young people*, in some municipalities as early as April 1998. An estimated 95 000 children were excluded from education either because schools were closed or destroyed, or because their families were internally displaced (IDPs). At that stage, at least 100 schools were destroyed or seriously damaged. During the 1999 refugee crisis, no schooling took place although efforts were made to provide temporary help in refugee camps in FYR Macedonia and Albania. After the war, 290 schools (37%) were completely destroyed or damaged beyond use; 800 had suffered damage. Most schools had inadequate water and sanitation facilities (some had none at all). While emergency rehabilitation is proceeding well, basic equipment and books are still not available in every school.
- *Low teacher salaries, and lack of trained school administrators*. Although in the parallel system teachers were used to working in difficult conditions for little or no pay, they saw their work at that time as a ‘patriotic sacrifice’ and as part of nation building. Now, however, teachers cannot be expected to work towards reform unless they are paid properly. Although teachers are remarkably patient, they are justified in wanting better conditions. The new contracts (see section on Teachers) are a good start but more support and training are needed.
- *Non-attendance and dropout*, even during the compulsory cycle. Data are unreliable but they indicate that only approximately 80% of 7-15 age cohort is in school; while for the 16-18 age group this drops to 37-38%.¹¹ Moreover, there is a steady erosion of school attendance as a cohort moves through the system, not only at transitions from one level to another but in between as well. For example, *Libri Shkollor* figures¹² for 2000 showed 35 000 students at the end of grade 4, 29 000 at the end of grade 8 dropping immediately to 21 000 at the start of grade 9, 13-14 000 taking Maturita exams at the end of grade 12, and fewer than 5 000 entering higher education.

11. 2000 figures, before 6 year olds were included in primary.

12. Textbook company. ‘Accurate figures exist for Albanian-language students, less precise ones for Turkish and Bosniak students, and none at all for Serb students.’

Statistical data

Education data for Kosovo are unreliable, because methods of collection vary and because of population shifts due to returning refugees and, to a lesser extent, internal movements of people.¹³ The United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) estimates that each month some 15 000 persons return from abroad; of the 100 000 refugees returned from Germany in spring 2000, for example, 30 000 were school-age children.

Table 1. **Schools by Type and Population (2000)**

School Type	No. of schools	No. of students	No. of teachers	Pupil: Teacher ratio (P:TR)	P:TR by ethnic stream
ALL TYPES	1 022 + 164 prep. classes	401 899	22 490	17.9:1	Not avail. 18:1
Pre-primary	21 Kindergartens + 164 prep.classes in primary	12 240	596	14:7 in KG 27.8:1 in prep classes	Albanian 16:1 Turk. 13:1 Serb 17:1 Alb,
Primary 1-8	919	286 940	15 788	17:1	Turk.,Bosn; 7:1 Serb
Secondary general	2754	31 318	1 929	16:1	19:1 Alban.
Secondary VET		49 343	3 094	20:1	8:1 Serb
Higher education	1 university consisting of 14 faculties + 7 higher schools	22 058	1 083	20:1	Not avail.

Source: CEPS, Ljubljana, December 2000. Drawn from UNMIK Statistical Book of Kosovo, 1999-2000.

A survey by UNICEF soon after the end of the conflict found that 45% of the 1 000 schools surveyed had been either severely damaged or destroyed, and that most schools had poor water, heating and sanitation facilities. The first priority at the time was to get students back to school, and to concentrate on reconstruction, repair, and replacement of furniture.

By September 2000, more than 400 schools had been repaired and re-opened; an estimated 380 000 students were back in the system, most of whom are Kosovo Albanians with Serb, Turkish and Roma minorities. The DES will continue its responsibility during the school year 2000/01, gradually handing over responsibility to the municipalities after the October 2000 municipal elections (see Education Policy Paper, 7 January, 2001).

Legal Framework and Policy Objectives

Resolution 1244 envisaged Kosovo as a multi-ethnic society in a safe and secure environment. In reality, however, very few schools are 'multi-ethnic' – and they operate with separate language streams and shift arrangements, which provide little or no opportunity for children and teachers from different ethnic backgrounds to mix. Generally, the inter-ethnic situation remains extremely tense, especially in the north of Kosovo (*e.g.*, the divided city of Mitrovica). Nevertheless, the international community remains committed to ensuring a peaceful multi-ethnic society, with an education system that serves the needs of Kosovo's young society and reflects modern European standards.

13. Some 61% of the population declared to have been forced to move from their place of residence in the 12 months preceding the May 2000 survey. For the Serbian community, lack of education was cited by 13% of these migrants. (Kosovo Demographic, Socio-economic and Reproductive Health Survey Basic Results. International Organisation for Migration, May 2000.

In the absence of new education laws, many of the old FRY laws still apply, at least formally. In practice, the system functions according to regulations issued by DES that has a special “legal officer”. New laws for general and vocational education and school organisation are underway, and are seen as ‘a comprehensive, lean guideline under which the autonomy of schools and municipalities can grow’.¹⁴

UNMIK is committed to achieving two main goals in the field of education. First, ensuring rapid resumption of schooling and continued learning during the transition to an elected, democratically accountable government. Second, supporting the longer-term reconstruction and transformation of the education system to reflect the needs of a modern European society.

The October 1999 DESK¹⁵ draft discussion document outlined a strategy for achieving these two goals, and for a smooth transition from UNMIK’s interim administration to local governance in the educational sector. The DESK model sought to create a framework for co-operation between UNMIK, donors, UN and international agencies, NGOs and local administrators and specialists, bringing them together in working groups. However, this approach did not work well in practice, and has now been replaced by a system of ‘Lead Agencies’ (international agencies taking responsibility for a specific task) working under the direction of UNMIK’s recently established (March 2000) Department of Education and Science (DES), responsible for all education and science affairs. DES also seeks to co-ordinate NGO activities to ensure maximum effectiveness and prevent overlap.

In terms of education policy, a major principle is ‘inclusive education’: *all* children and young people of Kosovo should have the possibility to go to school. Other issues are (1) narrowing the gap between content-based and competence- and standards-based teaching and learning, and (2) further development of education in minority languages.

In September 2000, the DES issued several important directives. A new contract for teachers was introduced, including a school calendar. The contract sets out the duties of school administrators, teachers, support staff, and maintenance staff. The school director has the power to hire staff, and is responsible for evaluating the quality of teaching and ensuring professional growth. Other major directives stated that (1) all children who have reached the age of 6 by the start of the academic year must be in school, and must remain in school until the age of 15; (2) parents will face a fine if they do not register their children, although exemptions from attendance can be given in certain cases (*e.g.*, children receiving home health care); (3) the primary cycle is extended from 4 to 5 years, followed by 4 years of pre-secondary education for a total of 9 years of compulsory (basic) education; (4) a programme of curriculum reform is under way, with UNICEF designated to be the Lead Agency in primary and secondary curriculum reform. Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is launching a huge teacher training project, which is expected to play a significant role in reforms of the education system in Kosovo.

Administration and Systemic Reform

Governance and management

As noted above, all Kosovo-wide education governance and management functions are the responsibility of UNMIK/DES, with a central office in Prishtina, and regional offices in Prishtina, Mitrovica, Gjilan, Peja and Prizren. All teachers’ contracts, for instance, are signed directly with

14. Michael Daxner, Education Policy Paper, January 2001, p.13.

15. D.E.S.K (“Design of the Education System of Kosovo”). Concept Paper, UNMIK Education Section 17 October 1999.

UNMIK/DES. The intention is to devolve responsibility (including fiscal responsibility) for education as much as possible to the 30 municipal authorities. Municipal elections were held in October 2000 and local education administrations are being set up.

Governments can help improve the quality of education mainly through setting standards, supporting inputs known to improve achievement, adopting flexible strategies for the acquisition and use of inputs, and monitoring performance. World-wide, the tendency is that national governments take responsibility for quality of outcomes by setting up and supervising structures for the organization and the management of the education system, while delegating responsibility for inputs and processes of learning to local or school level. Kosovo still has a long way to go before it will find itself among the countries that are successfully applying this strategy.

Renewal of education in Kosovo is hampered by time constraints, lack of funds, and insufficient skill of many actors. 'The solution is to prepare the system for a long period of emergency status' during implementation: there will be no normal labour relations, there will be overcrowded facilities, and there will be low salaries.¹⁶

Issues and barriers in governance and management

- *Building on the 1992-98 shadow or parallel system.* It created a powerful sense of decentralised, local initiative and energy, despite the weakness of central legislative or policy direction. 'Because they have run their own education and health systems for almost a decade, they are already the world's largest NGO'¹⁷. Re-establishing a viable legal and policy framework for the whole of Kosovo without losing the strengths of local involvement is a serious challenge. There are few signs that the current administration is able to/wants to harness these forces to continue working with the new system.
- *Influence of party and ethnic politics.* Governance and management are deeply influenced by party and ethnic politics. To keep a balance, representatives from rivaling Albanian parties are appointed who do not always communicate well with each other. Serbian minority policy is a key issue; in fact there are now no Serbian students or staff members at the University of Prishtina and many instances of discrimination against non-Albanian students are reported.
- *Shortage of professional managers.* There are not enough professional and experienced managers, nor are there training programmes to provide them, although UNMIK now has some proposals under discussion.
- *Involvement of stakeholders.* UNMIK had the unrewarding task of taking on a ruined system and establishing an infrastructure to make schools work again at short notice. Kosovo depends heavily on international aid: Kosovo itself generates only 40% of the income it needs. Salaries, for example, are likely to remain low for some years, with no pension rights and little social security; although UNMIK tries to involve stakeholders, many legitimate wishes simply cannot be met. This leads to dissatisfaction and frustration. The Teachers' Union (SBASHK) is critical of the new contracts which have no provisions for retirement or maternity leave, and no job description; parents and teachers complain that they are not consulted about the curriculum; community participation 'does not exist'. The sudden change of the entrance age to 6 years (announced only two weeks before the school year began) was met with general criticism. The change has severe repercussions on classrooms, textbooks,

16. Michael Daxner, Education Policy Statement 2001, p.8.

17. Quoted in Lynn Davies, *Education in Kosovo*, p. 35.

transport, and the system of early childhood education. Stakeholders resent the many visits by international teams, and their reports and recommendations that do not produce any real change.

Equity in access, attainment and achievement

When Kosovo's relative autonomy was abolished in 1991, a large number of 'temporary measures' were passed to re-impose rule from Belgrade. These included regulations that led to the dismissal or resignation of most Albanians in public sector jobs, journalism, medicine and the police. In education, the Serbian curriculum was imposed on Albanian-language students; when teachers protested, many were sacked, restrictions were placed on the number of children who could be taught in Albanian, and eventually the police prevented teachers and students from entering schools. A policy of 'rationalisation' followed, whereby for the 36 000 Albanian children finishing primary school in 1991 only 6 000 places were made available in secondary school (all Serb and Montenegrin students got a place). More than 860 academic staff of the University of Prishtina were fired, and it became effectively a Serbian-only institution.

Therefore, at least during the period 1991-99, there was no equity in access, attainment and achievement between ethnic groups in Kosovo. However, it should be said that most of the Serb schools were also in a poor state, and that 'quality' in education was low for most students in Kosovo, although opportunities were better for some.

The present situation still favours some groups over others. Although conditions are harsh for all, they are worse for some, and the pattern of non-attendance and dropout raises serious questions about *who is being served* (and who is missing out). Finally, simple quantitative access without quality cannot be called 'access to education'. It is understandable that material reconstruction of the system has taken priority, but the issue of educational quality for *all* children and young people must not be neglected. A minority officer has been appointed to the DES, who will supervise, develop and co-ordinate all issues pertaining to minorities.

Special education: only a very small percentage of disabled students attend school. There are three schools and two departments in Kosovo catering for special-needs children, with a combined total of 450 students. The long-term aim is to mainstream children as much as possible into regular schools, but for the moment this is not a realistic option.

Dropout is a significant problem. Approximately 7% of primary school pupils drop out before completing; at secondary level, only 66% of students starting secondary school complete it, giving a non-completion rate of 34%.¹⁸

Finance issues

Fiscal policy in Kosovo can only be rudimentary, given the present circumstances. It is a cash-based, Deutschmark economy without domestic financial instruments, no domestic currency, a weak banking and credit system, and operating either without clear laws or spasmodically, under FRY laws and regulations that are not conducive to attracting foreign investors. Budgets are not unified; recurrent budgets are met by a mixture of local taxation and donor support, while capital budgets are entirely donor-funded. The collection of custom tariffs, excise duties, and taxes is hampered by limited tax administration capability and widespread avoidance. Recurrent education budget for year 2000 is approximately

18. CEPS, Ljubljana, December 2000.

57.9 million EUR (approximately 56.7 million USD), out of which 78.5 % are allocated for wages and salaries. Total public expenditure on education represents around 14 % of estimated GDP, a percentage that is over twice the OECD average of 6%. It also represents 27.5 % of total public expenditure in Kosovo, nearly double of the OECD average. The high share of education in public spending is to be expected as donor funding is focused on Kosovo's most basic public services.¹⁹

Political opinions disagree about the optimal level of public expenditure for education. Proposals appear to converge, however, on 5-7% of GNP, which reflects the practice in many countries. There is less disagreement about two related points: (1) that public investment in basic education is necessary, (2) that public spending should give basic education the highest priority (*e.g.*, in relation to non-compulsory secondary and higher education), especially when enrolments are low.

Table 2. **Government expenditure on education and training**

Category	Amount	Source of Data
Public spending on education	N/A	...
As a percentage of GDP		
Public spending on education	28%	World Bank
As a percentage of all public spending		Feb 2000
Education spending per student	99 EUR	World Bank
(primary education)		November 1999
Education spending per student	135 EUR	
(secondary education)		
Education spending per level:		
Pre-school	5%	WB
Primary education	65%	February 2000
Secondary education	19%	
Higher education	11%	
Average monthly teachers salary:		
Pre-school	148 EUR	
Primary education	148 EUR	September 2000
Secondary education	163 EUR	
Higher education	153-276 EUR	

Source: CEPS, December 2000.

The parallel school system in Kosovo did create a habit, among the Albanian population, of raising resources for the schools: it operated essentially as a large NGO, outside government funding or control. At present, education is financed largely by the international community and administered through UNMIK, as there is as yet no stable tax base either at central or municipal level. A key fiscal policy relates to fiscal devolution to the 30 municipalities; however, the municipalities vary widely in size, economic potential, income per capita, taxable assets such as land, businesses etc., and capacity to administer their own tax systems.

Devolution in education financing and governance to the municipalities in the form of block grants based on a per-student formula would improve equity of funding across Kosovo. This would also provide incentives for municipalities to manage education resources efficiently, on the condition that any savings be used to benefit the municipality's education system.

Private sector development is mostly in small and medium-size enterprises, and in services. There are at present no private schools or private higher education institutions in Kosovo, although three institutions (acting, journalism and communications) did previously exist.

19. The World Bank: Kosovo Poverty Assessment, volume 2, Report No. 23390-KOS, December 2001.

Curriculum: Intended, Delivered and Achieved

Standards and Curriculum²⁰

Before 1990, the educational institutions in Kosovo were co-ordinated independently from Serbia within the general framework of autonomy, with the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture of Kosovo as the highest administrative body. The educational authorities of Kosovo were *free to develop and approve the curricula* and to control the whole educational system of Kosovo.

In Primary and Secondary schools Albanian and Serbian language functioned as parallel mediums of education. This arrangement was based on the Yugoslav constitutional framework of 1974. This framework included regulations for minority protection, which guaranteed the Kosovo-Albanians an important degree of national equality among the nations of the former SFRY. In addition, Turkish was recognised as a third official language in Kosovo.

This educational system, curriculum included, was relatively successful in raising quality standards. For example, after the Second World War, the literacy rates increased close to the average literacy rates in the region and the neighbouring countries. Since the establishment of University of Prishtina in 1970, more than 60 000 students had graduated and more than 60% in the Albanian language by 1996.

In 1989/90 Kosovo's autonomy was abolished. This had serious effects on the educational system, curriculum issues included. The Kosovo legislation on education, science and culture, as well as the decisional autonomy concerning curriculum were annulled in 1991. Serbian laws and curriculum were introduced instead and school buildings of primary and secondary education were closed down by force. By 1991/92 all Albanian-language education had essentially gone 'underground' in the parallel (shadow) system described above.

The curriculum of the 'parallel' system was inevitably aimed also at promoting Albanian nationalism. At elementary and secondary level, the old 14-subjects curriculum was maintained as far as possible. The shadow state tried to align curricula to Albanian requirements and began importing textbooks from there. This legacy has left Kosovo with curricula that are old-fashioned and fact-laden; they should now be modernised and streamlined along more modern lines, as has happened in neighbouring countries during the 7-8 years 'lost' to Kosovo due to its isolation from educational reforms elsewhere. Interviews and reports from international specialists indicate the need of introduction of new subjects, such as civics, history and geography devoid of nationalist propaganda, education for tolerance, sex education, AIDS prevention and drugs education, and introducing art and drama to support unification and help heal the traumas of the war.

Curriculum: Interim Arrangements 1999/2000 and 2000/2001

Despite all efforts and regulations, there is no 'unified' education and curriculum system in Kosovo. The Albanian and Serbian education systems and the communities they serve have so far remained separate entities, even if both are under UNMIK administration. As a consequence, there is, for the Kosovo Albanians, the former education system and curriculum, which had been operating during the

20. See *Assessment Practice and Policy Sheet, Kosovo* (Johanna Crighton) and Lynn Davies, "Education in Kosova: Report to the British Council". University of Birmingham, UK. August 1999 (unpublished paper).

“parallel model”(1991-1999) and which became part of the new arrangements after the establishment of UNMIK. For Serb students, there is a “sub-system” that is still beholden to Belgrade which provides the curricula and textbooks to the schools attended by the Serbian minority. Then there are other ethnic groups, such as Roma, Bosniaks and Turks that do not have separate ‘systems’; starting with 2000, they are mostly included in Albanian schools (for instance, some of the schools visited by the OECD mission in the Regions of Peja or Pristina). As for the curriculum in Albanian schools – which serve 90% or more of the total school population in Kosovo – UNMIK and Kosovar education counterparts have decided (at least until September 2001) to keep the curriculum that was in use under the parallel system.

New Structure for the Education System

From the 2000/01 school year, an important change was made that will significantly affect curriculum development. The first cycle of primary school was extended to five years, starting at the age of 6. Children are taught in self-contained classrooms. At grade 6, students enter a second cycle of primary (sometimes called lower secondary) education (four years); different teachers independently teach all subjects. The curriculum includes mother tongue, a foreign language (in most cases, English), mathematics, biology and physics (from grade 6), chemistry (from grade 7), history, geography, civics, arts and physical education. The four-year general upper secondary school continues much the same, with some additional subjects – as many as 15 or 16.

Quality of the Curriculum

Because of the difficulties Kosovo went through between 1990-1999, existing curricula for different subjects are excessively encyclopaedic, knowledge-, content- and information-centred, whereas in other countries curriculum approaches aim at developing students’ cognitive capacities; the curricula offer a narrow variety of learning opportunities and experiences. The excessively subject-based approach inhibits trans- and inter-disciplinary as well as cross-curricular work. There is no choice of subjects for students, although many demand it. There is a real need to update traditional disciplines and incorporate broader social and cognitive outcomes that should be attainable by the majority of students. The DES has started to review the ‘content’ of curricula for general education, but there is a need to first implement new approaches and procedures in curriculum development and teaching practices.

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

The education system that Kosovo inherited from the past is quite rigid in its teaching/learning methods; this has negatively influenced the quality of teaching and the education process as a whole. Due to its isolation in the past decade, the Kosovo education system could not absorb some major changes in education (especially in didactics, teaching practices, pedagogy) that have taken place in OECD or some former communist countries of Central Europe (Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Romania).

Classes are often large and over-crowded; some, *e.g.*, in Skenderaj, still functioning in temporary huts. Teachers – many of them unqualified – teach 20 or more hours each week; students have five or six subjects each day, approximately 24-30 hours per week. Students attend school in shifts – some schools have two, and a few have three shifts. Teacher-pupil relationships and individual attention suffer from this. The teaching is mainly “authoritarian”, “frontal” or “directive”; the teacher-centred model is predominant. Rote learning is common, with little attention to discovery and group-work, debate, problem solving, project activities, portfolio work. Teachers use the lecture method, and students memorise the material. Exceptions are mostly the experimental programmes introduced by various NGOs in a few schools, as well as a number of local initiatives.

Textbook Provision and Teaching Aids

Textbooks were generally imported from Albania or developed in Kosovo during the parallel system. The pool of experienced and competent authorship is therefore small and potential writers have not had a chance to show their skills. A consortium of several donors has funded the reprinting of existing textbooks, at least for core primary and secondary subjects, for use during the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years, pending a curriculum and textbook review in the coming years. Many schools lack basic instructional and laboratory materials, support materials, athletic equipment, and other teaching aids; therefore students learn theory rather than application. DES intends to equip science laboratories with basic laboratory equipment in 2000/01.

Curriculum Reform

In July 2000, UNMIK/DES introduced the concept of 'lead agencies'. These are seen as the main (but not the only) technical and co-ordinating bodies in different sectors. UNICEF was invited to act as Lead Agency in curriculum design, together with the International Bureau of Education (IBE).²¹

The selection of a core development group has been widely advertised, and initial training for the core group as well as an international workshop on current curriculum trends will be organised. In August 2000, the DES employed a curriculum development officer to support and co-ordinate the process. The deadline for the new curriculum framework has been set for June 2001; implementation will begin with the 2001/2002 school year.²²

Meanwhile, a number of school-based – 'bottom-up' – initiatives have already begun to change the curriculum. More than 100 NGOs are working to improve learning in the short term, using for example such new curricula as the 'Step by Step' programme of the Open Society Foundation, which involves teachers, directors, students and parents and has already been successful in other Central and Eastern European countries. In addition, Finnish Support to the Development of Education in Kosovo (FSDEK) that started in September 2000 aims to improve the quality of education in special-needs institutions. DES co-ordinates the efforts of NGOs and international projects.

Assessment and Examinations

In the old system, there was no evaluation and assessment function at Ministry level; all was devolved to schools. These used to send their results to the Pedagogical Institutes, which in turn would prepare an overview for the municipal education authorities. All these records, however, were based on oral assessment of individual students, with little differentiation between levels of achievement. The education component of the Kosovo Education and Health Project, to be financed from a World Bank grant, includes the establishment of a small unit (within UNMIK/DES) staffed by trained specialists to measure and monitor the quality of education outcomes. This unit would conduct sample based national assessments of educational performance in some key domains. Another component of this project is the establishment of an Educational Management Information System.

DES issues guidelines regarding certificates and diplomas of completion (DES [I]1/2000, 12/6/00), but practices are still very much as they were in the old system. Primary schools organise

21. See *Minutes of the Meeting on Curriculum Development*, Prishtina, DES, 3-5 September 2000.

22. This time frame is very tight and probably underestimates the complexities involved in introducing the additional year for 6-year olds. Effects are bound to be felt throughout the system.

informal school-based exit tests at the end of grade 9, leading to a certificate of completion (cohort size 29 000²³). Entrance exams into grade 10 (first grade of secondary education) are held by the receiving school (cohort size 21 000). The former Pedagogical Institute in Prishtina developed some sample tests that were published in booklet form and are used by teachers and students (*e.g.* in Mathematics) as learning materials. Secondary (*Maturita*) exams are both written and oral, and are set and marked by teachers (cohort size 13-14 000). Question types are mixed; in maths and science, multiple-choice and short-answer as well as extended answer questions are used. In humanities subjects, essays are usual.

Every faculty of the university organises its own entrance exams. These usually test rather basic and factual knowledge, and do not attempt to assess the aptitude of students to follow an academic programme. (Hence, there is little sense in continuing these exams in addition to the new-style *Maturita* exams, once they are comparable and of sufficient quality.)

A student's entrance exam results determine 70% of her/his ranking in the order of admission; 30% is determined by the success in secondary education. Faculties where the number of applicants is much lower than the number of places available (*e.g.* the Faculty of Mining, Mitrovica²⁴) use less strict criteria. Students who failed may re-sit the exam in autumn. Usually, results on an entrance exam for one faculty are not recognised by another. Students who did well in the Olympiads, held annually in some subjects (maths, physics, and history), have an advantage in gaining university entrance. In March 2000, the International Administrator of Prishtina University issued instructions for admission of regular students to the university and higher schools (IA [I] 3/2000), stating that all graduates from Kosovo secondary schools are eligible for admission, and should take entrance exams when applying for faculties of medicine, physical education, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, civil engineering, architecture and arts, or for a faculty or higher school where the number of places is lower than the number of applicants.

Issues and Barriers in curriculum, standards and assessment

- *The present process of change* is the first 'real curriculum reform' for over 25 years: there is a great deal to do. But the time frame is very tight, as the DES and local educators want to modernise the curriculum as quickly as possible. Moving from an old-fashioned content-based approach toward an outcomes-based one will take more time than is available; there is also a danger of repeating past mistakes.
- *The rigidities of the centralised curriculum system*, based essentially on textbook content, stifle curriculum development initiatives designed to encourage student intellectual inquiry, self-development, teamwork, and communication.
- *Curriculum change in one sector of the system will affect all other sectors*. Universities and teacher training institutions also need to undergo radical change and rethink their roles. Above all, however, there needs to be classroom change. The role of the teacher should be

23. Cohort sizes were taken from "Education in Kosovo: From Crisis to Recovery and Transformation" by Michael Daxner (paper for Graz Stability Pact Meeting, March 2000).

24. After the recent closedown of the nearby lead and zinc mines, the main employer of graduates from this run-down faculty, enrolments will probably drop even more. Output records have been dramatically low for a number of years: only 6% of the first years make it to their graduation, while only a quarter of these find a job in the mining profession. Nevertheless, there are no plans for switching activities to adjacent fields that do need highly skilled staff, such as waste disposal and soil cleaning.

redefined. The teacher needs to be seen as a professional, able to maximise resources to help students meet educational goals.

- *There is a lack of professional capacity in, and strategic vision of, curriculum reform*, even among UNMIK/DES staff. Also, co-ordination among lead agencies and UNMIK/DES.
- *Unification of the curriculum for general education*. There are powerful political reasons against the creation of a unified curriculum. Nevertheless, an explicit, coherent and valid *curriculum framework* is needed, and could be acceptable. For political and general democratic reasons, however, Kosovo minorities – above all Serbian – must have the right to be taught in their own language, and curricula that accommodate minority issues and differences.
- *Curriculum coherence and consistency*. There is no *systemic consistency* within the current curriculum. The aims for primary, lower and upper secondary education are not defined; neither are general and specific objectives and outcomes of various subjects. There is no *conceptual and structural consistency across different subjects*, as, generally speaking, the content units of the syllabuses are viewed in an isolated, subject-based perspective, without any type of integration across subjects or subject areas.
- *The pursuit of ‘European standards’*. It is widely said in Kosovo that the ultimate goal (in curriculum, teacher training, institutional development etc.) should be to implement or apply ‘European standards’. Very rarely, however, was there some understanding of what these standards might represent. Examples named included a shift from the ‘lecturing’ model to ‘interactive learning’; introducing ‘science’ as a single subject to replace the separate subjects chemistry, biology and physics; or introducing new subjects such as civics. In other cases, ‘European standards’ referred to the quality of buildings, equipment, furniture, computers, and even on occasion to teacher salaries. The truth is that ‘standards’ vary widely across Europe, and no time should be wasted on trying to imitate, piece-meal, practices that may or may not suit Kosovo’s reality or be coherent among themselves. Nonetheless, OECD benchmarks provide goals that could be helpful guides.
- *Congestion and overload*. The curricula show many separate subjects: 14 at the end of primary education and 16 at secondary. The content of these subjects is fact-ridden. Both have a negative effect on teaching methods, the depth of knowledge and understanding, and preparation for work or further education.
- *Relevance to the majority of students*. There is still a tendency to define upper-secondary curricula in terms of the expectations of higher education. In reality, however, these expectations are relevant only to a small proportion of students (only 4 545 were admitted to university in 2000, for example), while the large majority need to prepare for the world of work. Shifting the emphasis from content-based to competence-based teaching and learning is essential at this level, which in any case would also benefit those who *do* go on to higher education.
- *Need to involve teachers in the design and development of the curriculum, and in the improvement of school climate*. Current research shows clearly that curriculum renewal in a school is not merely a result of top-down introduction of change: the essential unit for improvement is the whole-school group of teachers and administrators. They need to learn and change together if the school’s ‘climate’ is to improve permanently.

- *Need to introduce psycho-social programmes in the curriculum.* The curriculum needs to respond to the severe trauma suffered by most of the Kosovo population (many of them children) during the 1998/99 crisis. The aim would be to acknowledge and heal the wounds of the past, to overcome ethnic barriers insofar as possible, and to build a basis for preventing future clashes.
- *Lack of procedures and data for monitoring and comparing the outcomes of education;* lack of impact of assessment data on educational policy. There is now no system of monitoring outcomes on a Kosovo-wide level, nor are there clear standards to serve as the basis for comparison; it seems unclear to officials why such comparisons would be useful in highlighting areas of poor (or good) performance, and in making informed policy decisions.
- *Inefficiency of the assessment and examination procedures.* Teachers set their own tests, using mostly oral testing. There is no professional support, and no standardisation to enable them to compare their outcomes with those of other teachers. The university entrance exams do not add anything useful to information that can also be obtained from professional school leaving exams; ‘double exams’ of this kind are inefficient, wasteful and a burden on students.

Education Personnel

Teachers

As has been set out above, many Kosovo Albanian teachers and professors were dismissed after the imposition of Belgrade control in 1990, and by March 1991 the Serbian government stopped paying salaries to those remaining. This was the beginning of the parallel (shadow) Albanian education system that has left its mark on today’s teaching cadre; many present initiatives that aim at improving the capacity and effectiveness of the teaching staff are connected to the years of the parallel system.

During those 8 years, Albanian-language teachers were deprived of in-service training and exposure to new educational developments. Many unqualified volunteers joined the teaching force, developing their skills on the job. UNMIK is now signing new contracts with all teachers (September to December 2000), as part of a systemic reorganisation. There is the plan to grant the status of ‘Provisional Teacher’ to those teachers who cannot, by way of certificate or references, prove their qualifications.²⁵ if they agree to register for an upgrading course. It is clear, however, that a scheme of intensive upgrading courses is necessary for the *whole* teaching force, not only for provisional teachers. A specific problem is with the Serbian teachers, who initially refused to sign the new contracts. (One reason is that signing will make them lose the payments they are still receiving from Belgrade; another is the severe pressure from their leadership not to accept UNMIK rule.) However, about 1 000 Serbian teachers have now signed contracts (February 2001) and opposition seems to be less.

Teaching cadre in Kosovo

The total number of teachers in the entire education sector in June 2000 was 28 625 (Table 3). Many teachers who joined the parallel system are still teaching in schools. No precise data exist on the ratio of trained or qualified teachers to those who lack appropriate training. The DES estimates that the

25. In the Prizren region, about 60% of the registered teaching force turned out to be qualified, while 10% were either double-registered or did not exist.

ratio is about 3:2, meaning that in any region up to 50% of present teaching staff can be unqualified. The DES is conducting a school census that will provide more reliable evidence. However, many teachers have lost their original documents and certificates when their homes were burned or property destroyed during the 1998/99 crises.

In several respects, the characteristics of the Kosovo teaching profession differ from those in other countries. First, the gender ratio among teachers is one-third female teachers to two-thirds male. At tertiary level, 88% of teachers are male, and the gender ratio declines by level of education (44% of pre-primary teachers are male; DES, 1999). According to the same source, 86% of school support personnel are men; and the overwhelming majority of school directors and education managers in the regions and municipalities are men.

Second, practically all teachers work in schools that have more than one shift. In Prishtina, Mitrovica and some other urban areas, schools may operate in as many as four shifts and are thus very crowded. The present estimate is that more than 25% of all schools in Kosovo operate in three or four shifts. This has a serious effect on teachers' working conditions and on the quality of teaching. Classrooms are cramped and there are few or no teaching aids; lack of up-to-date textbooks is one of the most serious problems. Only in exceptional cases can schools provide teachers with facilities and space for professional meetings and joint planning. Of course, the damage and destruction caused by bombing and shelling during the war are a major cause of poor facilities; schools also suffered vandalism and looting, and many have not yet been rehabilitated.

Table 3. **Number of teachers per level of education**

Facilities/Region	Prishtina	Prizren	Peja	Gjilan	Mitrovica	TOTAL
Pre-primary	137	55	57	96	57	402
Primary	4304	3288	2668	2318	3394	15972
General Secondary	1635	759	885	824	1072	5175
Vocational schools	870	424	453	340	393	2480
Special schools	17	21	17	19	1	75
University of Prishtina	801					801
TOTAL	7764	4547	4080	3597	4917	24 905

Source: Statistical Office of Kosovo, Education Statistics 2001.

Third, most teachers have worked for many years with very low salaries or no salary at all. Teaching in the parallel system was seen as sustaining the Albanian language and culture under the pressure of the ruling government. Therefore, even unqualified teachers had a recognised and respected social status in society, and this still influences the debates and discussions related to reforming the education system. The UNMIK administration has paid stipends to teachers, but these payments have been low and equal for all. Trained language teachers and computer specialists have left the profession for better-paid jobs. Furthermore, since there was no formal pre-service training for teachers during the 1990s, few young people joined the teaching profession in the first place.

Fourth, tens of thousands of Kosovo Albanians are returning. The DES estimates that in 2000 pupil enrolment in the education system increased by approximately 10%; this creates enormous

challenges, not only for the education system *per se* but also for individual teachers who have to cope with increasing class sizes and students with a variety of backgrounds and experiences. These returning students can be helpful to teachers, because in many cases they are able to speak other languages (like German, French and English), have mastered basic skills in information technologies, and are able to ‘teach’ other students about the countries and cultures in which they have been living.

Finally, the Union of Education, Science and Culture of Kosovo UESC (*Sindikata e Bashkuar për Arsimit, Shkencë dhe Kulturë e Kosovës, SBASHK*) has a specific role in Kosovo’s education reform. The UESC is a trade union of teachers that works actively with the DES to improve teachers’ working conditions. DES is also counting on their support for implementing a decentralisation strategy. It has a net of active international relations that are an important source of innovation. Therefore, the UESC has a key role in promoting changes in education that is not common among trade unions in other countries. During the 1990s, it provided moral and material support to the parallel system. A present concern of the UESC is the reduction of the teaching staff in Kosovo – it is expected that 10% of the present force will be dismissed, as well as 50% of education support staff.

Salary and payment

The teacher salary issue presents a dilemma. On the one hand, teachers are used to working in difficult conditions with low compensation; they saw their work as a ‘patriotic sacrifice’ and as part of nation building. On the other hand, teachers cannot be expected to work towards reform unless they are paid properly. Although teachers are remarkably patient, they are justified in wanting better conditions.

During and after the crisis, teachers went unpaid until UNMIK introduced teacher stipends in September 1999 (EUR 102 for 1 September-31 December 1999). From January 2000, a teacher salary scale was introduced; the university rector receives EUR 307/month, full professors EUR 215, secondary school teachers EUR 163 and primary school teachers EUR 149/month. UNMIK is generally able to pay on time.

The initial stipend arrangement lured some 2000 ‘ghost teachers’ on to the payroll. These only exist in name, but do not actually work in schools. The majority of these ‘ghosts’ have now been eliminated, but until the new contract procedures are finalised, the DES is aware that some teachers who are on its payroll actually work in other jobs, and receive payments there as well. A system as financially fragile as Kosovo’s can of course not sustain such double burdens.

The new salary system is based on a formal contract with a base salary with multipliers. Three kinds of contracts can be issued: full-time, part-time and temporary. The intention is to transfer the payment of salaries to the 30 municipalities. Teachers who have appropriate qualifications are the preferred ‘first category’. A second category is teachers who are not qualified but are competent to teach (so-called ‘Provisional Teachers’); there is the intention to give them a contract for one year, but they would have to agree to undergo an upgrading course at the University of Prishtina. A third category is those who are neither competent nor qualified, but are working as teachers. Another plan is, to sign contracts only for the first two categories of teachers, and thus decrease the number of untrained teachers within the system.

In September 2000, the DES sent out 20 000 contracts, representing a reduction of 6 000 personnel. The position of school ‘pedagogue’ was abolished. Salaries are paid only on receipt of a signed contract. In the 1980s, contracts were for a 42-hour working week, with a teaching load of 18 to 20 hours, depending on the level of education; the rest of the time was used to prepare for classes, meet parents, attend meetings, etc. The same approach is now being followed by the authorities. For some

teachers, accustomed to around 20 hours of school based work, this was a shock. A performance rating scale for teachers was introduced to be used in each municipality to assess the quality of teaching.

Selection criteria fall into three areas: age (up to 39 years, high priority; beyond 40, lower priority), gender (women have priority over men), and teaching experience, including evidence of understanding child development. According to the union, the contracts set only requirements and responsibilities for teachers, but do not place any responsibility on employers. Contracts were be effective until the end of 2000 due to UN regulations.

Clearly, the aim is to improve the quality of the teaching staff in Kosovo. However, moving untrained and incompetent teachers out of the system is painful. Many teachers worked for years without payment, and afterwards for very little. Dismissing them now may cause tension, especially between teachers and administrators. However, with returnees and the demographic trend, there should be ample opportunities for qualified teachers in the medium term.

At the same time, efficiency in the education sector does demand some painful changes. In Kosovo, for example, teachers teach only one subject; if teachers were able to teach, say, physics, chemistry and biology (science), fewer teachers would be needed, and their salaries could be correspondingly higher. A reliable monitoring system is essential to track the critical indicators that justify educational expenditure at all levels. At the moment, no such system exists in Kosovo.

Teacher training

Observers say teaching and learning processes in Kosovo are very traditional. A spokesperson from the University of Prishtina (teacher training) stated that in elementary school, pedagogical and educational approaches are sometimes ‘cruel’ and do not encourage children to enjoy learning. As in most other neighbouring countries, teaching is based on overloaded curricula and ‘factology’ that puts little emphasis on understanding concepts and issues, or developing thinking skills and habits of mind *per se*. Due to their past political and social experiences, many teachers lack training and hence the competence to create good, productive learning environments for students.

Teachers are trained in eight separate institutes or faculties. Table 4. shows the types of training provided. In SFRY, teachers for primary education (grades 1 to 8) graduated either from the ‘pedagogical high schools’ (after two years of study) or from the universities (after four years). Teachers of secondary schools were – and are – trained for four years at the university. At the moment, the *pre-service teacher training* is ensured and co-ordinated by the University of Prishtina. The language of instruction is Albanian only; there is no pre-service training institution that offers studies in Serbian

Training is mainly academic and heavily subject-based; except the special pedagogy strand offered by the Faculty of Philosophy. The concept of ‘teaching as a profession’ is missing form the training curriculum. Even some of the educationally relevant subjects are taught at a highly academic level. Teaching practice in schools or reflective teaching methods are carried out without any systemic view or clear objectives and goals. At the moment, the university lacks a clear vision, a long-term policy as well as short- or medium-term strategic planning for teacher pre- and in-service training.

It is intended to bring all pre-service teacher training under one institutional umbrella. The main institution, the University of Prishtina, intends to have a new Faculty of Education. Different training centres will be the affiliates of this faculty, and therefore part of the university. One of the major barriers in this reform is the lack of knowledge and skills of present teacher trainers; most have been totally disconnected from the international teacher training community, and their work is therefore mainly based on the educational traditions of SFRY in the 1970s and 1980s.

In-service training seems to take place mostly at the municipal or regional level. There is no evidence of any type of needs analysis and short- or medium-term planning of the training activities. In-service training activities are mostly carried out by NGOs or the recently appointed ‘lead agencies’, as the university or regional/municipal directorates have no professional teacher trainers. School-based training activities of the staff are rare, and the quality of those that do take place is questionable. In-service training reflects in many cases the methodology and attitudes of the former pedagogical institute. Teacher in-service training curriculum is academic in nature, mainly out-of-date, and teachers are not involved in the planning and implementation of their own training.

At the moment, in-service training of teachers is to a large extent in the hands of the international community. For example, the Kosova Foundation for Open Society (KFOS) has launched the Kosova Forum that conducted a workshop on Managing Educational Changes that was held in Macedonia with some 40 Kosovar participants. The British Council has arranged several English language in-service training sessions throughout Kosovo. Similarly, the Bureau de Liaison de la France has conducted French language training programmes for teachers. However, an overall strategy for in-service training of all teachers is still missing. Furthermore, there is little or no training for teachers to cope with issues and problems related to post-conflict circumstances, and with children with special needs.

Table 4: **Pre-service teacher training institutes, September 2000**

Type of institute	Place	Level
Faculty of Philosophy	University of Prishtina	1– 4, 9-12 and ‘pedagogues’
Faculty of Philology	University of Prishtina	9 –12
Faculty of Sciences	University of Prishtina	9 – 12
Teachers’ Faculty	University of Prishtina	1 – 4/5
High School/Teachers College	Gjilan	Pre-primary, 1-4/5
	Prishtina	1 – 4/5 and 5 – 8
	Gjakova	1-4/5 and 5 – 8
	Prizren	1-4/5 and 5 –8

Source: Department of Education and Science.

Teacher training is a priority for UNMIK and its partners. It is obvious, from visits to communities and schools, that most Kosovar teachers need urgent support in upgrading their professional skills to the level of adequate competence. No coherent strategy or harmonised donor operation yet exists; the in-service training market is fragmented and overloaded, and unable to tackle the overall problem of teacher competence in Kosovo. Under the auspices of the relevant Lead Agency (to be established in framework of a CIDA funded project), experts will be attached to DES to lead the work in teacher training.

Issues and Barriers in education personnel

- *Poor working conditions.* Teachers in Kosovo are working in physically and materially poor conditions. Many school buildings still have damage caused by bombings and other attacks by different groups of people. Teaching materials are limited in number, and their quality is not always supportive of good teaching and learning. Most schools operate in more than one shift; schools are crowded, and there is no space for anything beyond regular teaching in classrooms. Returning refugees add to the overcrowding, with students sharing desks and learning materials.

- *Teacher salaries have been very low, and remain relatively low under the new salary scheme.* Teachers often need to look for additional income, which affects their ability to concentrate on their teaching. In some subjects (foreign languages, maths and sciences) there are shortages because teachers are able to command much higher salaries by working for international agencies. In spite of this, teacher morale remains relatively good, and the population places considerable value on education and on its teaching force.
- *Lack of clear strategies and criteria for quality in education.* One common feature in many transition systems is ‘reform without vision’. Education in Kosovo is no exception. New thinking is only just emerging, and it is to a large extent driven by the ideas and experiences of the international community. Creating a coherent, ‘home-grown’ strategy that could guide reform at the operational level is an enormous challenge. In terms of quality, there is no common concept of what ‘good’ education could be. Quality is understood in terms of quantitative (input) measures rather than in terms of outcomes. This narrow view of quality is a major obstacle to change in teaching, learning, and assessment in particular.
- *Consequences of conflict and special needs children.* Many children have suffered directly or indirectly from the horrors of war and hate during the recent conflict. Kosovar Albanian families often have many children and a strong tradition of ‘extended family’; this means that the traumatic events that families faced were always witnessed by a number of members of the same family. It is beyond this report to go into details of the painful stories that individuals and families have to tell; it is obvious that they have left deep scars in hearts and souls of many children, and that the memories may haunt them throughout their lives. The school system as a whole and teachers in particular are struggling to cope with this emerging problem as more and more students return to classrooms. Most, if not all, teachers lack the proper tools and conceptual knowledge of helping children feel safe, handle their memories and emotions, and work through traumatic experiences. Moreover, there is a shortage of special education teachers who can identify other special needs, and find ways to deal with them as part of mainstream teaching and learning.
- *Shift from dissemination of information to ‘understanding and being able to do’.* An universal paradigm shift in teaching is a move away from the dominant presentation-recitation mode towards constructing one’s own knowledge and understanding through experiences. This has been a huge challenge even for OECD education systems with large human and financial resources. A resource-poor system emerging from a socialist, command-driven past with rigid and authoritarian traditions will find such a shift even more difficult. This is an issue because Kosovo does not yet have the infrastructure, know-how and resources to accomplish change; nor can the international community and donor funding alone solve the problem. The solution requires a redefinition of the purpose of schooling in Kosovo; shifting the focus from producing a manual labour force for domestic and foreign markets towards educating all individuals in a wider range of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Early Childhood Education

Before the 1998/99 crises, the state provided reasonable pre- and post-natal services and immunisations for children aged 0-3. There was however no tradition of institution-based child care in the region, and services provided were of a care-taking rather than child-centred or educational nature. There were no clear aims for pre-school care and no home-based parental support programmes other than those organised by individual kindergarten centres. Children with anything beyond a mild disability were sent to specialised institutions and rarely mainstreamed. Pre-service teacher training for the early childhood years

occurred either in teacher training high schools which offer a post-secondary two year programme for teaching at the elementary level, or through a four-year university programme for secondary teachers; neither was child-centred in approach. There was no in-service training.

Even so, as in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there were attempts to introduce good pedagogical models. The Soros Foundation initiated a Step by Step programme in Kosovo in 1997, providing materials and training in two pre-schools and eight primary schools. This programme provides a package of teacher training, materials and financial support to put in place fee-paying services for children aged 9 months to 6 years. The programme aims to introduce child-centred methods and parental involvement, and has expanded to become a major change agent (see below). During the war, services were largely provided by NGOs, with some early childhood care in homes. At the end of June 1999 an initial survey revealed the extent of the damage to the physical capital of the school system. Not only infrastructure, but also the fragile system of services for early childhood, the good pre-natal and early infant care of pre-war years had vanished.

Post-war, major donors such as UNICEF returned with the refugees to rebuild the school system, starting with emergency reconstruction of buildings and tent schools, achieving substantial success in getting the school system going again, especially for 7-14 year olds. Improvements in pedagogy continue through pilot programmes including those focusing on interactive methods for teaching, teacher training workshops, psycho-social support for teachers and children demonstrating signs of trauma and grief, and education for children in minority communities. Most children were back in school of some kind by August 1999. However, there has been a gradual withdrawal of donor contributions to early childhood education, which is now returning to normality.

Early Childhood programmes were started again in 1999. UNICEF helped collect information about pre-schools and provided material and furniture for 24 of the 44 pre-schools in Kosovo. There are also three model pre-school training centres. Their present activities include support for 102 classrooms for children from birth to age 6 in 24 pre-schools, in addition to 25 classrooms for 6 year olds in 25 schools serving 1 200 children (including one Turkish and five Roma classrooms), training 356 teachers and 40 faculty at university and 60 pre-school directors. The pre-schools are fee-paying and cost between 15-30 EUR per month. UNICEF has to date set up 56 playrooms in poorer rural areas, trained 300 facilitators to work with young children, and provided tents, recreational kits and furniture. The sustainability of these initial efforts will be of interest.

Kindergartens are segregated by ethnicity, and are run in the Serb enclaves using the kindergarten pre-school model from Yugoslavia. Thus there are special classes for 6 year olds to help them make the transition to school. (The Serb schools have not yet adopted the lowering of school age to 6 as decreed for September 2000 by UNMIK.)

For the 9 months to 3 years group, data are lacking on social issues affecting child development. The number of single-parent families is 19 800, but no breakdown of female-headed households is available, nor of the number of women in the workforce pre- and post-war. Pre-war, the infant mortality rate was 21.6%, and in June 2000 WHO estimated that the perinatal mortality rate is between 30% and 40%. Although health care for mothers and children is free, declining availability (and perhaps quality) could contribute to high rates of infant illness and attendant long lasting disabilities (e.g. deafness through lack of antibiotic treatment) requiring educational support. Nutrition rates are improving.²⁶ But there are early warning signs that the severe malnutrition present just after the war may return. The number of acutely malnourished children seems to have declined, but poor infant feeding practices and dietary hazards to mothers (obesity, multiple pregnancies) could endanger early childhood development. These

26. Conduah Birt, Jacqueline, and Phelps; Laura (January 2000), *Action Against Hunger* – UK.

indicators point to the need for special attention to the early childhood years in providing supportive developmental programmes for children.

Government actions in pre-school education

The DESK process initiated by UNMIK produced a comprehensive set of recommendations. First of all, it developed a mandate for the provision of pre-school education (rather than care) for each level. 'Pre-school education should foster the development of the ability/capacity of the child by developing his/her interests, fulfilment of their needs and development of their skills so that the child is prepared to respond to the needs of the future that life, the family or society might raise before him/her'. The DESK initiative saw immediate priorities as 'greater inclusion and access of children in pre schools, with obligatory attendance from the age of 5'. Goals were to ensure that 100% of children from 3-5 should be able to attend, or that attendance should even be made compulsory; and that better conditions should be created for children from 9 months to 3 years old.

DESK also recommended administrative changes to reflect the importance of these early years, including a separate section for pre-school education within the Ministry and in the pedagogical and textbook sections. It also recommended an early childhood division at municipal level, putting pre-school education on a par with other levels of education and expanding the parent councils. Of particular interest is the recommendation to put together an inter-sectoral group on early childhood programmes.

From September 2000, the school entry age has been set at 6 years. This has led to some confusion in the development of first-year classes, particularly in overcrowded schools using multiple shifts.

Issues and Barriers in early childhood education

- *Access to pre-school care and education in Kosovo is very poor.* Significant behavioural changes need to be made in the provision of care by parents, communities and the school system to improve care and education at this crucial stage in a child's life. Early childhood services are under-used, and there is little understanding of the need for child development programmes. In Albania, for example, 37% of children attend pre-schools, and in FYRoM about 20%; whereas in Kosovo 2.8% of children do. In addition, the region has the highest birth rate and highest infant mortality rate of South East Europe. Rapid urbanisation, with the break-up of extended family care, more working mothers and poor living conditions – including unsafe drinking water – contribute to a decline in the health of mothers and infants.
- *Enrolments are low* because pre-school is not compulsory, understanding of the issues is poor, enrolment criteria are arbitrary and sometimes discriminatory, places are not available, and they are costly. Payments to teachers are inadequate and uncoordinated. Curricula are inflexible and inappropriate, and the teachers poorly qualified. Continuity between pre-school and primary school does not exist, and communities and parents are not involved in the provision of pre-school care.

Vocational Education and Training

At the time of this survey, there were 48 vocational and technical secondary schools with 46 344 students and a teaching staff of 3 106. The spread of these schools is fairly well balanced across the region. About 58% of the schools are clustered around the larger urban centres (Prishtina, Prizren, Peja,

Mitrovica, Gjilan, Ferizaj and Gjakova) accounting for 52% of teaching staff and about 52% of students. The remaining schools are located in rural areas.

Within the vocational schools group, 16 are general technical schools, 10 are classified as 'economics' schools, 7 as 'medical', 3 as 'agricultural', etc. There is one small 'arts' and one medium-size 'languages' school. Six schools provide a mix of vocational and 'gymnasium' (academic) education; all 6 of these schools lie outside the major urban centres with 627 staff (20% of vocational teachers).

Kosovo's vocational schooling system directly reflects the former Yugoslav system, with vocational schools offering practice-oriented education for up to 3 years and some gymnasia providing a mix of general and specialist education. Vocational education was essentially supply-driven and theoretically oriented, rather than competence-based.

Administration

The responsibility for vocational education rests with UNMIK/DES. Until recently, an expert was seconded from a German regional administration to work on vocational education. Due to other priorities of the DES, the contribution of the expert to vocational education reform was limited. At regional level, 11 education officers cover the broader education provision in their geographical area.

Within the UNMIK's Labour Department, there is an officer responsible for vocational training. There is no regular exchange of information or common planning between the competent Education and Labour departments. This could be in part due to the turnover of staff recruited on short-term, six-monthly contracts. However, effort is required to ensure that the departments co-operate and a knowledge management procedure established to ensure that the know-how acquired by each post holder is retained by the departments.

An information-pooling mechanism to share knowledge could be considered. This could be particularly useful for example when common issues of training of vocational teachers/instructors and curriculum reform are being developed and where synergies between vocational education and continuing training reforms can be made. The Lead Agency initiative for vocational training proposed by the UNMIK Education Department (see *Reform Measures*, below) could facilitate or manage this service.

Cross-pillar²⁷ co-operation within the UNMIK administration will be more important given that the Department of Reconstruction in Pillar 4 (Economic Development) has recruited an education and training specialist who will be an important contact between vocational schools and enterprises.

Material conditions

The combination of 10 years' exclusion from mainstream Yugoslav developments and no capital investment has effectively closed down vocational schooling in Kosovo. Aside from the general material malaise of the schools, vocational education workshops do not meet minimum standards. Working materials for vocational schools reflect the former curriculum, which was highly occupation-specific. Materials for both students and teachers are poor, if available, and of insufficient quantity to meet classroom/workshop demand.

27. The UNMIK administration was initially organised in 'pillars', e.g. humanitarian work/refugees; civil administration; institution building; and reconstruction, each led by a different agency such as UNHCR, OSCE, the European Union etc.

Support from NGOs for building refurbishment at selected schools goes some way to alleviate the problem but cannot redress the critical under-investment since 1989. Health and safety in existing workshops are of major concern, in terms of building structures, sanitation and ventilation in workshop areas. There was little evidence of health and safety awareness being fundamental to the curriculum and to teaching.

Despite the depressing conditions of the vocational schools, there are several impressive examples of targeted donor support for workshop refurbishment and equipment. However, it is important to ensure that vocational equipment provided by donors – including the associated curriculum and training of instructors – reflects the reality of the work environments where graduates will find themselves. A sophisticated vocational education workshop, which bears little relation to the working tools and methods which young people will find in industry or enterprise, will not prepare them for the local job market. Before funding a school workshop, donors should undertake a ‘reality-check’ of the skill applications and methods in the local labour market; teachers and local employers are critical in planning, to ensure appropriateness of equipment, relevance to the local labour market, and ‘fit’ with existing curricula and teacher training.

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

No structured links exist between vocational schools and local economic environments: this undermines the entire notion of vocational education. At school level no staff member has specific responsibility for liaison with employers or social partner organisations. Links with local labour market support structures are also poor or non-existent. Schools do not track school leavers after they get jobs; liaison with and support from local employment offices are poor.

Finally, a training agency could be created, combining vocational education and adult education and training, either attached to or with direct links to the employment service to ensure integrated training and employment services for Kosovo. Such an institutional framework would underpin efforts to develop a policy of life-long learning as well as allow more cost-effective administrative and research services.

Each school should have at least one teacher responsible for links with local employers and another for co-operation with the local employment office. They would need training, e.g. in communications with employment offices in terms of data assembly, employment placement and tracking.

Reforms to date

UNMIK/DES has taken steps to redress the setbacks suffered by vocational education after the 1989 Belgrade emergency provisions. First, attempts were made to initiate a strategic reflection and forward planning process for vocational education within the wider DESK education reform plan.²⁸ A working group was established to define priorities and make recommendations for reform and development of vocational education. The working group did not deliver any strategic orientations or recommendations, which was less the failure of the working group than the general breakdown of the DESK initiative where local support from the education environment was lacking.

A second UNMIK/DES initiative is to ‘out-source’ the development for vocational education to an external organisation or ‘Lead Agency’. This is a good move, but it should be reinforced with direct

28. D.E.S.K (“Developing the Education System in Kosovo”). Concept Paper, UNMIK Education Section 17 October 1999.

involvement of the UNMIK Labour Department (DOLE), employers' organisations, and other social partners to ensure that the vocational education developments are not considered in isolation from wider training and employment preparation support systems.²⁹

Vocational teacher training and curriculum will be among the Lead Agency's tasks, alongside vocational training legislation, standards, certification, social partnership, and international networking. It will be important that the reform and development plans for teacher training and curriculum development be co-ordinated with a separate 'agency' (supported by Canadian funds) which will address teacher training in particular. Skills required for much industry and enterprise development are universal, or at least have many common elements. The use of training packages from other countries will reduce costs significantly compared with developing them afresh, provided they are adapted to Kosovar needs.

Key to the dialogue will be local involvement and ownership to ensure that reform recommendations will eventually be followed through on the ground. Pilot actions, study visits and technical assistance are needed across a range of subject areas, to support local capacity building in policy and institutional reform.

Issues and Barriers in vocational education

- *Recruitment of vocational teachers, and staff development.* There is at present no specific pre-service training for vocational teachers in Kosovo. Clearly, this will need to be developed, with particular attention to the interface with general teacher training and the training of teachers/instructors for adult training. There is little in-service training, aside from seminars provided by NGOs and bi-lateral support projects. While these exercises are meaningful and appreciated by the teaching community, a systemic development of pre-service and in-service training of vocational teachers is needed to help establish a modern and effective vocational training system.
- *Training for school management and administration.* The management and administration of vocational schools is in need of overhaul if an effective system is to be re-established. School directors and managerial staff should be trained; especially those who were ejected from their school management jobs after 1989 and those assuming new management functions.
- *School-based entrepreneurship strategy.* An area of developing interest in the region and wider Europe is *entrepreneurship* in education, as part of the wider curriculum to promote initiative amongst young people and to provide the basic knowledge required for self-employment and or small business operations. This area should be considered in the curriculum reform discussions to be led by vocational training 'Lead Agency'.
- *Social partner contribution to vocational education reforms.* Social partners in Kosovo do not, at present, contribute to vocational education. The earlier DESK vocational education working-group did not include representatives of employers, while trade union involvement was confined to teacher unions, with no involvement of industry or commerce trade unions. These partnerships are crucial to an effective VET system.
- *Vocational guidance and counselling.* Schools do not provide vocational guidance and counselling. Some employment offices of the Kosovo Employment Service provide help to

29. Since the visit of the OECD team, co-operation has begun between the DES and the DOLE at the initiative of the Lead Agency and the Kosovo Employment Observatory.

schools, but the impression is that this is based on personal contacts rather than standard professional practice.

Higher Education

Origins and development

Although the first faculties and higher education institutions in Kosovo were founded between 1958 and 1969, they functioned either independently or within the University of Belgrade. The University of Prishtina was founded in 1970, with four faculties (philosophy, law, engineering, and medicine). By 1990 the number of faculties had grown to 13, and 7 higher schools were attached to the University. At this time, the languages of instruction were Albanian and Serbian. In June 1991, however, the Serbian parliament introduced the notorious “interim measures”, appointing Serbs to all senior posts. Within 6 months, all Albanian staff and students were expelled or had left. The University Assembly (Senate) then voted to continue working in private premises, and elected its own rector. For the next 8 years, the work continued in the ‘shadow’ or parallel system in very difficult conditions. In June 1998, two buildings were given back to the University, followed in 1999 with a third one; however, these buildings had been extensively damaged and furniture and equipment deliberately vandalised.

At present (2001) the University of Prishtina has 14 faculties and 7 higher schools.³⁰ There are plans to establish additional sub-units, *e.g.* an Institute of Psychology; a Department of Political Science/Public Administration; a School of Journalism leading to a Master of Arts degree; a Department of Physiotherapy; a Department of Water and Sanitation (civil engineering), and the Faculty of Education.

The University has always been a focal point for ethnic Albanian intellectuals in the region, and has good relations with universities in Zagreb, Tirana and Tetovo.³¹ The European Universities Association (previously the CRE), in co-operation with the Council of Europe, has a special Prishtina Working Group, supported by the World University Service (WUS-Austria), through which support from the European academic community is channelled. The University has a moderate level of autonomy, which allows it to keep a certain distance from daily politics. Most of the teaching staff and students are Kosovars.

According to the Statutes of the University, its goal is ‘to provide higher education and research opportunities; to create, defend and transmit knowledge through teaching and research’.

Academic arrangements

The language of instruction in the University of Prishtina is Albanian, but legally instruction can also be organised in other languages (*e.g.*, Turkish, and in the foreign language departments instruction is often given in the relevant language).

The academic year runs from 1 October through 30 September; there are two semesters, with a total of 30 weeks’ teaching per year. Examination periods are in January, June and September; higher schools can have additional exam periods, often in October and April.

30. There is a Teachers’ Faculty at the University in Prishtina, and 4 of the higher schools are Higher Pedagogical Schools (in Prishtina, Prizren, Gjilan, and Gjakova).

31. This university does not officially exist and is not recognised in FYR of Macedonia.

The University currently offers four types of study: undergraduate (minimal 4 years); scientific post-graduate; professional post-graduate, and artistic post-graduate. (Some higher schools within the University offer 2- or 3-year undergraduate courses.) There is mention of a credit system in the Statute, but this will not be applied until 2001/02 at the earliest. It is unclear and not applied at present. Curricula are proposed by faculties or schools and approved by the Senate, and can be reviewed annually. Curriculum planning is not well organised. Degree programmes are being revised in line with the Bologna declaration, the 3-5-8 model having been approved by the Senate. While it is possible for students to take courses in several institutions simultaneously, recognition of exams among faculties is decided by faculty commissions. There is no co-ordination at University level of such transfers.

In practice, there are no doctoral or professional studies at present in the University of Prishtina. However, many post-graduate students take more than 4 years to obtain their Master of Science or Master of Arts degree, and it is possible then to convert this into a doctorate if the candidate has at least one paper published in a refereed international journal, and if the University agrees. This is now expected to change and made much more rigorous.

Some occupations (medicine, dentistry, pharmacology, except in experimental fields) require a one-year internship plus an exam before a candidate is fully qualified. Lawyers must take an examination after two years' practice before they are qualified to serve as attorneys or judges. These are good examples of bringing university preparation closer to the standards of the profession it serves.

Teaching loads vary from one sub-unit (faculty, higher school, institute) of the University to another. In principle, they are 5hrs/week for professors, 6 hours for PhDs, 4 for other lecturers and 10 hours for assistants. Sometimes teachers are appointed to teach just one particular course, regardless of the number of hours per week. UNMIK has recently issued an instruction which sets out teaching loads. No member of staff appointed to a full-time position may undertake any work outside the University, including work for public or private companies or organisations or another University or higher education institution within or outside Kosovo, without permission of the University Board. In granting permission, the Board may attach any conditions at its discretion.

Teaching at the University is practically monolingual (in Albanian), although the issue of higher education in the Serbian language remains an issue. Some Serbian-language faculties are operating in North Mitrovica within the UNMIK framework; there are, for security reasons, no Albanian-language students there, although there are students from other minorities. A few small, informal projects for Kosovo Serbian-speaking students exist elsewhere.

Textbooks and learning materials are usually written by course teachers. Proposals for textbooks are submitted to the University Publishing Council and, if considered suitable by two referees, included in the annual publishing plan. Authors are entitled to a fee but this is rarely paid; instead, authors often sell the books themselves and collect their fee that way; authors also publish and sell their own lecture notes (without authorisation or referees). Books published in Albania are also often used. Issues of intellectual property rights, now important in many OECD countries, will no doubt become issues in Kosovo as well.

There are no private higher education institutions in Kosovo (2001), although private higher education is permitted under prevailing decrees governing the sector. There is a Faculty of Islamic Studies, but this is not part of the University of Prishtina.

Administration

The higher education system is administered at three levels: Kosovo, University, and Faculty or School level. At the Kosovo level, the decree governing higher education calls for a National Council of Higher Education, but this has never been established.

According to the Draft Interim Statutes of the University,³² the principal organs of the University are a Board and a Senate, both of which exercise their functions on the principle of majority voting. The Board has the power to establish other organs, committees and commissions with specific duties. Each sub-unit (e.g., Faculty, Higher School, or Institute) is an integral part of the University and no unit may have any form of independent legal personality. The chief academic and administrative officer of the University is the Rector, who is responsible to the Board for the workings of the University. The Rector is selected by the Board from among Professors of the University nominated by the Senate. The appointment is for a period of four years, renewable once.

At Faculty and Higher School level, the governing body is a Faculty or Higher School Council. The chief executive officer is a Dean or Director (depending on the type of sub-unit). The appointments of administrative staff and teaching staff are governed by the decree of 1994, the University Statutes (1995) and the revised Statutes of 2000, special regulations of the Senate, and the statutes of the sub-unit itself.

Appointments to teaching positions are made through public competition and are usually for 3 years (or 4 years for some professional collaborators and junior assistant staff). In addition to their teaching duties, Faculties are also expected to organise research and teach research methods to students. In practice, most research now is undertaken at the initiative of individual researchers, often as part of externally funded projects. Faculties are not asked to submit any reports on their research activities to their governing bodies or to the University, except for full professors who are expected to submit such reports every five years after their second re-election in the post.

Finance and budgeting

Until 1991, all higher education in Kosovo was financed directly by the Provincial Government. Teachers were not civil servants but were paid by their respective institutions. Full time study was free of charge; part-time students had to pay a small fee plus a 'tax' for examinations.

Between 1991 and 1999, the University played a special role in financing higher education in Kosovo. The shadow government allocated an annual budget to the University rather than to faculties or schools, which also tried to raise funds from other sources (including fees for students, which were equal for all types of studies).

At the time of the team visit (2000/01 academic year) almost the entire HE financing of salaries and goods-services comes from the Kosovo Consolidated Budget. Part of this (approximately 20%) comes from internal sources; the remaining 80% from abroad. A 'price list' for extra charges (such as examination fees and certificates) is approved by the University Senate; costs are low (tuition is 12.5 EUR per semester for 2000/01).

32. Draft regulation on the Status and Organization of the University of Prishtina.

Students: Access, attendance, learning and assessment

Since secondary school curricula tend to be designed with considerable involvement of university-level teachers, they are – at least in theory – compatible with university requirements. However, this all-too-common arrangement also assumes that *most* secondary students aim for higher education, which in the Kosovo context is not the case (in 2000, only 4 545 university places were made available; see section on access and equity, above).

To compete for a place in higher education³³, students must be (1) graduates from Kosovo secondary schools; (2) graduates from secondary schools in other countries. Graduates from foreign secondary schools must present a certificate covering a minimum of 12 years of schooling and a formal graduation certificate which entitles them to apply to a university or undergo a university entrance examination in that country; (3) applicants who present certified transcripts of their record of study at an institution of higher learning which is either recognised by the Association of European Universities or accredited by a national agency will be eligible for admission in to university or higher school level. The Convention on Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region [Lisbon, 11.IV.1997] applies.

Each faculty or HE institution sets its own admission criteria. Entrance exams are often required; admission criteria are publicly announced in advance, via an advertisement from the University (June). This advertisement contains the number of places per faculty, admission criteria, application deadlines and examination dates.

At present only one category of students is admitted: 'regular' students (although some 'irregular' students remain in the system). Admission is based on a combination of secondary school results expressed as a grade point average (30%) and entrance exam results (70%). There are no interviews. Successful students who have completed some tertiary studies in other faculties or outside the University of Prishtina may be granted advanced placement. The entire structure of university-level studies is being liberalised to allow students some leeway in planning their studies.

Students may be admitted to full- or part-time studies, although some faculties (medicine, engineering) accept full-time students only. Regular attendance at lectures and experimental classes is expected but the rules are applied flexibly in practice. Student load is between 20-30 hrs/week (1 hr = 45 min.).

In order to progress, each student's attendance record and exam results are evaluated at the end of each semester before he or she can continue. At the end of the academic year, students (depending on their study programme), sit examinations that determine their progress to the next year. Fulfilment of attendance and exam requirements is confirmed, signed and sealed in the student's record; courses and teachers have to be listed ('semester confirmation').

The most common form of assessment is the examination (written or oral). Students may take an exam up to three times, and a fourth time in front of a committee. Failing students are required to re-take the course or, if they fail again, are deprived of their full-time status. The grading system is 5-10 (10 = highest); 5 = fail. Student records are kept. University graduates are awarded titles like 'graduate economist', "graduate engineer" or 'professor' (secondary school teacher), whereas graduates from higher schools have these titles without the suffix 'graduate' – *i.e.*, they are economists, engineers, or teacher.

32. Instructions On The Interim Admission Of Regular Students For The Winter Term of 2000/2001 and on University Matters Concerned with Staff Development.

There are few counselling or career guidance services available to students; recently, the World University Service (WUS) has opened a student advisory centre, which does excellent work. Most graduates try to find jobs immediately after completing their studies, either through newspaper advertisements or the Employment Office. Unemployment among graduates is high in some fields, while in others (foreign languages, IT, management) there are shortages.

Issues and Barriers in higher education

- *The University of Prishtina was at the very core of political conflict and the self-esteem of Albanian Kosovars; it was one of the most highly politicised places in all of Kosovo. Its focus must now shift to alignment with Europe, for example through the Bologna Framework. The first steps are (1) the introduction of the 3-5-8 year (Bachelor, Master, Doctor) scheme; (2) the application of quality assurance; (3) the adoption of the European Credit Transfer System; and (4) the development of true academic autonomy from any future government.*³⁴
- *A difficult balance must be struck between the severe restrictions on university places (only 4 545 in 2001) and the capacity of the higher education system to cope with more students, and also the capacity of the labour market to absorb more graduates. Clearly more young people would like to continue into higher education. It might be possible to expand the number of places in certain disciplines where there is a skills shortage. Part-time places, especially for adults who have missed out on university education, should be expanded. Possibilities for scholarships to study abroad and student exchanges could be explored.*
- *Academic standards and fees are under discussion. During the ‘shadow’ system, efforts went towards keeping students in the system, and the requirements for entry and performance were not high. Academic standards, however, must now be raised to bring them back to European levels; but with the accompanying risk of discouraging students, or losing them altogether. Benchmarking with other universities to verify quality standards should be pursued. Fees are low at the moment, but there are arguments for (a) abolishing them (e.g. for bright or disadvantaged students), or (b) raising them, especially for popular faculties where places are scarce.*
- *The equally difficult question of (ethnic and linguistic) integration needs to be resolved. There are no precise figures for Serb students and university staff remaining in Kosovo, but there are apocryphal accounts of discrimination against Serbs in university admission and employment. Teaching is now practically monolingual (in Albanian), apart from a few faculties operating in North Mitrovica and a few small initiatives elsewhere that allow some Kosovar Serb students to study in Serbian.*
- *Some faculties have suffered greatly, especially engineering where even the old Russian machinery has broken down or has been damaged beyond repair; also, as jobs in engineering are still very limited, students are not motivated. Other faculties (e.g., Law) declined seriously during the years when no Albanian judges or lawyers were allowed to practice and an attempt at a ‘shadow’ judiciary failed.*

34. Michael Daxner, Education Policy Statement 2001, p. 10.

- *The long years of the ‘shadow’ system have created a haphazard culture of teaching and learning.*³⁵ Attendance during these years dropped by more than 50%; students often turned up only for examinations; staff development was non-existent; teachers and students are no longer used to consulting libraries or journals, or have no access to them. Modern methods of pedagogy (for teachers) and active study skills (for students) are badly needed.
- *Kosovo and the University have no serious research record.* There are exceptions, but clearly the material as well as the knowledge base are insufficient for research that can stand up internationally. However, change will require the open acknowledgement and co-operation from within academia. The planned Central Laboratory Unit (CLU) and international links through European partners will provide a basis for focused and respectable research.
- *With a single university,* higher education is automatically defined as the University of Prishtina. While a more diverse tertiary education system may be desirable, current financial restraints make this impossible for the medium term.

Recommendations

Recommendations: Policy and management

The priority aim is a timely hand-over of education into the hands of a highly autonomous regional government, but without destroying what is now being built now.³⁶ A six-day workshop in March 2001, with representatives from all levels, introduced the new two-layer structure, with Serb and non-Serb minority participation.

- *Training programmes are needed for all levels,* with international technical assistance. Policymakers at ministerial level should study systems abroad, receive training overseas, be connected to other academics and policy makers and generally gain experience in international university management. Modern ‘human resource management’ techniques should be part of these training programmes, including modern, constructive ways of staff evaluation that are designed to promote good practice and open staff development. The Lead Agency concept should be expanded to include new donor groups, because Kosovo’s budget will not be able to finance essential reforms.
- *The legal system must be enabling, not restricting or controlling.* Only if there are laws that enhance the freedom and opportunity of people can a democratic environment build a competitive economy. The focus should be on developing local (rather than central) capacity and authority.
- *Kosovo’s new education system must, from the outset, be designed to expect parent and community support for the school,* either in direct resources or time, although this is not feasible in many areas at present. Free education is unlikely ever to be sufficient, so the concept of external, non-government contributions should be encouraged, planned and budgeted for from the beginning. The present (interim) management system in Kosovo is still too close to the traditional bureaucratic approach. Parents are left out of the equation, and the

35. Lynn Davies, ‘Education in Kosovo: Report to the British Council’, unpublished paper, August 1999, p. 28.

36. Michael Daxner, Education Policy Statement 2001, Prishtina, 7th January 2001, p. 3.

parallel system of the past decade has not had the effect it could have. The opportunity is there to do something different, but needs to be seized before the cementing of current structures takes it away.

- *The rebuilding programme is impressive, but buildings are only the beginning.* Schools should develop a community focus, become a place where anyone who wants to can learn – parents, children, people out of work and especially teachers. Teacher unions, which had been so influential in the parallel system, should be involved more closely in educational decision making. If not, union opposition rather than co-operation will be the outcome. The situation seems delicately poised at the moment.

Recommendations: Curriculum, standards and assessment

Establish a coherent curriculum development system that integrates curriculum, student assessment and examination, training and teaching approaches, and books/materials aimed at introducing innovative learning and teaching strategies in the classroom.

Base this system on a clear set of principles, including:

- *Ownership of the change process.* It is of utmost importance to create a sense of ownership among all local institutions and stakeholders, especially teachers, and to directly involve them in planning and implementing the new curriculum. There is much frustration among local specialists that their skills and experience are not used enough. A mechanism of *public consultation* should also be created, to raise public awareness of the need to reform.
- *Flexibility.* Curriculum development should be seen as a non-linear, cyclic process. The core group should actively reflect on and analyse work to date with local actors, and regularly revise and rework the development plan and the curriculum under construction.
- *Replicate the model.* During the curriculum development process, the participants will acquire skills in design and development that can be applied to other design and development projects, for instance in teacher training reform, development of learning materials etc.
- *Balance the speed of curriculum reform with careful consideration of its impact on the system as a whole.* While the time has now come to stop writing reports and start work on the system in practice, it is easy for parts of the system (teacher preparation, textbooks, materials, assessment methods...) to get out of step with curriculum innovation. The Lead Agency could develop small modules for subjects that demonstrate some crucial aspect of curriculum innovation; this would give teachers some materials to use in the classroom, and give them a better grasp of what is meant by ‘new, European standards’. For example, some reading comprehension materials, both in the language of instruction and modern foreign languages; applied maths; every-day-life science. If these domains were to be the focus of the proposed Standards and Assessment Board, a welcome reinforcement of efforts would result. Active involvement of teachers in curriculum reform would serve both the professional upgrading of teachers themselves, and the direct dissemination of new curricula into classroom practice.
- *Improve procedures and data for monitoring and comparing the outcomes of education.* Qualification, linked to employability, is a major asset for building Kosovo’s future. The proposed Standards and Assessment Board (SAB) can overcome ethnic barriers by providing information that is useful for all stakeholders. It is important, though, that the assessment

instruments used do not merely measure achievement against the ‘old’ attainment targets, but operationalise a transition to more modern approaches.

- *Provide professional support for classroom assessment.* The activities of the SAB should also yield products that would support teachers in their classroom assessment, and help them find out how their students achieve with respect to some national average. This could be done by setting up a procedure for making national assessment results and tests available to all teachers.
- *Reconcile Maturita and university entrance exams.* The ‘double system’ of examining should end. If, in the short term, university entrance exams must remain, efforts could still be made to share as much as possible the same exams for different faculties, thereby enhancing enrolment options for students. Considerable effort needs to be made to make assessment transparent to students.

Recommendations: Teachers

- *Train all teachers to make the transition to the new system.* With all respect to the accomplishments of the past parallel system, experience acquired there is not a relevant criterion for being an effective educator now.³⁷ Foster in-house training systems that support school-based curriculum development, as ‘centralised’ training seems to be more and more difficult to organise and manage. The ‘in-house’ model should involve teachers and administrators from the same school as groups, so that changes have a discernible and sustained impact on classroom practice.
- *Clarify the priorities for teachers to avoid fragmentation and overload in education reform in Kosovo.* Clear and widely accepted priorities need to be set for all teachers in terms of what to reform, and how. A first priority could be to delete unnecessary and inappropriate content from the curriculum and classroom teaching, to make room for developing skills and attitudes. Another could be a clear and conceptually sound focus on those children who have special needs in regular classrooms, or who do not attend school because they have special learning needs.
- *Establish a consistent pre-service teacher training programme in the University of Prishtina.* Teachers are trained in various institutes in Kosovo (Table 2, above). The problem is that there is no clear common philosophy or theoretical background for teacher preparation. In several EU countries, and in some other countries in the SEE region, teacher training is becoming the responsibility of universities, and the university has a Faculty of Education (or similar) for this purpose. The faculty ensures that teacher training curricula have a strong pedagogical content, to develop personal teaching skills and an understanding of children.
- *Hence, all pre-service teacher training should be moved under the umbrella of University of Prishtina.* There should be a new faculty in the university for teacher training, e.g., the Faculty of Education. This faculty should train pre-primary, primary, general secondary, and special education teachers. Teacher education, however, is too important to be the responsibility only of the Faculty of Education. All faculties need to be aware of, and contribute to, the education of teachers.

37. *Ibid.*, page 4.

- *Assess the needs in in-service training.* A serious needs analysis should be carried out as soon as possible. There are no institutional structures at central, regional or municipal level that can ensure quality in-service training for teachers. This is of the utmost importance, as a new national curriculum, new textbooks and assessment procedures will be issued and implemented starting with 2001. An institutional structure or a formal task force should be created – at least for the next two/three years – to ensure a rational and coherent policy for teacher in-service training in Kosovo.
- *Establish benchmarks and appraisal mechanisms for good teaching.* Conceptions of what constitutes a ‘good school’ in general and ‘excellent teaching’ in particular should be renewed. First, benchmarks should be set for all teachers to understand what makes teaching and learning ‘good.’ These benchmarks should be clear enough to help teachers compare their own behaviour to the ideal. Second, there should be a teacher-friendly mechanism for monitoring the quality of teaching and providing teachers with feedback on their performance. Traditional inspection systems or school supervisory structures are probably not the best choice.

Recommendations: Early childhood education

- *Co-ordinate health and welfare programmes for the 0-3 age range.* Improving maternal and infant health care is a must (new programmes are focusing on community-based provision). Information and education campaigns on good infant feeding practices are recommended. NGO programmes such as Action against Hunger can be the foundation for wider public health campaigns targeting good early childhood development practices not simply the utilisation of health-focused, clinic-based services. Kindergartens and early intervention facilities should form a network of information to parents and carers. Overall, co-ordination of services for the very young across ministries and agencies is vital to maximise resources and equity of access. The inter-agency co-ordinating mechanism recommended in the DESK process should be created and mainstreamed into the government.
- *Improve teacher preparation.* Knowledge of child development should be part of all teacher training programmes. In addition, professional training of early-childhood carers should be a priority.
- *Target support for pre-schools.* Given the low economic and technical capacity of the present system, it is possibly unrealistic to aim for comprehensive coverage for all children from age 5 onwards. Children from low income families should be targeted for government support for early childhood pre- school places run by the private sector. Encouragement should be given to those wishing to set up private kindergartens, and legislation put in place to provide standards.
- *Improve educational opportunities for girls.* Awareness of the need for education for girls should start at the pre-school level, and parents encouraged to enrol girls in pre-school education programmes.
- *Continue and mainstream pilot programmes.* The administration should work with NGOs to ensure that improvements in pedagogy are mainstreamed into teacher training programmes, used by inspectors, and not allowed to fade when NGOs eventually leave the region.

- *Design a coherent approach to pre-school and the first year of primary.* Smooth transition from pre-school to primary school requires adequately trained teachers, facilities and the co-operative development of transition programmes, especially now that 6-year-olds are included in the primary cycle.

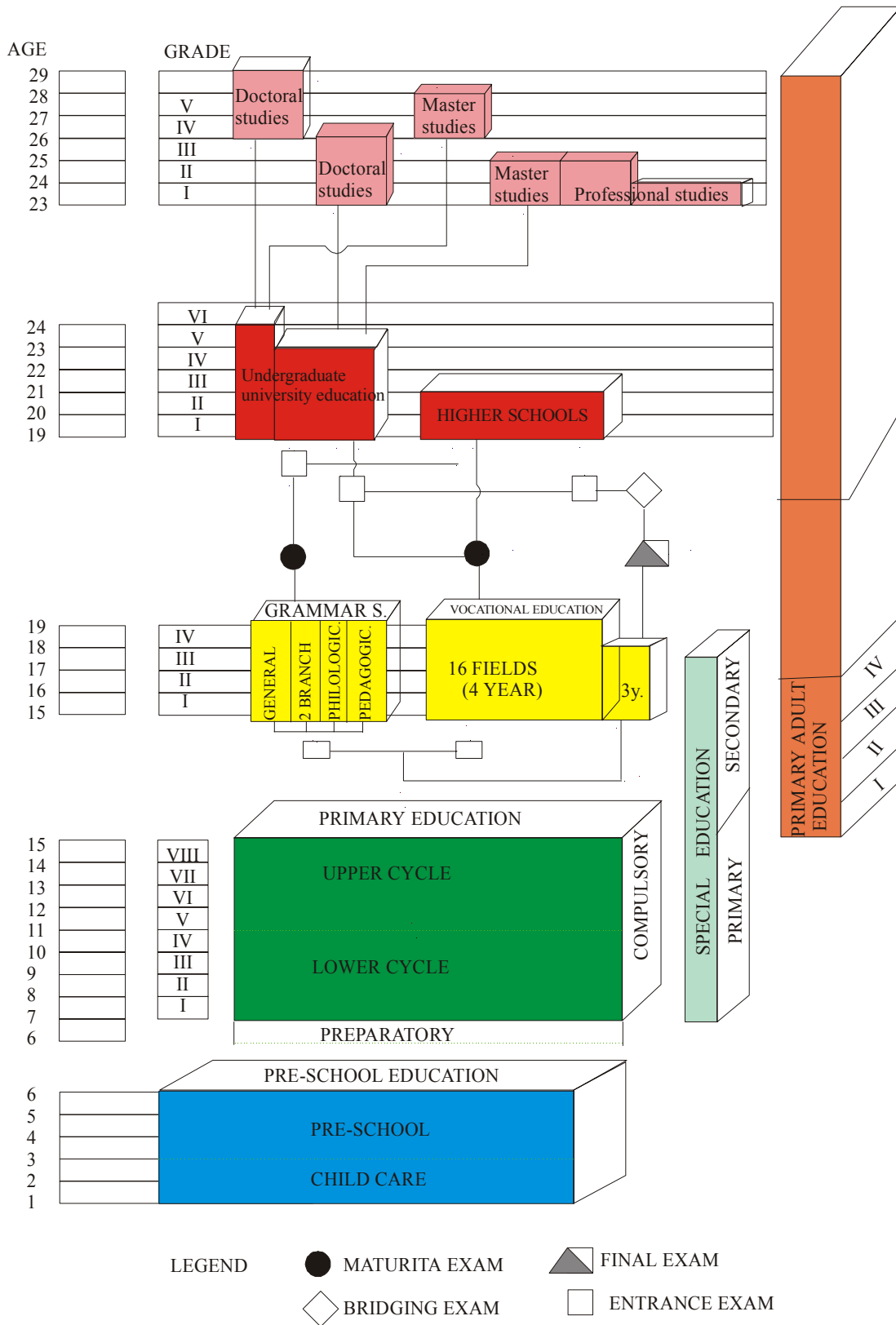
Recommendations: Vocational education

- *Step up recruitment and training of vocational education teachers.* Talent-spotting in the existing teaching force could identify a core group of ‘change agents’ which would raise awareness and stimulate staff development at school and municipal levels. This core group should include practice-oriented ‘master’ instructors. A recruitment drive for vocational teachers, as part of the wider campaign to bolster teaching staff numbers, could consider candidates who (a) have lost positions in industry and would consider joining the teaching profession, or (b) have acquired enterprise or vocational training experience while abroad, as refugees or otherwise. Such candidates could participate in the intensive training exercise planned for non-qualified teachers, e.g. those supported by Canadian funding, and other moves proposed by the vocational training Lead Agency.
- *Widen the perspective.* Intensive training could expose the group to ‘good practice’ teacher training and curriculum development organisations in the European Union and beyond, e.g. in new methods of teacher training delivery, curriculum, open class room management, communication skills, working with industry, and partnership building. Particular attention should be given to the balance of work-based training and general pedagogical training for vocational teachers.
- *Orient training towards practice.* The training of vocational education teachers should be closely linked with the world of work. A major constraint in Kosovo is that enterprises now are unable to support vocational teacher training exercises. Pilot projects could provide opportunities for schools and enterprises to learn together, and the results should be disseminated amongst other schools and their economic environments.
- *Make optimum use of new expertise in Kosovo.* A great deal of work on teacher training and curriculum reform has been done in the last 8 years supported by the European Union’s PHARE programme. The policy and experience of neighbouring countries (e.g. Slovenia, which has the same historical links to FRY, including institutional arrangements for education and training) could be tapped. In Slovenia, reform of vocational teacher training and curriculum modernisation was school-based, included social partners, and could be a model for school-based reforms in Kosovo.
- *Involve social partners.* The vocational training ‘Lead Agency’ should ensure that social partners are firmly integrated into the strategies for teacher training and curriculum reform. School-based staff development (directors, teachers, support staff), for example on vocational school/enterprise links, should involve employers and social interest groups.
- *Make guidance and counselling services available* in each vocational school. A network of teachers could be formed and a training programme devised. Staff from local employment offices and social partners should ideally take part in such training, and the development of a more professional vocational counselling service should be part of any reform strategy in vocational education and employment. More importantly, build a strategy to develop vocational learning in all schools to prepare young people for the world of work.

Recommendations: Higher Education

- *Sustain the impact of international agents of change* on curriculum, pedagogy, quality assurance, accreditation, research and continuous upgrading.
- *Recognise previous studies obtained elsewhere* by students who enter the University of Prishtina. Conversely, ensure that degrees awarded by the University of Prishtina are sufficiently credible for other European universities to accept them. This implies full transparency in the curriculum, examinations and degree award procedures, as well as the introduction of a credit system.
- *Develop and implement the new legal framework for higher education in Kosovo*, and base new orientations on alignment with Europe and the Bologna framework to ensure the recognition of qualifications and the employability of graduates.
- *Strengthen regional co-operation* (e.g. with Tetovo, Macedonia and with higher education in Serbia, Montenegro and Albania), and resolve the issue of the ‘university in exile’ in Mitrovica.
- *Focus on equipping the new Central Laboratory Unit and Library* to support learning, teaching and research.
- *Exercise less control and provide more guidance*. The main aim should be to turn away from the ‘directive type’ towards a model offering better counselling, supervision and guidance through interaction and support.
- *Modernise methods of teaching and learning*. Change from a teacher to a student orientation, implies a phasing out of authoritarian style, a reverse of a repetitive learning trend, and a move towards more interactive methods. The implementation of extra-university elements, such as media, political peers etc. and a general modernisation of didactics are in the planning phase. Most importantly, the change from the year/teacher system is to be implemented.
- *Combat corruption*. As in most areas of Kosovar society, corruption is manifold within higher education system. This creates the most idiosyncratic developments, where certain outspoken allies of reform often become the cause of public discontent. Alleged job buying, trade of examination questions and answers, misuse of donations are among the problems in this area. Education has always been a highly politicised training ground for diverse political forces. The university still dominates in perpetuating this phenomenon despite the first attempt to implement democratic statutes and more transparent structures. All parties campaign for a de-politicised non-corrupt system; they should undertake strong efforts to act accordingly.
- *Actively promote* measures that encourage young academics to return to Kosovo from abroad.

Figure 1. Education System in Kosovo



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