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THE THEME OF THE ISSUE:

Before the Bergen Conference

page 4

INTERVIEW: Prof. Dr. Izudin Kapetanović

In a Tigh Shirt

page 6

NEWS:

Bologna Process in B&H

page 8

DOCUMENT:

Bologna Declaration

page 30



Evropski i američki profil školovanja:

- preduzetnički menadžment
- menadžment javne uprave
- uslužni menadžment
- poslovno pravo
- poslovna informatika

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Prof. Refik Šećibović, Ph. D.

A Pending Issue

How should the Bologna Process be implemented in South-East Europe – the issue has become pressing and omnipresent indeed – as it is mentioned in the headlines of most newspaper articles, media reports and opening speeches of all gatherings dealing with education in the West Balkans. We have agreed with the necessary. This is a step forward, if we remember our earlier prevalent view, after learning about Bologna recommendations that we, the countries of the West Balkans, and our academism cultivated on Humboldtian principles, do not need anything. Actually, we do need higher salaries, and this only would perfect education in the Balkans. The academic spirit simply refuses to accept the market as its new censor and a factor which can significantly influence the profile of university worker or their work.

Following some publicly expressed views, two solutions appear possible: one is realistic, the other fictitious. If we are to judge by the behaviour of our academics, turned to themselves rather than to their students, it is quite realistic to expect that the Almighty, may he be the god of whatever people, will implement single-handedly the Bologna Declaration in South-East Europe, thus harmonizing the work of our tertiary schools with long-ago modernized European universities. In the equally unfeasible science fiction scenario, our university professors accept European novelties and start acting accordingly! This is why the O&R editorial published prior to the Bergen Conference focuses on this little-discussed issue, maybe even intentionally disregarded, the issue which should be on the agenda of both our academic and general public – where is South-East Europe heading in its tertiary education sector?

For years now, this question has been asked at many universities of this region. The actual problem asks for objective assessments and also reveals the secondary issue, one of the fate of tertiary education – do we have teachers in tertiary education brave enough to let the government, students and their broader community evaluate what they have achieved in their careers?

The Bologna process places emphasis on the responsibility of university teachers for their research and requires that they offer good quality performance to their users. The close connection between tertiary education and economic markets generates processes which significantly and essentially change tertiary education funding, contents, organisation and achievements.

As a general criterion, individual accountability to the whole society is required. Tertiary education is a sensitive area, as it interferes with the highest values of a nation. The great changes ahead of us will put those professors less interested in education than in their other work and engagement in a rather unfavourable position – in dire straits between politicians, policy makers, including those in the sector of education, discontented students, tax payers... As it seems, our university professors are rather neglectful when it comes to permanent education, even though it ought to be their duty as well.

When considering the reform of tertiary education, too many sentences end with a question

mark. Unfortunately, very few answers are offered, and their number seems to decrease as we approach and accept the concept of a united education sector closely connected with labour markets. Where will our young people study? Where will they work, and for whom? What will our professors do... this is all a pending issue.

The Bologna spectre haunts this part of Europe, satanized by many who claim to be tradition-oriented, by self-proclaimed protectors of true values. However, Bologna means a big step ahead, proving a vision with noble goals – it aims to provide protection, and its direct or indirect beneficiaries, primarily students and prospective employers, will be highly interested in good quality education.

How can we, little prepared as we are, follow European trends in education? How can our students become equal partners, if their professors lack the readiness and willingness to evaluate themselves, take into account students' wishes, or change the way they teach? How can we create partners if our employers are unwilling to specify the skills and knowhow of their prospective workers? The peoples of South-East Europe have so frequently proved they share the same common traits in their tendency to make agreements banal, act inconsistently in their implementation, and simply improvise infinitely... There is a danger of reducing the Bologna process to the introduction of ECTS, while clinging on to our old practices – customarily playing makebelieve with the the world.

The united European tertiary education sector is to be established in 2010. How will the countries of this region catch up? Rushing headlong, by enforcing laws? Will we reduce the Bologna process to the paper version of education reform, while remaining true to the old ways?

The Bologna process may turn into a means to develop private universities and open the door to foreign ones. Some of these universities are located in attractive places and the number of their students is rising. This is creating a paradox – while politicians are disputing about tertiary education laws and the preservation of national symbols, many young people are taking courses taught in English, attending foreign universities (and will eventually receive foreign degrees), and are taught by foreign professors. The young are impatient and they will not wait long for politicians and state university professors to reach an agreement and devise a scheme to 'rig' European standards. Many are leaving the country to study abroad. One day, they will be founders of new, reformed, well-equipped universities, open for cooperation.

The twenty-first century relies on societies eager to learn and knowledge is becoming a major factor of development. Development through higher education has already begun and this stimulates young people to search for solutions before their own teachers do. This is why our scholars, our men and women of letters must come to terms with one thing – they have to resume learning in order to remain in the university milieu, whose mission is to exchange the most advanced knowledge through free research.

Otherwise, they will be looking for new employment after 2010! By that time, it may be too late for them to jump on the last carriage of the last train running from the dis-united Balkans – to united Europe.

Šećibović

Contents:

THEME OF THE ISSUE

Before the Bergen Conference... 4

INTERVIEW

In a Tight Shirt... 6

THEME

Bologna Process in B&H... 8

INTERVIEW

Calculations at Risk... 10

THEME

Luxembourg Student

Convention... 12

Student Perspective... 12

SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

Less Money for Electricity,

Water and Education... 15

Between the Federation

and the Republic... 17

The Anniversary of University

Education in Serbia... 18

Bulgaria's Warm Hug... 19

Students' Parliament... 21

Studying on Credit... 22

Development of Information

Society in B&H... 22

Conscientious Objection... 24

Peace Caravan in west Balkans... 25

Statistics Rendered Easy... 26

DOCUMENT

Bologna Declaration... 30

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Before the Bergen Conference

**Bologna Process:
Creation of European Higher
Education Area**

The twenty-first century, called 'the age of learning', has brought, among other things, the need to increase the number of university graduate experts. Currently, China has 18,000,000 students, which is 14% of the total number of young people who could be attending university. In India, 10,000,000 students make 10% of the university age population. Tens of millions of young people are hoping to be offered a chance to enroll in a college or university. If we look at these figures, it is understandable why Europe began to consider restructuring the system of higher education. It is certain that those European countries whose population is smaller than the number of students in many countries of the Far East cannot play an important role in the future education market. On the other hand, given the fact that Europe is the cradle of higher education, it would be inappropriate and unnatural for it to lose its primacy in this area due to its inability to adjust to globalisation.

Facing this challenge, 29 European countries decided to unite their resources and start shaping a European Higher Education Area. Another ten European countries joined this process, which is called the Bologna

process, after its first Declaration signed in Bologna in June 1999. This created conditions to shape a European Higher Education Area, which may become attractive for students from all over the world.

The European Higher Education Area does not mean the existence of a uniform system, but a series of principles on which each country which has joined the process will base its system of higher education. The principles are the following: the model of three distinct study periods expressed through credits in accordance with ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) as the actual workload for a student to complete a curriculum, diploma supplement, quality control and assurance, student participation in education on the basis of partnership, diploma recognition mechanisms in accordance with the Lisbon Convention, lifelong learning, establishing connections with the European Research Space,

European studies, student and teacher mobility, etc.

It is paradoxical, but also true, that simultaneously with European efforts to harmonise its system of higher education, a converse process took place in our region – the disintegration of all we shared.

After splitting the area of higher education in accordance with national borders, in 2001 and 2003, all countries of the region concluded they ought to join the European integration processes. In September 2003, Serbia officially joined the Bologna process.

Lagging behind or taking the lead?

Unlike many other declarations, which are first signed, but then slowly fade into obscurity, the special feature of the Bologna Declaration is the clearly defined procedures to monitor its implementation as well as the final goal: the shaping of a united European Higher Education Area by 2010. In the first meeting, when the Declaration was written, it was agreed to form the Bologna Follow-Up Group, whose responsibility is to devise and implement various activities in relation to the process of reform, and prepare reports on the reform status.

It was also agreed that ministers of education convene every other year, analyse the achievements and define followup tasks. Two such meetings have been held so far, the first in Prague in 2001, and the second in Berlin, in 2003. The Bologna process was supplemented and further elaborated after the adoption of communiques.

At the Berlin meeting, some specific tasks were defined, which signatory states were to fulfil by the beginning of 2005 and submit their reports respectively at the next conference, which will be held in Bergen in May this year. It is only natural to see what the position of Serbia is just prior to the conference in Bergen.

The aim of the official report which our country submitted for the conference was to answer precisely to a number of questions regarding the developments of the reform of higher education, and yet, it does not answer any of the questions concretely. In other words, it is impossible to learn from the report how much has been done regarding the process.



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Organisation of studies and European credit transfer system

All states are expected to have activated the three-cycle model of studies (bachelor, master, doctor degrees) by the beginning of the 2005/2006 academic year, where all study cycles will be precisely defined through their corresponding number of credits, and also, following their completion, a student will be awarded a corresponding diploma and a diploma supplement. For the purpose of forming new curricula, every country is expected to specify comparable qualifications based on the student workload, achievement, and acquired skills and competences.

It is our impression that Serbia has made the greatest progress in reforming curricula. Although official data are not available, the estimate is that approximately 30% of the curricula in Serbia have been more or less reformed, while those faculties which have not started the reform yet are carefully deliberating on it. Unfortunately, the presented percentage is far lower compared with the percentage of modified curricula in other European countries, and it is certain that the objective set in Berlin will not be met. Furthermore, despite the fact that all reformed curricula have at least formally been expressed through credits, we do not believe that the actual workload, ie the number of hours of work needed for a student to complete a course, has been seriously taken into account. In other words, credits appear as a matter of formality rather than what should be the essentially new concept of organisation of studies. Another problem is that new curricula are designed based primarily on the professional interests of the current teaching staff, rather than upon objectively analysing what qualifications, knowledge and skills will be gained after completing a specific curriculum.

Lastly, even if the reformed curricula are extremely good, they will not be implemented successfully in the system of higher education organised in accordance with the current law. In fact, in order to really reform the organisation of studies, it is necessary to pass a new law which would enforce the concept of continuous learning and progress made based on the credits a student has earned.

Also, let us add that out of all Serbian Universities, only the University of Novi Sad has begun awarding diploma supplements.

Quality control

It is expected that by the end of 2005, the national system of quality control will

be set up, and this system will include the following: it will define the responsibilities of various bodies and institutions and evaluate curricula or institutions, which will further include internal evaluation, external reviews, student participation and publication of results, the system of accreditation or similar procedures, and international participation in evaluation as a way to cooperate with similar systems in other countries. Also, it is expected that ENQA (European Network for Quality Assurance) will work jointly with other institutions to produce a set of standards, procedures and guidelines for ensuring quality control.

Fully aware of the scope and importance of this job, the Republican Council for Development of University Education appointed at the end of 2003 the Accreditation Commission to formulate a proposal of standards and procedures to be used before opening a public debate. The Commission

Law on university

My innate optimism forces me to believe that we can still repair what we failed to do last year, but only if we immediately pass the new law on higher education and make a joint effort for its quick and efficient implementation. The new law will make it possible to catch up with Europe, at least for those who are capable and wish to do so. Finally, the new law, if passed before Bergen, will allow us to meet our European colleagues feeling slightly less uneasy and give them proof that we still want to be part of the European education area.

completed this job in the spring of 2004, but neither the newly appointed Republican Council nor the Ministry of Education and Sport showed the slightest interest in the produced proposal. Wishing to move things again after the standstill, the UNESCO Department of University Management at AAOM published a booklet to publicise the proposal of the Accreditation Commission and distributed it to all colleges and universities in the country. Unfortunately, the Ministry again failed to show any ambitions to undertake the initiative, and officially nothing has been accomplished in Serbia regarding this issue yet.

Recognition of degrees and duration of studies – All countries are expected to ratify the Lisbon Convention and adopt clear and transparent procedures for recognising degrees and duration of studies in line with the Convention.

Our country joined the Convention in June 2001, ratified it in September 2003, and submitted its ratification instruments in March 2004. It was expected that the degree recognition procedures in line

with the Lisbon Convention would come into force with the new law on higher education. Unfortunately, the new law has not been passed. Even the current draft law maintains the traditional procedures of diploma recognition, which can hardly be harmonised with the Lisbon Convention. Consequently, we have failed to fulfil another Bergen objective.

Our regional ranking

When the data presented are analysed in the light of the reports submitted by other European countries, it is clear, unfortunately, that Serbia is straggling well behind them in the process of reform. We do not wish to anticipate the outcomes of the Bergen conference, but there are reasons to believe our country will not exactly be praised for its achievements. The fact that we still do not even have the law on higher education, which would enable the full reform of the system in accordance with the Bologna process, will certainly contribute to our being criticised. There are two reasons why we should feel bad about our country falling behind.

First of all, at the beginning of March 2004, the Ministry of Education was lavishly praised for its speed and efficiency in implementing the reform since the beginning of the process of transition. So, we have proved to Europe we have the potential, and this is why it is so difficult to understand this absolute lack of initiative, in fact, a situation where certain things achieved last year are starting to be annulled.

However, we need to point out another positive aspect of the Bologna process – its pan-European orientation. Contrary to many other processes limited to the European Union, which expand with the expansion of the European Union, the Bologna process involved all European countries in its initial phase, or at least those on which no international sanctions were imposed at the time and which showed interest to be part of the process. In this way, the European Higher Education Area is becoming a precursor of united Europe. This is particularly important for the countries such as ours, which are going to 'stand in line' a little bit longer before entering the European Union. At least one constituent of the Union, the most important one, according to many, is already within reach, and it only depends on us if we are going to use this opportunity. If we consider our current situation, it appears we are not even trying to take advantage of it.

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Prof. Dr. Izudin Kapetanović, Rector of Tuzla University

■ *What did the new law essentially change in the organisation of higher education in the Canton?*

The basic provision of the new law is that it defines the university as an integrated community of faculties, instead of a loosely connected one, as was previously the case. In accordance with the 1999 Act, Tuzla University changed its status to become an integrated organisation and a single legal entity. We were the first university in this region to abandon the type of university organisation unique for former Yugoslavia, Austria and Slovakia. The faculties of Tuzla University ceased to exist as separate legal entities and became constituent units of the university. Even today, we remain the only integrated university, not only in B&H, but the whole region. This has led us to a completely new concept of university administration and brought us different achievements.

I would like to say that in 2000, Tuzla University had 5,282 students, and around 300 teachers and assistants. Today, we have around

research and publish papers the whole duration of their studies, will use the third year to complete his thesis... We are planning to evaluate our curricula and syllabi in 2007 to see if the 4 + 1 + 3 model is the right one.

■ *Are there also drawbacks to the new law, and is the academic community autonomous in organising and implementing these changes?*

The new law was passed in 1999, the same year the Bologna Declaration was signed, so naturally, it does not explicitly contain the goals of the Bologna process. However, I hold the view that the lack of a legal framework to support the implementation of the «Bologna» goals may not be our excuse for not doing anything for that matter. All our departments have adopted ECTS, even though the credit system is not mentioned in the Act. Still, the law does not ban this system. Our university acts define the European Credit Transfer System as a cumulative one. In each semester, a student may accumulate 30 credits, of which 25 are compulsory subjects, and students may choose

In a Tight Shirt

If we look at absolute expressions, we have achieved good results with less public funding in 1999 and 2000. This is particularly important if we remember that state, or canton subsidies are lessened annually by 20 percent, while we have at the same time doubled the number of employees and tripled the number of students. We would have failed without this reform!

15,000 students, approximately 700 permanently employed staff, over 1,600 subjects are taught at 44 departments, and this is the second year since we implemented and use ECTS – the European Credit Transfer System. We have also worked to implement other goals of the Bologna process: new curricula and syllabi have been adopted, as well as the duration of studies, which has been reduced to four years, with the exception of the Faculty of Medicine

We have also adopted a series of important documents: rule books, regulations, standards, as well as norms of work and conduct. We have standardised and regulated various procedures. We have also rationalised our operations, and now manage to achieve more with less resources. We have enhanced our efficiency in every way.

■ *How is studying organised and which model have you chosen?*

The Bologna process requires three distinct study periods in line with one of the following two models: 3 + 2 + 3 years, or 4 + 1 + 3 years. Consequently, higher education should not exceed 8 years. We have opted for the second model, 4 + 1 + 3. Our undergraduate studies take four years to complete, where one may be awarded 240 credits, we have reduced our postgraduate studies to one year, or 60 credits, and this year we will introduce doctoral studies, which will take three years and be weighted to 180 credits. So, in line with the Bologna process, we are modifying our doctoral studies, which will now consist of a two-year period of tuition, and the candidate, who will be expected to do

the rest on their own. This means 16.7 percent of the credits earned are awarded for what students select. This also means that a student studying at one faculty of Tuzla University may choose a subject from a different faculty or a different department of their own faculty. This is the key feature our integrated status – it enables student mobility within the university. When student mobility is internally fully operational, it will be easier for us as a university to cooperate with other universities on the principle of partnership and support larger-scale student mobility, thus strengthening one of our «Bologna» achievements. Student mobility is impossible within the boundaries of an isolated faculty; the situation where one faculty uses the credit system, while other faculties of the same university do not, makes this mission impossible.

Let me return to your question about the drawbacks of this law. I do not think it supports or helps develop our declared autonomy. The Government of Tuzla Canton gives its approval upon the election of university management and appoints the Management Board. The Management Board has nine members – we have succeeded in securing three member positions for our teachers, while the other six are appointed by the Government. I can say that we are lucky that people in the Government are such that our cooperation with them is good, but we wish to arrange things in an institutional manner. We would like to eliminate all external influences and secure true university autonomy. Naturally, it is a long way to this. One positive

feature of the Act is that the rector and deans are elected in public competitions, but it is bad that their mandates run for two years.

Furthermore, the Act should specify student participation in decision making. It was our initiative to involve students in this, and I believe this is good – students make ten percent of Senate members and they have equal rights to vote. Of course, I could also mention some other «Bologna» goals, such as lifelong learning, which may become an additional financial source for universities.

■ *How does the system of distribution of administrative power between the university and faculties function in reality?*

When the university was registered as a legal entity, the faculties lost their status of independent legal entities. We have kept the term 'faculty' and still have faculty deans, which is a transitional phase, in my opinion. Practically and theoretically, faculties do not exist any longer. The academic community will eventually accept this, as great changes are yet to come.

There is a single bank account held by Tuzla University, while the faculties are structured in such a way they have the sole responsibility to organise research and undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral studies. There autonomy is full in this segment. Solving the problem of roof leakage will no longer be a dean's responsibility, as there is a relevant centralised university service to handle things like this. It is the responsibility of every dean to ensure that the biggest possible number of matriculated students graduate on time. Beside teaching, faculties engage in research, and they are fully independent in this respect. When it comes to research, projects and studies, deans have the power to sign contracts with whomever they wish and for any amounts of money... and according to our regulations, the university gets 15 percent of the total amount earned, but will in return be responsible for the infrastructure, computers, laboratories, heating – the university takes over all these responsibilities. Also, some faculties are efficient, others are not, some are established, others are not... while all salaries and pay bonuses come from the university account, and it is the university which negotiates with the government and is its partner, not thirteen deans.

■ *What is the share of state subsidies allocated to higher education in funding the university, and how much does the university itself earn, and also, how are its financial resources budgeted?*

The state provides around 60 percent of the necessary funding, while we earn the remaining 40 percent. We are the only university in Bosnia and Herzegovina operating under the auspices of the Treasury of Tuzla Canton. There are set rules which regulate the allocation of funds. Believe me, this works excellently. The system of treasury funding was devised well before it was officially

enforced at state level. Funds are distributed to fifty subaccounts, all fiscal affairs happen at one place, while expenditure is controlled by means of adequate decisions, rules of conduct and standards. In my opinion, we have been very successful over the last five years in implementing the reform of university structure.

■ *What impact did this have on salaries?*

Salaries are still the same. Subsidies are used to cover salaries, operations and maintenance, while the rest of our financial resources is expended in line with precisely defined criteria. It is impossible to use this money to pay our staff. For example, students' fees are used exclusively to increase the standard of studying, which means investments. This model is good because we need fast development. Our university is one of the biggest investors in Tuzla Canton. So far, we have invested between 3.5 and 5 million BAM annually towards this goal. I mean – new buildings, the adaptation of old buildings, new equipment... every employee has a personal computer at work and free Internet access both at work and home. We have furnished and equipped several buildings. We have opened a multimedia centre and a distance learning room. Undergraduate lessons take place in this room. For example, professor Kolonić from Banja Luka lectures to our students of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, and professor Werner from Vienna lectures to defectology and medical students.

This is how we decided to invest, not in salaries. Our goal is to become accredited by an international agency and obtain a certificate to prove it measures up to European universities. We invest everything we earn in our future.

■ *The University is practically in Europe, is its surroundings following?*

The mission of the university is to disseminate education and knowledge. I view the university as avant-gard. We expect the university to bring about change to its local economy. Tuzla will no longer be famous for the quantity of kilowatt hours of electricity produced in the area or millions of tons of mined coal, but for some other, more sophisticated qualities. We expect the university will change the economic profile and the people within its sphere of influence. This is an advantage and opportunity of the university of our canton.

In B&H, around 60 percent of the population have no formal qualifications – they have finished primary school, or only some forms of primary school. Around 32 percent are secondary school graduates, while only about 3 percent hold degrees of further or higher education. What other factor can advance a country where three percent of the population are college and university graduates and is dreaming about a European future.

■ *How is this regulated at the moment?*

There is no funding formula. There is no uniform pattern of funding universities in B&H, and that is sad. Depending on their respective regional centers, universities are differently funded. Maybe it would be fair if we obtained less than what is possible today. However, we want a funding formula. The rules of the game must be set before the game starts if we want to have sound policies and practice.

■ *Achievement and quality assessment are imperative in higher education. Discontinuity due to frequent authority changes is often a mechanism which impedes the reform, how do you deal with this?*

Unfortunately, I have to say we are only starting to address the issue of quality assurance. We have made a lot of effort to promote the culture of quality, the culture of education. Our current law deals with this issue in a rather old-fashioned way, in my opinion, and I have to say that, regardless of how revolutionary it was when first enforced, it has already turned into an obstacle for us when it comes to certain issues. We feel like we are wearing a tight shirt. We need to assess quality in a different way. We have founded the Quality Bureau, which will standardise and regulate various processes and procedures for every curriculum, every subject, every faculty. The international expert evaluation report states that our university has the honour to be proclaimed leader of higher education reform processes in and outside B&H.

■ *Who forms the Quality Bureau?*

The University itself, ie representatives of all our faculties. The following figures can confirm the success of our scheme – 135 teachers have been promoted over the last three years, and at this moment, over 25 young teachers are visiting foreign universities; every faculty offers postgraduate studies, and we are the only university with its own foundation which provides scholarships and stipends to its students and teaching assistants.

The foundation has only its own resources. Last year, we granted 82 scholarships to our best students, whose average grade was higher than 9. They all received 1,000-Mark scholarships. Also, we cover our teaching assistants' tuition fees with 7,500 BAM and our doctoral candidates with 12,000 BAM. Until now, 1,250,000 Marks have been expended from the foundation.

This foundation functions on a mechanism which secures its self-sustainability and growth. Last year, we employed 92 young experts. There is no other firm in the whole region which employs so many experts. This will secure we maintain our vitality and keep our staff young. Very few of our assistant lecturers have failed to take study trips abroad. We are on the way to solve the problem of our faculty's age structure.



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and Herzegovina does not interfere with the sector of education at all. This has resulted in serious consequences. One of the most adverse consequences is certainly the apartheid in our primary schools, whose most famous product is the slogan 'two schools under one roof'. Owing to this system of education, we are by now deeply engaged in the process of raising generations which have nothing in common – they are educated in three languages which are allegedly different, within three different educational systems, they are taught different versions of the history of their country, and worst of all, they have no contact between themselves. What kind of future will these generations create for this country when they take over the governing of this country?

Tertiary Education

Tertiary education world wide is characterised by intense cooperation and teacher and student mobility, which leads to its internationalisation. Nevertheless, tertiary education in this country remains within

however, that the signing of these documents does not enforce anyone to actually start implementing the provisions of these two documents. The organisation of our state is to blame, ie the nonexistence of a state ministry of education with its respective authority.

Certainly, there are other aspects of life in this country which suffer from similar problems. Now and then, the High Representative intervenes when it comes to certain issues, enabling to start their adequate development. In that sense, it is not clear why the High Representative continues to avoid the sector of education. Also, I will never understand why, since 1996, education has not been in the list of PRIORITIES for the reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Why does the High Representative not intervene now, if it is clear that we cannot do anything for education in this country shaped by the Dayton Accords?

What is the Bologna Process?

The Bologna process of reform and harmonisation of European higher education

the period between two conferences. Also, in these periods between, different states participating in the Bologna process organise seminars under BFUG's supervision (the so-called BFUG seminars), which focus on the issues and topics specified as priorities at minister conferences. The conclusions and recommendations of BFUG seminars are then collected and sorted. Some of those recommendations and conclusions are added as priorities to the materials prepared for the next conference.

The Bologna process is a serious reform of higher education. The most developed European countries, which initiated the reform, predicted it would take at least ten years for its completion. B&H joined the process (if only verbally) in September 2003, and it has engaged in it insufficiently to reach the level which many other Bologna Declaration signatory states achieved over the last five years.

The harmonisation of the B&H higher education sector with the systems of higher education of other European countries ought to be our first ticket to enter Europe.

Serving the Students

What are the goals of the Bologna reform? Firstly, it focuses on the student, creating 'student-centered university', unlike the one we have now, where the focus is on teachers ('teacher-centered university'). According to the Bologna reform, all activities taking place at a university need to support teaching / learning activities, or university studying. According to Bologna recommendations, students learn continuously – they study. In our system, students work periodically – they take examinations.

acquiring the required knowledge, and, on the other hand, it is also possible to fail an examination, despite obtaining good knowledge of the subject matter.

New Standards

The Bologna reform introduces standards and norms which specify the length of studies and the weekly workload together with the total workload needed for the acquisition of certain knowledge and skills; there is no room for arbitrariness. Higher education is divided into three separate study cycles, undergraduate/postgraduate (master)/doctoral, which all take a specific period of time. For most professions the cycles take 3+2+3 years, or 4+1+3. (This means that if undergraduate studies take three years to complete, postgraduate studies will take 2). The number of contact teaching hours, ie hours of direct communication between students and teachers is reduced to 20-25 hours per week (instead of the current average of between 30-35 hours per week). Students will accomplish progress and be marked based on their total workload, not only on grades attained in examinations. Based on their total work load, students are awarded points. Students may transfer the points they have collected in case they choose to continue studying at another university, which stimulates student mobility, and student mobility, according to Bologna standards, represents a special value of a reformed university.

As a rule, university examinations are written. Oral examinations are very rare at good, reformed universities. Seminars, debates and practicals are verbal, whereas examinations must be written, producing a document written on paper. These written documents are collected from day one and filed in the so-called 'student's portfolio' (a student's file), serving as proof that a student has successfully acquired the knowledge and skills necessary for a certain profession. This makes it impossible to counterfeit diplomas, which is so common in this region. Apart from this, for the purpose of objectivity, respectable universities have introduced the practice of the so-called external assessment, or at least 'double marking' of students' university papers. External assessment is carried out by external teachers who assess students and their knowledge. By doing so, they also evaluate the quality of work of the teacher who taught that particular subject. When it comes to double marking, examination papers are marked by another teacher independently of the one who actually taught the subject. Their marks are then compared and, in case of discrepancy, certain measures are undertaken.

It is necessary that many changes take place at our universities during the Bologna reform process. These changes include the modification of curricula and syllabi (changes to the contents of subjects taught, their modernisation and harmonisation with the programmes of other European universities), changes in the conduct of all those having a role in university education, as well as new ways to choose and employ university teachers. Teaching assistants will not be employed permanently; their status will be of temporary engagement, while they will simultaneously be working to win their masters or doctors degrees.

An enormous body of work is ahead of us, and so is a long period of intensive learning, and all participant in this very important process should find time and build up enthusiasm for it.

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Bologna Process in B&H

The extravagant state organisation inaugurated by the Dayton Accords had, among other things, a great deal of negative impact on the sector of education. One entity, the Republic of Srpska, has been structured as a tiny centralised state which has, of its own will, developed much more intense cooperation with its neighbouring country, Serbia, than with the rest of its own state. The other entity, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, has been fragmented into 10 miniature states – cantons – which all have almost unlimited control in the sector of education. Beside this, there is a third particle of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Brčko District, which has its own educational policy. Consequently, the state of Bosnia

ethnic boundaries, it is reduced to local dimensions, utterly poor and light years away from the so-called European space of tertiary education.

Our attempt to adopt a framework law on tertiary education was a complete failure. This law, which would at least somewhat standardise our further education and introduce relevant bodies, norms and regulations in line with the Bologna Declaration, is now only a dead letter.

The state of Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the Bologna Declaration (September 2003) and the Lisbon Convention (June 2003), thus guaranteeing that Bosnia and Herzegovina will work hard in the process towards the common recognition and comparability of European diplomas. It seems,

takes place in stages marked by bi-annual conferences of the ministers of education of the Bologna Declaration signatory states. This process commenced with the Conference of Ministers held in 1999, followed by the conferences in Prague in 2001, and Berlin in 2003.

The next conference will be held in Bergen, Norway, between 17 and 19 May 2005. The activities undertaken within the Bologna process of higher education reform are organised, monitored and guided by the body called 'Bologna Follow-Up Group' – BFUG. This body consists of the representatives – experts from all Bologna Declaration signatory states (since the Berlin Conference of Ministers, it has had 40 members). BFUG meets several times in

But, how much do we know about it in the first place? How much do our politicians, cantonal and entity ministers, and the Council of Ministers know about the Bologna process of reform? Finally, how much do teachers and other university staff, and also students and their parents know about it? Very little. Their knowledge ends with superficial mentions of the Bologna Declaration, hardly anyone speaks about what the reform really means.

It seems that the purpose of studying at our universities today is not to obtain knowledge and skills, but only to pass examinations; however, winning knowledge and passing examinations do not necessarily correlate as cause and effect. Sometimes, it is possible to pass an examination without

Mostar University Asks for Equal Status as Other State-Subsidised Institutions

Members of the Senate of Mostar University have addressed cantonal authorities responsible for its financing in accordance with the Constitution with a request that the University be given equal status as other state-subsidised institutions, such as secondary



schools and cantonal ministries, without any further delay.

According to Senate members, the institutions and individuals responsible for responding to their request are cantonal ministers of education and finance, and presidents of cantonal governments of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, West Herzegovina Canton, Herzeg Bosnia Canton, Posavina and Central Bosnia Cantons, along with members of various parties holding the above-mentioned posts in these cantons.

In their open letter, Senate members are unanimous in stating that the financial state of the University is 'unviable and unbearable', and that something ought to be done urgently or, otherwise, they will have to stop their work. Even though they say they realize there is little chance of providing sufficient financial resources to satisfy the University's real needs, Senate members wrote this letter to inform the authorities that the funding received by the University scarcely suffices to pay minimum

salaries to their staff, let alone the costs of maintenance and operations, or bills. Reminding the authorities that the University has more than 30 study programs, 11,500 students and 890 professors and assistants, Senate members object that the sum of 860,220 KM allocated to the University for December 2004 and the first three months in 2005 was not enough to pay minimum salaries for more than 1,000 University employees, let alone its operations, maintenance and utility bills.

To resolve the current crisis, the Senate is united in asking that their requests be complied with without any delays, reminding that it is the constitutional responsibility of cantons to finance the University and secure the same status for this institution as for any other institution subsidized by the government – such as secondary schools and cantonal ministries. They also requested that funding for the University be planned under the same criteria as for other mentioned users and that the

funds allocated be transferred at the same time, pointing out that they wish to share the fate of secondary school teachers and cantonal ministries, which means they wish to receive and expend their funds on a regular basis. Senate members also said to the authorities that 'the survival and development of the University is in their hands and only upon them do the University's future and development depend'.

Source: 24si / Agencies



Dragan Primorac, the Minister of Science, Education and Sports, on the implementation of the Bologna process

Calculations at Risk

■ *The new academic year is at our doorstep, we are pretty late when it comes to harmonizing our system of higher education with the Bologna process, and university entrance exams have been postponed until September. The public is still unfamiliar with many things, but according to Dragan Primorac, Minister of Science, Education and Sport, the Ministry is working hard to avoid postponing the adaptation of our system of higher education to European systems for yet another year.*

– At the Rectors' Conference, we appealed to all institutions in the sector of higher education, the Council of Polytechnics and Colleges, the Ministry, the National Council for Higher Education, the

Taken from Novi list with author's permission.
Editing: O&R Editorship

Agency, which is starting its work in a few days (today the constitutional session of the Administrative Council of the Agency for Science and Higher Education was held), as well as the National Bologna Group, to adopt and act strictly in line with the rules proposed at the Osijek Rectors' Conference held on 19 November. The deadline was 15 January for universities and colleges to submit to the Rectors' Conference, i.e. the Council of Polytechnics and Colleges and the National Council for Higher Education their study program schemes containing lists of undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate curricula, duration of studies and credits awarded in accordance with ECTS, student mobility scheme, what study programs need to be completed in order to enroll in the next level, and the maximum number of students who will enroll in a study program. By 1 April, we need to complete the proposed study programs and run their internal evaluation. By 15 March,

the National Council will provide the Agency for Science and Higher Education with instructions to speed up the process of curricula evaluation, and they will also appoint evaluation committees; the process of evaluation will have to be completed by 5 June with the assistance of the Agency, and the Minister will then be advised to issue licenses for the curricula evaluated as satisfactory. The majority agrees that starting curricula which are not evaluated positively ought to be postponed until the next academic year, and this bears a very important message.

■ *According to you, the Ministry has already finished a great deal of the job, but you mention deadlines, which are still on paper. Allegedly, the situation in reality is far worse, and part of the academic community is convinced these deadlines will not be met, which will open up the possibility to amend the law once more. Is this likely to happen?*

– It is possible, theoretically. The Ministry is now in charge of a system five times bigger than the one it used to cover. The Ministry of Science and Technology has worked beyond its capacity for a year now and it has been pressing those who need to meet their deadlines to their maximum. The situation at universities is such that, apparently, they are late when it comes to certain issues. We are aware of everything and we have intensified our efforts, and Croatian universities are doing

the same in order to prevent having to change the law again, which would postpone the process one more year. However, at this point, I do not even want to think about changing the law again.

■ *Does this mean that we might have a heterogeneous system, as the Universities of Split and Zagreb have not adopted the Statute yet, and it is hard to believe that they will manage to finish all the preliminary work?*

– We observed the models and experiences of other countries which have gone through the same process, and none of them had an ideal situation. It would not be good to have mixed systems in Croatia, as they would bring about a lot of confusion, but I still believe that the process will be completed on time, based on what I have heard from the rectors, and knowing their enthusiasm and eagerness.

Licences to be granted for all proposed curricula by 15 June

The academic community has never been so ready and determined, and no deadlines have been broken so far; in line with the Implementation Dynamics document adopted by the National Council for Higher Education, the Ministry will issue licenses for all proposed curricula by 15 June, and starting with this academic year, students will attend studies modified in accordance with the Bologna process. Dragan Primorac, Minister of Science, Education and Sports, said yesterday at the conference 'Implementation of Bologna Process and Croatian Particularities' organised by the Council for Science, Education and Culture of the Socialdemocratic Party of Croatia.

Stipe Tutiš, President of the Social Democratic Students' Union, said that Croatian students are not familiar enough with the Bologna process and he said that it is very important that students participate as equal partners in establishing ECTS and the system of quality control. Aleksa Bjeliš, Vice-Chancellor of Zagreb University, concluded that all efforts need to be channelled into undergraduate curricula.

Jasmina Lukač-Havranek, the interim director of the Agency for Science and Higher Education, and Pero Lučin, Vice-Chancellor of Rijeka University, agreed that today there would be less doubt, suspicion and lack of understanding if we had started harmonising our system with European systems in 2001, when Croatia signed the Bologna Declaration.

In the opinion of Gvozden Flego, President of the Socialdemocratic Party of Croatia Council, a great change is ahead of universities, as they are to take upon themselves greater social responsibility, which is why they need to become more efficient. The Bologna process is an opportunity to solve all mentioned problems, Flego concluded.

Minister Primorac sent a memorandum in which he asked the appointment of members to the Council for Standardization of the Croatian Language

Dragan Primorac, Minister of Science, Education and Sports, sent a memorandum in which he asked that member are proposed for the Council for Standardization of the Croatian Language ...

After the expert committee of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports recommended 'Hrvatski školski pravopis' (Croatian School Orthography), co-written by Stjepan Babić, Sanda Ham and Milan Moguš, for use in schools, Minister Dragan Primorac announced an expert debate on the issue of orthography. As his first step to implement this, on Thursday, Primorac sent a memorandum to all leading Croatian institutions dealing with standard Croatian. The memorandum requests that each institution proposes a competent member the soonest possible, who would constitute the newly-founded Council for Standardization of the Croatian Language.

The memorandum was addressed to all leading Croatian institutions dealing with standard Croatian – universities and institutes – which need to appoint their members to the Council, and according to what Vjesnik learnt at the Ministry, it has been addressed to the Faculties of Philosophy in Pula, Rijeka, Zadar, Split, Zagreb and Osijek, the Teachers' Academy in Zagreb, Croatian Studies, Institute of Croatian Language and Linguistics, Croatian Academy of Arts and Science, Matica hrvatska, and Lexicographic Institute 'Miroslav Krleža'. Primorac said that the memorandum follows up the 2003 decision of the Government to devise a strategy to develop the national linguistic culture, as well as the 2004 request of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports in connection with the state of the Croatian language.

Marko Samardžija (PhD), professor at the Department for Standard Croatian Language of the Zagreb Faculty of Philosophy, says for Vjesnik that there have been similar attempts to establish a standardisation council: 'We should certainly welcome the efforts of Minister Primorac, but at the same time, we need to remember that there existed a council for the standardisation of Croatian at the same Ministry, which practically failed to produce any results'.

■ *What about the funding of different study programs? Namely, faculties have offered various models, from 3 + 2, 4 + 1, to 5 + 0.*

– If we simply adopted all curricula as proposed by faculties, without additionally evaluating them, our calculations would immediately fall through. The Bologna process bears with it responsibility, and it does not only mean proposing models which look brilliant, but require maximum employment and reorganisation, which would cost so much that it would prevent their implementation. We had a number of debates, and some institutions, which initially proposed the 5 + 0 model, analysed European experiences and decided alone to opt for the 3 + 2 model. These days, some faculties, among which I single out law schools, are finishing their consideration and debating, and they will present in detail the experiences of EU member countries in their respective areas of study and research, and propose a model for Croatia. One common objective of the Bologna process is to educate professionals who will be awarded a title and have the required competences immediately after their graduation, and who will consequently be able to start contributing to their country's economy right away, first it will be Croatia's economy, one day European economy, based on the principle of reciprocity or mobility.

■ *Many people still don't understand why we should reduce the first study period to three years, that is, what degree exactly will a student who has graduated in literature or economics have after a three-year course, and where will they work? Or is history*

going to repeat, if we remember 'Šušteršič's reform', which educated young experts who could not find employment anywhere?

– After completing a study period, a corresponding degree will be awarded, and as for the question of employment prospects for a person with a three-year degree in economics, it is a matter of the labour market demand. Market research has shown us, for example, that there are a lot of posts for which one does not need a degree in economics. If there are such positions in Europe, I shouldn't expect that something similar will be impossible in our country, and I do not think people with such degrees will be unable to find employment when Croatia enters EU and full mobility of workers is achieved. I am highly critical and objective when I say what everybody else is saying – it is true that it is the interest of every individual faculty to make their studies as long as possible for financial reasons – but we simply have to adjust to the trends we aim at, while, naturally, protecting our strategic national interests. With regards to the implementation of the Bologna process, personally, I strongly support wider professional debates at universities, without any political interference. In order to implement new and modern, but also extremely demanding curricula, we need to educate additionally the staff that we have, but we must also have new vacancies, and after many years of not having vacancies at universities, we have allocated substantial funds to create 450 new, long-awaited openings.

Elvira MARINKOVIĆ ŠKOMRLJ

AEGEE Scholarship Program

Education for Democracy' is a project sponsored and run by EC which provides scholarships to cover the costs of tuition fees for the duration of one academic year (10 months) at EU member state universities. Students eligible for scholarships are matriculated students from the Western Balkans



states and South Caucasus. Scholarships are granted through AEGEE national offices in the above states.

The aim of the project is to promote the idea of European integration and mutual understanding by giving a chance to young people to gain first-hand experience of genuinely democratic societies and take the lead in the process of reconciling young people living in countries previously involved in armed conflicts.

Source: Mladi info

Conference on Functional Assessment of Education Sector

Between June 2004 – February 2005, a team of foreign and national experts closely cooperating with ministries of education and pedagogical institutes conducted a functional assessment of the sector of education.

'Until now, we have completed functional assessments of the sectors of agriculture, health care, police forces, legislation, public administration, relations with the media', said Vranić, adding that after completing the assessments, the conclusion is that administration needs improvement the soonest possible.

Halilović said that it is very difficult to reform education in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

'The system of education is organised in an asymmetric way. On the one hand, cantons are in charge of education issues, on the other, it is the responsibility of the entity of the Republic of Srpska', Halilović emphasised, adding that until two years ago, the state had no power whatsoever when it came to the system of education.

Commenting on the issue of diploma recognition, B&H Minister of Civil Affairs said that primary and secondary education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is satisfactory, and that the country has the most problems in implementing the Bologna process in the area of higher education.

Source: 24si

Luxembourg Student Convention



Hose Manuel Barroso i Vanja Ivošević

ESIB (National Union of Students in Europe), UNEL (Union Nationale des étudiant(e)s du Luxembourg) and ACEL (Association des cercles d'étudiants Luxembourgeois) held the 9th European Student Convention in Luxembourg on March 18-29, which featured more than 90 student representatives from all over Europe. The aim of the Convention was to give rise to advanced discussions on financing higher education and to attempt to develop adequate approaches for student participation as competent partners in current and future policy developments in this field.

The convention also issued a declaration to the next ministerial meeting within the Bologna process, to be held in Bergen, Norway, in May this year. The so called "Luxembourg Student Declaration" calls upon the ministers to make the social dimension of student mobility a priority in the Bologna process after the Bergen summit and to remove the main financial and political obstacles to student mobility in Europe. This should be done through establishing a European Mobility Fund and through committing EU member states to ease or abolish the conditions for obtaining visa and residence permits for mobile students.

At the closing ceremony of the Third EUA (European University Association) Convention, José Manuel Barroso, European Commission President, addressed the convention and in his

speech he emphasised the importance of education, research and development in the views of researchers in the context of achieving Lisbon goals. He spoke of legal and other initiatives of the European Union in this area. Vanja Ivošević, ESIB President, said that, along with general student mobility, the issue of mobility of students with special needs (mobility conditions, travel) is also very important, i.e. providing the same mobility conditions for all European students (including students coming from non-European Union states). She also spoke about the importance of establishing a European Mobility Fund. After Ivošević spoke about her concerns, participants to the convention proved their interest in these issues by giving their support to ESIB. After this, President Barroso called education the first step in overcoming the issues of disability and special needs.

A one-hour meeting was organized between President Barroso and a big number of ESIB representatives and many students who participated and are now participating in the program Erasmus in Glasgow. Barroso pointed out that it is important for Europe not to abandon its proclaimed values in pursuit of material goals. He agreed with ESIB members that social and international dimensions of the Bologna process are very important and that it is necessary to make greater efforts in their implementation.

Ivana Pantelić

When asked about the developments in the implementation of the Bologna process, students most frequently bring out the obstinate opposition of their academic community to change, insufficient information about the reform of higher education and its relevance for students, its narrowing to the opportunity of starting undergraduate studies in one country and continuing them in another, poor working conditions at universities, and scarce funding and governmental support. The yawning gap between needs, wishes and possibilities in many of the states originating from former Yugoslav republics has made possible only the initial steps of the reform of higher education; unfortunately, the few achievements have to be credited to individuals.

Representatives of students' associations from Serbia, B&H, Macedonia and Montenegro unanimously agree that the

Student Perspective

greatest obstacle to change are those professors reluctant to accept new ways of thinking and working with students. Incidentally or on purpose, they turn the system upside down (basically trying to avoid real reformation), simply by dividing their subjects into several one-term courses, translating them into the credit system, but still maintain the same scope syllabus. Some faculties and departments make positive examples, but they all face the same major problem – insufficient funding.

Even though neither Serbia nor B&H have adequate laws on higher education to accompany the Bologna Declaration, the situation in these countries is no worse than in their adjacent states. The current law in Serbia does not obstruct the introduction of the novelties promoted by the Bologna process, such as interactive teaching, continuous grading throughout one semester, contemporary literature, student participation in all decision making processes to do with the quality of education... In this sense, the law is flexible enough, but it is not stimulative enough. The initiatives of various institutions of higher education to begin their educational transition processes are solitary and disharmonious, and they develop their own action plans



Srećko Šekeljić

to implement the reform. There is not a common view or a consensus to define the aims of the reform and the instruments for their implementation, says Srećko Šekeljić, coordinator of the Department of Higher Education of the Belgrade Students' Association.

Some colleges and faculties have seriously focused their efforts to modernise and reform their work in order to become competitive in good time. However, the substantial majority of our schools defy the spirit of our time, persistently clinging to their methods and habits established long ago, which they inherited from earlier generations. It is easy to see that one part of the academic community strongly resists all changes. This group of academics tendentiously compare the attempts to introduce European standards into national higher education with some other unpopular international responsibilities, calling themselves the 'anti-Bologna lobby', says Šekeljić.

He mentions several examples of schools and faculties which have introduced ECTS into their programs, although most of them do not dare to start the process of standardisation of their students' total work load. The main excuse for using out-of-date books and literature is the lack of money, and this same excuse is unjustifiably made at better-off faculties too. Miloš Vitošević, Šekeljić's colleague from the Serbian Student Association, says that 'we can see there are efforts at certain faculties to make it easier for students to sit and pass exams,' which is, according to him, 'the start of continuous grading to more efficient studying'.

However, some faculties are aware they will soon be competing against private colleges, which in itself brings new quality. They are starting to realise they will be losing students, which will also take away part of their profits, and there is an even more serious danger of their becoming redundant – says Vitošević.

While saying that upon its introduction, ECTS is still in its experimental phase at some faculties, Vitošević claims that this also conceals one of the greatest dangers for students due to unreformed curricula and syllabi. According to him, it is not worth even mentioning other provisions or recommendations of the Bologna Declaration; apart from some attempts to introduce a quality assurance system,

there are no traces of their implementation whatsoever.

The question of the readiness of our faculties to start the reform must be analysed from several different angles. It is primarily based on their willingness, but also on their potentials, such as their budget and staff capacity, as well as on some other resources available to colleges and universities. The reform will cost and that is inevitable. If we ask how much can be achieved without any additional funding, and how much at huge expenses of the state, students and the market, estimates for individual faculties vary by a small percentage. Just imagine the sum needed to print all new books for all subjects at one faculty. Also, try to imagine how many computers, laboratory chemicals, etc., will be needed. We are talking about huge amounts, and without new teaching aids, modern literature, the eagerness of our professors to write new books (ie engage in research in new fields at their average age of



sixty), the reform will remain a dead letter – says Vitošević.

The main obstacle in implementing the principles of the Bologna Declaration in Macedonia is the situation where its state universities consist of faculties which are all individually legal entities, unlike most European universities, where they are only legal entities, and as such, participate in the Bologna process on the principle of partnership. Marija Stambolieva of the Students' Network for Southeastern Initiatives, says that Macedonia has a lot of difficulty in restructuring its traditional universities, which is a process which asks for changed attitudes, especially in the case of its aging academic and administrative staff, before they accept the reform. Some faculties, mainly physical sciences, have

already started using ECTS, while others are still at the beginning of the process. Macedonian universities have already gone through the processes of accreditation, self-evaluation and external evaluation conducted by the European University Association.

Macedonia passed its law on higher education in 2000, which is three years before this country officially joined the Bologna process. The law introduced certain changes into the system of higher education and it will serve as a legal framework in the process of reform. New bodies, which did not exist in the earlier system of higher education, have been founded, such as the Accreditation Board, Evaluation Agency, Council for Higher Education Funding and Development, in order to ensure better quality in organising and implementing the reform. Still, there have been omissions in enforcing the law; for example, the Council was founded and started working as late as 2004.

While Macedonia is considering

amending its current law or even passing a new one, which would specify concrete steps to implement the principles of the Bologna Declaration, Bosnia and Herzegovina has not yet resolved the most general issues on its state level.

Similar to everything else happening in B&H, higher education is essentially affected by the policies of our current authorities, which has put it in a very difficult situation. A recent attempt to pass the framework law failed, and the whole process ended with the Constitutional Court ruling that the proposed law was detrimental to the vital national interests of the Croatian people in B&H. During one of the many public debates with local politicians, I challenged the relevance of constantly raising the issue of vital national

interests, if a part of the population of B&H is also young people who are not part of any constitutional ethnic groups. The law was not passed so as to protect the interests of the Croatian people; tomorrow, it will not be passed for the sake of vital national interests of the other two peoples, and this will go on and on in circles. I can only say that we have already lost a few million Euros which were to have been granted in support of the B&H higher education reform – says Adi Kolašević, student of the Faculty of Sport and Physical Education, and coordinator for international cooperation of the Sarajevo University Students' Union.

Since there is not an adequate law or a legal framework to support the reform, and since there is fear of change (especially when it comes to professors who taught in the socialist system), very few faculties in B&H are really trying to change something. Those colleges or universities which have begun the process of modifying their curricula and syllabi do not receive any financial support from the government. According to our interviewee, Sarajevo University makes one positive example; Hasan Muratović, its new Rector, is using all their strength and resources to set the process of reform in motion.

Although Montenegro passed its law on higher education in October 2003, most faculties are not prepared to start implementing the principles of the Bologna Declaration, or, generally speaking, any European university standards, says Boro Krstajić, president of Montenegrin Student Association.

The conditions for students' work are at their lowest. Our laboratories do not satisfy minimum conditions, so practical work is virtually nonexistent. We do not have any modern literature, and the only exception is professors publishing their new books. The Internet and computer rooms are extremely poorly equipped, and there have been attempts to bring about some changes over the last year. In terms of quality, it can hardly be said that our faculties can implement or adhere to the principles of the Bologna Declaration. In saying so, I mean primarily our teaching staff, who are incapable of adopting a totally different way of thinking and working with students. This will be the most serious problem; the things I mentioned above can be obtained in one way or another; however, that will be pointless if the teaching staff, primarily our professors, do not change their ways as



Adi Kolašević

educators. In accordance with the new statute, all faculties have modified their curricula and syllabi; they are both good and modern on paper, but their implementation in reality is a problem. The concept of organising and conducting examinations has been changed; we insist on more communication between

students and professors and its better quality. ECTS was introduced when the new statute was adopted. However, the fact is that the relevant ministry is not very concerned to develop a strategy to modernize our university in line with Bologna principles – says Krstajić.

In his opinion, 'things have changed for the better' over the last three years, but 'in order to achieve more

positive results, we need good cooperation with our neighbouring universities, industries and various institutions in Montenegro, which would enable our graduate students to test the knowledge they have acquired in practice.'

How important is the role of students themselves in all this and are they interested in changes? The impression is that mainly the management of these different student bodies is interested in the reform, while most students do not quite understand what exactly Bologna means. For students, the most attractive prospect is the possibility to enroll in a faculty in their own country and then continue their education abroad, as well as the fact that their degree will be recognised in the world market.

Generally speaking, Macedonian students have very little information about the reform and how it would benefit an ordinary student. This is happening as a result of little comprehension and slow and inadequate ways to implement the principles of the Bologna Declaration on the part of our academic staff. We can say that only a limited number of students' representatives have the right information about Bologna, and the problem here is that they cannot share this with their colleagues due to changes in the management of students' organisations – says Marija Stambolieva.

Student participation in the management of colleges and universities and in the reform of education has started to be appreciated and taken into account, but this is mainly so at university level. On the other hand, the influence of students'

representatives at faculty level, where education actually takes place, is not strong enough to properly protect the rights and interests of their colleagues, who are at the same time real users of faculty services. Apart from lacking good practices, there are no legal acts which cover the issue of organisation of students, which would help in regulating the functioning and authorisation of students' representatives.

Students make the only partners genuinely interested in this reform. However, there are those among us as well who act entirely in their own interests. This is not only their fault, as apathy is omnipresent and pervasive. Everyone wants to graduate as soon as possible and leave. One colleague of ours said: 'It will take us eight years of sweating to get our degrees, compared to the future, 'Bologna' generations, who will be getting theirs much more easily, in three to four years. Why shouldn't we, then, rise against the reform and our future fellow students?' – says Miloš Vitošević.

There are different opinions about how much students have really felt the change. The leader of Montenegrin students claims their students have noticed the situation changing, but they have not become fully used to a system which is closer to secondary education than to the past higher education practice.

Our organisation, which is the University's most important partner in this reform as well as founder of the Students' Parliament, is going to publish a brochure, 'A Guide Through The Reform', which will provide all information to future students, but also those currently matriculated, about the new system of higher education, as well as the rules and duties of both students and professors. To do this clearly enough, the brochure will compare the old with the new system of studying – says Boro Krstajić.

Adi Kolašević, his colleague from Sarajevo, says that 'students notice every change for the better, wherever it may take place', but he also says that as a rule, students do not know much about the Bologna Declaration. He adds that students in B&H do not participate enough in the work of students' associations and unions due to their conviction that they cannot change much, which makes them passive onlookers and contributors to the current situation.

Radmila Pejčić



Boro Krstajić

The State of Finances of State and Private Faculties in the Countries in the Region

finances and students (whose number is below the required). We could continue this unpopular list with more such faculties.

or economics schools – and we will not be able to continue working like this for much longer – warns Nedeljko, DSc.

Less Money for Electricity, Water and Education

In Serbia, only 45 percent of maintenance and operation costs is covered by state subsidies, Slovenia does not cover all expenses of its faculties either, while in the Republic of Srpska, funding is allocated only for employees' salaries



Prof. Dr Stanka Cetnikar

Even though state faculties in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia work in different social and political environments, and certain aspects of their standards of living are almost beyond comparison, institutions of higher education in these countries all have the same open sore: their maintenance and operations costs. For example, state subsidies for these costs in Serbia are continuously reduced year after year, and Slovenia is not an exception either, as the state budget does not fully satisfy the needs of its faculties. This is still worse in the Republic of Srpska, where there are no state subsidies for either utilities or other expenses in tertiary education. However, the situation is currently the most dramatic at Belgrade University, which has just celebrated its 167th anniversary. The deans of certain faculties have come to think that the only thing remaining to be done is go on strike, or, alternatively, close their institutions down! Incredibly high bills amounting to 140,000 Euros are threatening to close down the Faculty of Chemistry; also, the Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy and the Faculty of Mining and Geology are in a bad position, as they are struggling with both their

In fact, the costs of maintenance and operations have become a running sore for Serbian universities, except for the University of Novi Sad, where, due to the omnibus law, subsidies have not been jeopardised by the regulations introduced by Mlađan Dinkić, the Minister of Finance.

If you add up the costs of utilities of all state faculties in Serbia, they amount to around three million Euros – and the state does not subsidise half of this sum, or of our teaching expenses! Some faculties of Belgrade University (BU) cope by securing additional funding from the profits gained from commercial activities, while others will have to close down, unless something changes fast... BU representatives have already visited the Mayor of Belgrade with a proposal to reduce charge rates for the University, but we haven't received any feedback yet – says Milan Nedeljko, Dean of the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering.

Actually, there has never been enough funding for maintenance and operations costs of Serbia's state universities, not even before Slobodan Milošević, and given the current state of their finances, the situation has remained the same after his overthrow. This has frequently stirred the academic community, which respectively led to various outcomes.

This is how it is in reality: the Belgrade Faculty of Mechanical Engineering receives a heating bill of 1,500,000 Dinars (equal to around 18,500 Euros), while the state provides funding to pay around 45 percent of this bill. Another example: this Faculty covers the area 40,000 square meters and its electricity, telephone and water bills are 25,000 Euros a month, and of this sum, more than 3,000 Euros is spent on refuse collection service! We have a wind tunnel, and as soon as you start the engine, it consumes a megawatt hour, and it needs to keep working one hour at least before students can actually learn something. This will cost the same regardless of the number of matriculated students or our staff. I believe it is on the state to decide and publicly say how many institutions it can fund and how many state-funded faculties it needs. The most serious problem at the moment is the maintenance and operations costs, as our faculties are not located in small buildings, our courses need more than boards and chalk to teach, compared with law

Salaries are still a secondary issue, at least in the minds of Belgrade deans. They seem to be trying so hard to cover bills and keep lessons going in more or less normal conditions, and fail to notice that the majority of their professors and assistants are discontented with their salaries, especially if they compare them with the salaries paid at well-to-do state faculties, if we may call them so. Differences can be drastic indeed – those salaries are sometimes seven, even eight times higher, while the teaching staff at some other faculties receive only their basic salaries. This has frequently provoked resentful comments, making professors believe that high salaries are not a reward for one's work, but rather a result of their monopolistic positions.

As for the other countries mentioned at the beginning of this article, the issue of salaries is similar, as they all receive only their basic income from the government; in case they wish a surplus, they have to work on projects, tutor

Improving the standard of living

According to Pero Lučina, Vice-Chancellor of Rijeka University, the current University administration has, over the last four years, concentrated its efforts on improving the standard of living of their employees and solving the problem of housing:

At the time, we estimated that we could not significantly influence the income policy, but we could effectively change our working conditions and assist our staff to solve their housing problems. With the assistance of the government, we initiated a series of activities, which were then adopted at other Croatian universities as well – which has subsequently turned these activities into a national program. During 2002 and 2003, in the first cycle of our program to improve the standard of living, around 16 million Euros was invested. At this moment, we may state that we do not have employees with a housing problem...

or lecture to a big number of students, rent premises or charge for some other services... This is no different when it comes to private colleges, where, as a rule, salaries are much higher. What all of them have in common is that their professors employed at state universities most often sit between two chairs, which is extremely convenient for the founders/owners of private colleges and universities, who are consequently not liable to pay various contributions and taxes. This saves them more means for salaries, which may soar very high.



Prof. dr Milan Nedeljković

In Serbia, rumour has it that salaries at private colleges range between 30,000 Dinars and 300,000 Dinars (from 378 to almost 3,800 Euros), which is definitely above Serbian average. The issue remains a rumour, since true amounts are carefully kept secret. Salaries at Slovenian private colleges are also twice as high compared to those earned at state universities, since there are no legal limitations for the founders or owners of private colleges, and the gross salaries of their full professors are minimum 5,000 Euros. Slovenia has not yet passed the Competition Act in higher education area either.

The staff of state universities in Serbia are equally unwilling to speak about their income. Unofficially, a full professor at Belgrade Law School may earn as much as 1,500 Euros, whereas salaries at the Faculty of Economics are around 500 Euros lower. For this reason, the regulation of the legal status of individual colleges by the new university law is hotly disputed.

In the opinion of Ljubiša Rajić, professor at the Belgrade Faculty of Philology, this issue can be resolved by introducing pay grades and the rule whereby all university employees will be entitled to the same salary, regardless of their home university – and by reducing the number of faculties and their staff by one third!

Despite the same basic salary at Ljubljana University, individual incomes also vary, as there are faculties which earn an extra 40 percent of profits owing to their commercial activities. And yet, in general, state subsidies

for maintenance and operations costs are low for state-founded faculties.

- We have inherited this situation, where the state and budget remain insensitive to our actual needs. In the administration of our faculty, if we relied solely on the resources budgeted for its maintenance and operations costs, then, as an example, we would have only 10 percent of personal computers needed and more old than new equipment. The advantage of additional profits is that we use our extra resources for equipment and for improving the quality of studies – explains professor Stanka Cetnikar, Dean of the Ljubljana Faculty of Public Administration.

As odd as it may seem from Serbia's perspective – there are also faculties in Slovenia facing the threat of being closed down due to financial reasons. This is the position of the Faculty of Metallurgy. Only one of its departments (Textile Department) will survive, but it will have to join a different faculty. Along with the serious state of its finances, this Faculty lacks students because its curriculum is not attractive enough. According to Cetnikar, there are more faculties of Ljubljana University facing closing down. On the other hand, private faculties make fierce competitors, especially in the area of social sciences (economics, law, business management, administration). Professor Cetnikar hopes state faculties are not wiped out in this competition.

As for the Republic of Srpska, there are no mentions that faculties will be closed down, no loud complaints are heard, like in Serbia, and there are no rumours of redundancies or strikes.

Marin Gužalić, Dean of the Brčko Faculty of Economics, and Milorad Božić, Dean of the Banja Luka Faculty of Electrical Engineering, say that faculty expenses are covered in various ways – from projects, donations... and part of these resources is allocated for fees and equipment purchases. Professor Božić was not willing to answer our question if any of the faculties was in an exceptionally bad position, but he added that there are many of them without students or projects... Still, many of them have at least secured their own premises after RS Army withdrew from its barracks.



after interviewing students from the Medical Faculties in Zagreb, Rijeka, Osijek and Split since October 2003 to January 2004, and 312 (76 percent) of the total 408 final year students participated in the poll. A total of 137 students

Salaries in former Yugoslav republics

It is said that Slovenia has the best standard of living of all former Yugoslav republics. This is true, but it is also true that it has a high cost of living. When it comes to rents, Ljubljana ranks second, right after Vienna. The average income in Slovenia is 770 Euros, while around 1,000 Euros is needed to cover the expenses of a four-member family. A teaching assistant employed at a state university earns a basic gross salary of 1,200 Euros (the net salary is 55 percent of the sum), a teaching assistant who holds a masters degree earns 1,300 Euros, a teaching assistant with a doctors degree 1,600 Euros, an assistant lecturer 1,800 Euros, and finally, the gross salaries of associate and full professors are 2,000 and 2,500 Euros respectively. All Slovenian faculties receive funds for salaries from the state budget.

At Rijeka University, a teaching assistant earns around 650 Euros, assistant lecturers get 1,000 Euros, while the salary of a full professor is around 1,500 Euros. The average monthly cost of living for a four-member family in the area of Rijeka is 750 Euros.

Average salaries in the Republic of Srpska are between 300 and 400 BAM. The salary of a teaching assistant does not exceed the average, a teaching assistant with a masters degree earns between 400 and 500 BAM, and a full professor earns between 600 and 700 BAM, depending on the number of subjects they teach. Unofficially, the average monthly cost of living is above 400 BAM.

Following the latest pay increase, full professors in Serbia will be earning slightly more than 29,000 Dinars (around 375 Euros), associate professors will get 335 Euros, assistant lecturers 310 Euros, teaching assistants with doctors degrees 260 Euros, and a teaching assistant less than 230 Euros. The average salary in Serbia is 185 Euros, and 1.25 average salaries are needed to cover the average monthly cost of living.

There is space now, but professor Božić is very concerned over the fact that those faculties expended 100,000 KM on electricity only during two winter months. No one knows how those costs are going to be covered now...

One thing is sure despite all the complaints that can be heard from university staff – most regional state faculties will shortly come to a crossroads. Their market orientation, ability to earn additional funds and attract students will play a crucial role in their survival.

Olga Nikolić

(44 percent) do not expect they will obtain their desired residency positions in Croatia, while as many as 104 of them, which is one third of the total number of final year undergraduate students, said they are considering leaving Croatia if they are not able to practice medicine in their preferred branch of medicine. These students would most rather immigrate to the EU, while the most frequently mentioned state was Slovenia. The most common reasons for them to consider emigration are better salaries and job finding prospects.

Source: Hina

Brčko District was founded in 2000 and encompasses the territory of the town of Brčko and its surrounding villages, corresponding to the area of the former Brčko Municipality. The word district comes from New Latin, which means constituency, district, domain, joint dominion. Brčko district of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is its full official title, is a condominium (joint rule of territory by two or more states). It belongs both to the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska, while at the same time, it has its own legislative, executive and judicial power and its independent institutions. It does not have any armed forces, and its barracks have been transformed into a court, a youth centre, music school and grammar school. There are fifteen primary schools in the District, and four secondary schools in the town: Grammar School, School of Agriculture, Technical

Between the Federation and the Republic

and Economic Schools; also, it hosts the Faculty of Economics (section of Eastern Sarajevo University) and FE Business School (department of Tuzla University). Since 2001, Brčko District has had a multiethnic schooling system. Classes are made up of students coming from all three ethnic groups, and the biggest difference among them (probably also the only difference, for that matter) is in that they attend native language class separately: Bosnian, Croatian or Serbian. Unfortunately, it is impossible to implement the idea of multiethnic education in primary schools in some villages in the District for a simple reason: the composition of their local population does not allow it, while staff is multiethnic in all schools..

- The Brčko District has different departments, which correspond to ministries in the rest of the region, while ministers are called department heads. In comparison with their regional equivalents elsewhere, the difference is not solely lexical – we have a special department head (which means minister), as well as subdepartment heads for both primary and secondary education. All schools are fully dependant on the Education Department. This means they are not free to make their own decisions

when it comes to operation principles. However, from this academic year, schools will become more independent after the introduction of school boards, which will serve as administrative school bodies. The curriculum and syllabi are defined in detail and have to be completed. In that sense, an academic year may last longer than usual, which means it is not possible to complete one academic year with fewer lessons than planned in any subject regardless of the excuse, and the planned number of lessons has to be taught, with lessons compensated when necessary – Miss Tanja Marković, teacher of German language and literature from Public Institution – Grammar School 'Vaso Pelagić', presented our E&D team the structure and schooling in the District.



consequences in the long run – schooling and education – it is understandable why teachers express their concern and worry when it comes to this seemingly desirable advantage.

Brčko receives most attention from its surroundings when it comes to teachers' salaries. Brčko's budget is financed from many different sources.

It has its own sources: taxes, contributions, customs duties and similar, and RS and F B&H are also responsible for allocating part of

their resources into its budget; also, the District receives foreign donations and investments.

- Foreign 'investors' who invest in education most often provide funding directly for the renovation of schools, facades, painting or school equipment. For example, OHR (Office of the High Representative) provides funding, plans and monitors its expenditure (the High Representative is popularly called the Supervisor), but it also sometimes takes the initiative very firmly and, for example, decides to renovate the building of Grammar School – teacher Marković explained.

Teachers are on the payroll of the Government of the Brčko District and so are paid directly by the District, which explains their high salaries.

The lowest salary for teachers holding university degrees is currently 1,400 KM (secondary school teachers), and around 1,200 KM (primary school teachers). For purpose of comparison, a department head, or minister, earns 3,500 KM, while subdepartment heads get 2,250 KM. It is important to say that salaries are paid to these amounts regardless of the actual number of instruction hours. In our interview, teacher Marković also explained this:

- All teachers are required to work for a total of 40 hours during one week. Beside regular instruction hours, this includes all additional lessons, preparation time, class headship, attendance, work with parents, work with various professionals boards, school council meetings, as well as the time intended for keeping school documentation. Apparently, many schedule combinations are possible within working hours, and one

should not be misled to believe that all teachers' schedules are identical and strictly specified in advance in order to complete their required number of lessons, which has to be accomplished. Extra-curricular education and participation in various extracurricular activities, individual professional improvement, etc., do not affect salaries. However, if a whole family lives on one salary, or if a family has a child / children who are HE students, this has effect on the salary and it may be slightly higher. Teachers do not have school holidays, but a vacation, and they have to take vacation during summer holidays, while they are obliged to spend all other holidays in the school, where they have to spend eight hours in line with their daily working hours requirement. Holidays are often used for seminars. There are no meal or travel allowances, which are still paid to teachers from Sarajevo Canton, and their salaries almost amount to District teachers' salaries.

Nevertheless, the budget of the Brčko District is slowly going down, and since January 2005, all taxation profits will be sent to B&H joint institutions first (F B&H and RS), and subsequently redistributed, which means they may end and be used anywhere in the Federation or the Republic. This clearly suggests that the District budget will grow poorer, which will consequently affect teachers' incomes. On April 1, 2005, the Parliament adopted the District budget for the current year, and according to this, salaries will be 10% lower in all sectors, except for legislation and health care.

If the Brčko District is an experimental administrative unit, it sets an example to the rest of the region in many ways. It is apparent that there is a list of drawbacks and omissions alongside one enlisting achievements. The question is which of the two lists is longer and by how much? One example: the Grammar School has two video beams, several laptops, TVs and VCRs, and the school is in the process of creating a computer room for extra-curricular education; at the same time, we caught an incidental side comment of one of its students: 'This is the third year that I have been trying to picture a lab tube in my head', and maybe this comment speaks less about the existence and lack of opportunity, but more about ways, bad ways, which we so traditionally preserve.

Vesna Smiljančić

The Anniversary of University Education in Serbia

With its Commemoration Ceremony held at the Kolarac Foundation on 12 March, Belgrade University celebrated the hundredth anniversary of the first University Act and its University Day. In 1905, the University had three faculties - the Faculty of Philosophy, Law School and Technical School, with 788 students. Today, it has 31 faculties and five research institutes, with 71, 683 undergraduate students.



Belgrade University Rector Building

For Belgrade University, 2005 is the year of celebration, and a series of events and happenings will be organised to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of Serbia's first University Act. According to the Rector, Dejan Popović, the Great School gradually developed into the highest teaching and scientific institution of the Serbian people. The first Draft Act was submitted to the National Assembly on 28 December 1904, and it was passed and came into force by a decree which King Peter I signed on 12 March 1905. The opening of the University was celebrated on 15 October 1905, and this day will also be commemorated this year.

The 1905 University Act, which in its first article reads that 'the Great School of Belgrade is proclaimed a university', guaranteed autonomy for the University, stating that 'the teachers are free to teach their science'. With the enforcement of this law, all teachers employed at the Great School at the time became accounted for and were given university titles (full and associate professors, and assistant lecturers) based on stricter criteria. The rector became head of the University, while deans were made faculty heads. The rector and deans made the University Administration, while all professors with the rector constituted the University Council.

According to Popović, even in hard times (in 1968 and later), Belgrade University remained one of the cores of intellectual life of Serbia and former Yugoslavia, the place where many generations of young people developed, educated in the spirit of belonging to the European civilisation and values and provided with plenty of knowledge to continue their studies at the world's most prestigious universities. From the very beginning of the 1990s, it was clear to most University teachers that Serbia trailed behind in terms of its transition, with even graver consequences to follow due to its isolation from the rest of Europe. The student demonstrations which took place in March 1991 and June 1992 proved that Belgrade University was the most radical center of resistance to the

retrograde and nondemocratic policy of the government. The Declaration signed in June 1992 remains a witness of the responsibility which both professors and students felt in the sense of upcoming tragic events, and of their intellectual courage in conveying their concerns to the public.

- After a decade of its international isolation, the University of Belgrade has returned to the international academic community. It has become a member of the European and International Associations of Universities and is again participating in various international cooperation projects (Tempus projects, UniAdriion, and so on). International teacher and student exchange has become intense, and the first Joint Master Studies have been organised in cooperation with 'La Sapienza' University of Rome and Sarajevo University.

Research is again becoming the basis of university teaching, and more faculties are starting their programmes of doctoral studies. Foreign students are returning to Belgrade University: 33 such students graduated in 2003/2004, and an increasing number of them are entering postgraduate studies every year - Popović said.

- The number of students of Belgrade University continuously grew after World War II, and at the beginning of the 1960s, it reached 50,000, while in 2004/2005, the university numbered 71,683 undergraduate students. From the establishment of individual faculties until 2004/2005, 322,288 students graduated from Belgrade University. Twenty thousand seven hundred and seven students have earned their master's degrees at the University, and 12,073 doctors dissertations were defended - said Mr Popović, the Rector of Belgrade University. He also mentioned that along with the increase of the number of students enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate studies, the number of teachers and teaching assistants grew. Today, the University of Belgrade employs 2,539 teachers (1,025 full professors, 706 associate professors and 808 assistant lecturers), 2,411 teaching assistants and other associates, as well as 2,807 non-teaching staff. B. Č. C.

Studying in Bulgaria remains such a sensitive issue that many of those studying in Sofia are reluctant to tell reporters their names in order to avoid having problems once they return to Macedonia.

Is Bulgaria's foreign policy to Macedonia evidence of the lingering of its old territorial ambitions, or the expression of its friendly intentions?

An outsider would estimate Macedonia's relations with Bulgaria as good. The country has not been affected by unresolved matters of prior federal coexistence in comparison with some other former Yugoslav people, who had gotten entangled in armed conflicts, nor can one sense

Bulgaria's Warm Hug

the feeling of uneasiness over the legal issue related to the name of 'Macedonia', which has been aggravating its relations with Greece for over a decade. Still, this country's relations with Sofia raise some extremely sensitive issues with respect to Macedonia's insistence on being treated as a sovereign state, whose Slavic population has its own identity and language.

If we scratch below the surface, the impression is that some aspects of Bulgaria's official policy are founded on the premise that Macedonia is nothing more but a piece of land incidentally separated from its mother country. Macedonian students come in masses to study at Bulgarian universities - only to discover that once there, they are expected to recognise their Bulgarian ethnic identity. On their part, Bulgarians are also slow to recognise Macedonian as a distinct language, differing from their own.

History Textbooks Worldwide Full of Nonsense

Contemporary national history textbooks used all over the world are full of incorrect data, which creates fertile ground to support myths, which consequently lead to fake historical memory and hatred... This is the final conclusion of the analysis of various history textbooks from all over the world performed and published by Giuliano Procacci, professor of modern history at La Sapienza University of Rome, the news was posted in the Iskon portal. Corriere della Sera reviews the book 'La Memoria Controversa: Revisionismi, Nazionalismi E Fondamentalismi Nei Manuali

Macedonians find this disturbing, but it is still unclear if this is an issue of a hidden expansionist scenario, or simply a matter of bureaucratic inertia, resulting in the failure to change some old views.

Education: A Hidden Agenda?

One of the key areas where history still has an important role is the sector of higher education. Bulgarian universities have opened their doors to Macedonians, but they have to pay a price for it.

Many young people take advantage of the special concessions, which the Bulgarian government offers Macedonian citizens. Between 700 and 800 Macedonians come to



study in Bulgaria every year, using various scholarships which Bulgaria offers them. A total of 3,500 Macedonian students are currently attending universities in Bulgaria - which is more than one tenth of the total number of 31,000 students studying in Macedonia.

This relatively high number results from the sudden increase of interest to study in Bulgaria. Ten years ago, less than 30 Macedonian students were studying in Bulgaria. Belgrade University was the most popular and prestigious destination. However, after the breakup of Yugoslavia, Serbia's popularity decreased, and Bulgarian universities slowly took over.

Di Storia', due to appear in bookstores on March 17.

The book mentions Japanese textbooks, which do not contain the information about the Nanking Massacre, where three hundred thousand Chinese were slaughtered by Japanese soldiers in 1937. It also says that the Japanese interpretation of the country's conflict with the USA in the Second World War is ambivalent.

One of the conclusions of this recent book is that many countries give more space to their national histories than to the world history. 'National histories make three thirds of the history subject matter, like in Serbia, for

Aleksandar Popov, the official of the Bulgarian Ministry of Education in charge of Macedonian students in Bulgaria, comments on this development of trends with certain content. 'A decade ago, our universities attracted only those Macedonians who failed to enroll in colleges at home,' he says. 'Studying in Sofia has now become prestigious.'

A key element of this generous policy is that only those Macedonians who recognise that they are ethnic Bulgarians are eligible for the scholarships, while all students are required to prove they are familiar with the version of history as presented in Bulgarian schoolbooks.

Students categorised as ethnic Bulgarians coming from abroad are entitled to a number of concessions stimulating them to study in Bulgaria. Macedonians can compete for one of the 300 positions subsidised by the state, while those who explicitly declare themselves as ethnic Bulgarians receive the best treatment, and fifty percent of these positions are reserved for them. This group is also privileged when it comes to tuition fees, as they pay only 30 percent of what is normally charged to foreign students.

The process of deciding if a foreign student is of Bulgarian descent is rather liberal. Between 1993, when Macedonian students first started arriving in Bulgaria, and September 2004, they were not required to present any documents as proof of their origin. The Bulgarian Ministry of Education took the stance that obtaining such documents would be too complicated for students coming from former Yugoslavia, and consequently they did not insist on their submitting any written evidence of ethnicity.

This policy changed in 2004, partly due to newspaper reports which stated that students of non-Slavic descent also used the concessions intended for ethnic Bulgarians. Candidates are now requested to submit documentation, but the conditions are

example. In Bulgaria, all European history is interpreted as viewed from the prism of its impact on the Balkan Peninsula,' says Corriere della Sera, which concludes that this is 'a result of the delayed nationalism of the nineteenth century'.

There is a debate in Azerbaijan as to what date to declare as the official birth date of the Azeri state, which never really existed before, while in Georgia, which was founded in the Middle Ages, there are attempts to prove it has existed since prehistoric times. Palestinian books completely ignore Israel, while in Spain, history is written depending on each region's individual beliefs. Izvor: Hina

still very liberal, and a certified statement of descent or a letter of an organisation representing Bulgarians abroad are accepted.

Adopting History

The key element when applying to study in Bulgaria is taking literature and history examinations. Since historical truth is traditionally a bone of contention, this is a test challenging Macedonians to study Bulgarian history books and check on the different versions of the events they were taught about at home.

The official stance of Bulgaria is that Macedonians were in fact Bulgarians, at least until they joined the Yugoslav Federation, and this can be viewed as an incentive to recognise one's own Bulgarian origin.

Popov denies the accusations that the Ministry's policy generates confrontation. 'They have a chance to learn about Bulgarian history, and this goes for all candidates from all countries,' Popov says. 'No one can force these students to believe in what they write in the examination.'

The majority of Macedonian students interviewed by IWPR (Institute for War & Peace Reporting) say they do not feel any pressure for assimilation or change of their ethnic identity. 'No one here has ever spoken to me about my nationality,' said Aleksandar Nancev from Strumica, who is currently studying for a teaching degree at the University St. Kliment Ohridski in Sofia.

Political Perspectives

Bulgarian officials claim that there is nothing bad in their wish to enable studying in Bulgaria. Popov, from the Ministry of Education, claims that on the political level, their official stance is little different from what Greece or Hungary offer foreign students of their respective ethnic descent.

Venko Bozanov, his colleague from the Ministry's Department of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies, agrees with this view, and says: 'The European Union tolerates this view. Members of ethnic communities should definitely remain loyal citizens of their homelands, but they can also build bridges between countries.'

One or Two Languages?

Another ghost from the past is the question of language. Depending on the view you adopt, Bulgarian and Macedonian may be regarded as two closely related, yet separate languages, or, alternatively, as one language.

As for the legal side of things, standard Macedonian is the official language of Macedonia. However, when Bulgarians recognised the new neighbour, they did not recognise its right to linguistic independence. Seven years later, the governments of the two countries – even though they had good relations – had failed to sign a single bilateral document. The only cause of misunderstanding was the standard diplomatic formulation, 'This document is signed in the Bulgarian and Macedonian language.'

The Bulgarian Parliament finally resolved the issue in 1999 by paraphrasing the text to read that the language of agreements is 'in accordance with the Macedonian Constitution'. The verbal acrobatics worked, and the two countries have by now signed at least 50 agreements. Nevertheless, every time a bilateral agreement is signed, this compromise reminds us that Bulgaria negates the use of the word 'Macedonian' as a legitimate linguistic term.

Future May Hold The Answers

All these issues may lose part of their relevance and conflict-generating potential

with the two countries approaching their common European future. It appears that in this new context, the attitude of Bulgaria to Macedonia is based on civilised and liberal values. Ambassador Jordanov puts emphasis on the issue of the European Union and minimises such problems as the Macedonian-Bulgarian language dispute, blaming it on 'politicians messing with historical reality'.

On the lower level, Aleksandar Nancev surely conveys the opinion of many Macedonian students in Bulgaria in saying that the questions of history and nationality are now less important. 'Macedonians, Bulgarians – this will all soon be history,' he says. 'People do not worry about this anymore and it is not important in our lives. My friends focus on the future rather than the past.'

Hristo Matanov, a professor of history at the University of St. Kliment Ohridski, believes it is perfectly acceptable to strengthen the country's ties with Macedonia by means of scholarships and speeding up the process of obtaining citizenship. 'It seems that Bulgaria wants to establish relations with Macedonia similar to those between Germany and Austria,' he says. He also adds the following: 'Educating students means forming a lobby among future Macedonian intellectuals.'

In Matanov's opinion, this is favourable for Bulgaria, which is becoming accustomed to its role as a country where, for the first time in one hundred years, foreigners wish to study and live.

The trick is to ensure the recognition of positive discrimination for what it really is, not as assimilation which only uses different methods.

IWPR (Institute for War & Peace Reporting)

Editorship and selection:

O&R editorial staff

□ The Croatian Parliament has ratified its agreement with Serbia and Montenegro on the protection of the Serbian and Montenegrin minority in Croatia, and the Croatian minority in Serbia and Montenegro. This agreement formalises the position and rights of these minorities in the two countries, as well as the responsibility of their governments to provide assistance to the minorities to preserve their national identity, use of language and alphabet, education, culture and access to the media.

'I Will Try to Come up with a Solution with Čolak and RS Ministers'

□ Since the working group appointed to draw up a draft law on higher education failed to



succeed in finalising their proposal by the set deadline, which was November 10, Safet Halilović, Minister of Civil Affairs of B&H, announced that he will try to contact directly RS ministers and Bariša Čolak, president of HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina), in order to draw up a model which would be acceptable for all and which the B&H Parliament would adopt and enforce as the state

framework law on higher education.

Let us remember the meeting of the working group last month, where representatives from Mostar University asked

for amendments to the B&H Constitution and transfer of responsibility in the area of higher education to the state level.

On the other hand, RS representatives requested the enforcement of a framework law on higher education in accordance with the Bologna process, while they insisted on leaving details to be regulated later by entity laws.

- Such things are paralysing any further developments in the process of passing the act. Nevertheless, we will try to resolve this in a different way. If we wish to reform education, it will certainly be possible to do something by asking for and reaching a compromise – said Halilović.

According to him, another public debate will be

For longer than a year now, our grammar school has had the Students' Parliament, established and run totally independently by students. Over this short period of time, the Parliament has done some fantastic things, some of which were the organization of several humanitarian actions, gigs, school lectures, as well as schoolyard clearance action. The enthusiasm of a few senior students has 'painlessly' rubbed

Students' Parliament

off on the first formers, and something quite uncommon is happening at the Third Belgrade Grammar School: students are awaking, slowly, but surely. Apparently, they crave knowledge and more beautiful school days.

It did not take us long to think of a new way to 'shake' the school a little bit. Soon a team was formed, lead by the newly elected president of the Students' Parliament, Vanja Biserčić. The team took upon it to realize the idea of a poll. Together with the school pedagogue, we specified three categories for which teachers would be evaluated:

- Teacher-to-student relation (what quality relationships teachers have established with their students – the level of interactive communication);
- Examination and marking (how good and fair is the method which a teacher uses when examining and marking students);
- Subject matter presentation (how successful a teacher is at conveying knowledge).

We decided we would use the system of whole school marks ranging from 1 to 5, without any decimal marks.

Since we did not have any sponsors, we personally covered all the costs in actualizing the poll. Around ten students were divided into several teams, and for two days, we interviewed more than 900 students. Most teachers did not object

(apart from a few black looks we were given), but there were those who did not allow us to run the poll in their lessons, even though the head teacher had previously approved it.

On the whole, some teachers reacted interestingly. When the poll was first announced, we noticed fake indifference, which concealed some worry and some ego. Shortly afterwards, there were comments such as: 'I don't see why you are doing this, there is no point in it', but it was exactly this exaggerated interest, this

insistence on how this was 'absolutely none of our concern or our business', that gave teachers away. According to students, some



of them started giving higher marks and generally expressed an unusually high level of teaching enthusiasm.

After we had conducted the poll, we needed to do the most difficult part of the project – analyse the information. It was necessary to go through all 900 questionnaires and write down the marks awarded to each teacher, and if you do the math, the number of marks which needed to be properly classed was 40,000. The work was delegated to small teams and individuals, and the results were quickly obtained. They were some results!

We could say a lot about the obtained evaluation and it would be difficult to either confirm or deny it, but we choose to abandon speculations and stick to what is obvious. First and foremost, the myth that one's assessment depends on the subject evaluated momentarily collapses. Physical education teachers did not rank among the first ten, and the winner was Boris Laštro, a physics teacher, whose average

mark was 4.91. His marks were highest in all three categories.

Secondly, no one can claim these results lack objectivity. The students took the poll seriously and did not give their marks easily, which is clear from the example of a chemistry teacher who was given low marks for her treatment of students and examination method, but a pretty high mark for her teaching.

The overall average mark may be described as satisfactory, being as high as 3.81. This is equivalent to 'weak very good', compared with the marking system used with students. Still, there is certainly room for improvement, and even though some may claim there is no point in running such polls, we know the truth is quite the opposite. The fact that you are reading this article is only one of the arguments to support our view. Almost no one remained indifferent to our action; after learning students' opinions, some teachers actually decided to do something about their greatest weaknesses. Also, and maybe most importantly, this action opened the door for a series of others, and raised the issue of the quality of teachers' treatment of their students and profession. It is not necessary to comment on our system of (un)education, and, apparently, it is on students and teachers to find a common language to make the time spent at school a bit more pleasant for everybody. It may be said that, quite unexpectedly, we, the students, took the initiative to improve the current situation, and now it is our teachers' turn. If they chose to combine complementary strengths, if older teachers used the wisdom and experience they have gained after years of working with secondary school students, and if younger teachers shared the enthusiasm and understanding they have for people only slightly younger than them, I am absolutely convinced everyone would go to school with a smile on their faces, even on dull, rainy days.

Relja Dereta

organised to gather all interested parties from the system of higher education.

Following the debate, the B&H Ministry of Civil Affairs will propose a draft act.

- Deadlines have not been set yet, but we need to act urgently, since the diplomas of hundreds of thousands of students are not recognized, they have no credits or any prospects of exchange and studying at other universities – said Halilović.

Source: 24si

Education – International Baccalaureate Program in B&H

□ United World Colleges (UWC) and International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) offered a project to start the international baccalaureate program in B&H in order to introduce an International Baccalaureate (IB) in two grammar schools, in Mostar and Banja



Luka, as well as support the Second Sarajevo Grammar School, which is already running this program.

UWC schools offer students the international baccalaureate curriculum, which is taught in more than a thousand schools worldwide, and which enables students to enroll in the leading world universities.

The curriculum of IB schools consists of the following six main groups of subjects:

first language (Croatian, English, German), second language (English, German, French), individuals and societies (economics, psychology), experimental sciences (biology, chemistry, general chemistry, physics), mathematics (three branches) and others (computer science, arts, Latin).

Brain Gain

□ The aim of this program is to attract professors, teaching assistants and, generally speaking, experts from former Yugoslavia to return to the region and lecture in the capacity of visiting professors during a period between several days to three weeks – at universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia.

This type of international academic exchange is important not only for the development of universities in southeastern Europe, but it will also lead to the so-called brain-gain effect, even though its final goal is not to return academics permanently from overseas. This sort of outcome would be most desirable, but its achievement is hardly realistic due to the current situation in the region, while it also exceeds the goals of this program.

Successful cooperation between Hypo Alpe Adria Bank and Megatrend University and the Faculty of Economics, Finance and Administration

Studying on Credit



pay blockages). This loan may be granted on the 'year by year' basis, which increases annually by the amount of tuition fee for each subsequent year, amounting to the total schooling fee and for the maximum crediting period of five years. This loan is repaid in monthly annuities in dinars.

Hypo Alpe Adria Bank has signed loan agreements with Megatrend University and the Faculty of Economics, Finance and Administration (FEFA) as a step to provide financial support packages for students struggling to cover their tuition fees while studying, which will consequently enable them to obtain loans on very good terms.

- We offer student loans at very low interest rates, and this condition separates them from other types of loans. Loan terms are very favourable, as these packages are not part of our commercial strategy; we wish to assist young people in covering their school fees – says Srđan Ninković, Director of Private Entities Department at Hypo Alpe Adria Bank.

The bank offers two different packages – the first package is granted on the basis of standard collaterals, while the second is secured on a special deposit. The first type of loan is secured on a deposit equalling 20 percent of the loan, with the annual interest rate of 7.75 percent. Loans are granted to citizens of Serbia and Montenegro holding permanent jobs in Serbia. The borrower is a parent or guardian who has had permanent paid employment with the current employer for minimum six months. As for the creditworthiness of the borrower or guarantors, the monthly annuity will not exceed 30 percent of the net monthly income of the borrower or guarantors, after subtracting all their dues (alimony, other loans and/or

The second package is granted on the basis of deposit.

The only collaterals for this type of loan is a special deposit in Euros, and it is deposited the whole length of

Loans also available for postgraduate studies

Hypo Alpe Adria Bank has signed an agreement with the Faculty of Economics, University of Belgrade. Owing to this agreement, the two above-mentioned types of loan packages will be available to postgraduate studies, ie to students matriculated in the specialist course „Contemporary Quantitative Approach“ and the master course 'Quantitative Finance'.

the repayment period. The deposit is 10 percent higher than the loan and its annual interest rate is 1 percent. This package is favourable because no guarantors or bills of exchange are required, the annual interest rate is 4.5 percent, and it is granted fast, as credit rating is not requested. This loan is repaid in monthly annuities in dinars.

Due to increased interest in student loans, Hypo Alpe Adria Bank is currently negotiating similar arrangements with other universities. Srđan Ninković says that the demand for this type of loans is seasonal (university application / enrollment periods) and expects that more agreements will be signed this year. He adds that the bank is open for cooperation with both private and state universities and faculties.

V. S.

Adnan Terzić, Chairman of the B&H Council of Ministers, addressed participants today at the second international conference on the development of the information society in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The two-day international conference 'Development of Information Society in BiH' was organised by the B&H Ministry of Communications and Transport and the United Nations Development Program. Here we publish the whole speech delivered by Chairman Adnan Terzić.

'It is my great pleasure to welcome you to Sarajevo for the second international conference on the development of the information society in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Almost two years ago, in this very hall, we signed a memorandum of understanding which defined the terms for preparing the B&H policy and strategy for the development of the information society in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Today, you have before you the documents

Development of Information Society in B&H

which are the result of joint work and genuine dedication of representatives of the Council of Ministers, Bosnian and Herzegovinian experts and the United Nations Development Program, and which also, for the first time, clearly specify development directives for the sector of information and communication technologies, that is, the development of the true information society in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I would like to say that once we adopt this strategy, we will be one of very few countries in the West Balkans which have their own strategy to develop an information society, which are at the same time fully harmonised with European procedures and directives, as well as with the world's best national examples.

Naturally, the role of education and science will become crucial in the process of upgrading and harmonising our state institutions on all levels of administration with the latest international IT trends. The policy and strategy for the development of the information society in Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted at the 69th Session of the Council of Ministers clearly accentuates the importance of this role. The specified plan of action, its directives and projects clearly point out the importance of information and communication technologies as some of the most fundamental values. We can freely say that they are the leading force of economic and social development in the world today.

It is not necessary to say that global communication, electronic business and the Internet greatly improve the way of living and bring huge profits to developed countries. The accomplishments of those countries over the last two decades and the examples of a few countries which strategically improved their economic and social reality set a clear example which we need to follow. Bosnia and Herzegovina simply has to be more efficient and take better advantage of the available information and knowledge to create new values.

Global electronic communication, as the infrastructure of the future, is one of the



generators of economic success and the way to connect with the rest of the world, and it is also the creator of one new generation, which is frequently labeled 'the Internet generation'. For this new generation, the Internet is a way of life, and work or business without the prefix 'e' in front of it is not real work or business.

The strategy we present today is a genuine step forward, and I am convinced that its implementation will make the society of B&H far more attractive for our young and talented citizens.

Learning from the experiences of some adjacent countries, it is possible to separate two key factors which secure the fast development of one society:

- First, the competitiveness of individual countries in the context of a globalised economy will depend primarily on their scientific and innovative capacity. Therefore, it is extremely important to interconnect the sectors of education and industry, and so create a society grounded on knowledge and innovations, while preparing our young generations for the type of work and jobs that future time will offer and request. The section of the Strategy Document referring to the sector of education is based on this premise.

- The second factor is the following: public administration and its bodies will play a crucial role in the process of transition and reform. Therefore, one of the primary

requirements of transition is improved efficacy and lowered costs of administrative bodies. Public administration on all levels will have the obligation to become more agile and efficient in providing financial and human resources, as well as education and atmosphere to support the implementation and sustainable development of the the information society in B&H.

By implementing this strategy, our government will improve the quality and upgrade services intended for citizens, and also expand the scope and improve the availability of services. The majority of bureaucratic procedures will be transferred to the Internet and adequate public infrastructure will be used. Considering the obligation to reduce public administration in B&H, infrastructure organised in such a way will become the optimal technical solution of the problem.

The transformation of these procedures into interactive e-communication and the

introduction of the e-Government system will greatly cut the costs for B&H. Naturally, we will have to educate service users, while resources saved will be allocated to help special groups, such as underprivileged sections of the community.

In that sense, the upcoming enforcement of the Electronic Business and Electronic Signature Act will represent another step ahead in our efforts to join in the European integration processes.

I am deeply convinced that after this conference, with the support of our colleagues from the United Nations Development Program and the B&H Office of the European Commission, we will start to create the electronic government, which will consequently improve our chances of fast and efficient reform of public administration.

In the world today, information is the main resource, while knowledge and the ability to adopt new trends are two essential features of one's competitiveness.

Let us take this step forth for B&H, and by implementing this strategy, let us make Bosnia and Herzegovina a true information society. The advantages which this implementation will bring will lead to new successes and new generations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I expect that this conference will show the way to implement the presented documents successfully and in their entirety.

Opportunity for B&H Scientists and Researchers

Scientists and researchers from B&H will have an opportunity to apply and participate in FP6 – 6th European Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration – through NIP FP6 BiH (National Information Point for Framework Programme 6).

According to what Ammar Miraščija, director of NIP FP6 BiH, said at the press conference in Sarajevo today, the task of their office is to provide their potential clients, primarily researchers from universities and industry, with all relevant information necessary for their active participation in joint European research projects, and enable them access to European funds for research, technological development and demonstration activities.

NIP's partners are all B&H universities, and during the first stage of the project, information points have been set up at the Universities of Banja Luka, Sarajevo, Tuzla, University 'Džemal Bijedić' in Mostar, and Mostar University.

All legal entities registered in accordance with national, international or European laws are eligible to participate in the program – university research groups or research institutions, companies interested in innovations, small and medium sized enterprises, as well as public administration bodies dealing with research policies or public research management.

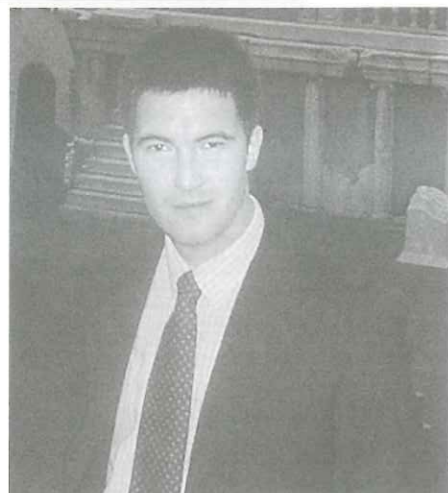
Faculty of Health Care at Zenica University

The Rector of Zenica University, professor dr Sabahudin Ekinović, said that the Faculty of Health Care will be opened in Zenica (this faculty will train and educate nurses).

Studies will take 8 semesters, where the first three years of studies will be harmonised with the curriculum of the traditional education of nurses. Students will receive specialist education in their fourth year, which will cover several branches of medical science.

After the completion of the fourth year of studies, students will be awarded one of the four specialist titles:

- Internal Health Care Specialist
- Surgery Health Care Specialist
- Community Health Care Specialist, or
- Health Care Management Specialist



Petar Miličević,
President of the Balkan branch
of the European Bureau for
Conscientious Objection

Conscientious Objection

Conscientious objection is the right to oppose to take part in military operations or aggression that one's country may be involved in. It does not simply mean opposing to serve in the armed forces or to receive military training; rather, it is one's refusal to take part in an act of aggression or give it any support. According to international law, the right to conscientious objection is regulated in the following way: a person who does not want to bear a weapon is assigned alternative service. Alternative service is social or humanitarian and is done in institutions which are not related to the armed forces.

Conscientious objection started with the collective right of religious communities based on their religious beliefs, opposition to bear weapons, and the Ten Commandments: do not kill, commit no evil deeds against your neighbour, etc. This started happening in 16th and 17th century, while one later example of this is the collective letter of the Quaker community in England presented to Queen Victoria, informing her that they would not take part in any military operations, nor support them in the name of either the Kingdom of Earth or the Kingdom of Heaven. Along with the development of international institutions, international law regulated and changed this collective right into individual right. With this law, everyone had the right to conscientious objection on the grounds of whatever reasons, moral, ethical, philosophical, and not solely religious, as it used to be until then. Alternative service started to develop in some countries as a modulus of appreciation of the right to conscientious objection as early as 1916. Several European countries, 7-8 of them, introduced this

type of service prior to the Second World War, while it became the international standard in its aftermath.

'When it comes to alternative service, there is practically no one we can compare ourselves to, as only a handful of European countries have preserved some forms of alternative service, while others have completely abolished national service.

The right to conscientious objection was introduced in Serbia and Montenegro when the 2003 Military Service Act was enforced. Alternative service was thus introduced through the back door; if we had waited for the new defence law or a set of acts, another three generations would have been denied the right to alternative service.

Since the introduction of alternative service in Serbia and Montenegro, military authorities have continuously obstructed its implementation.

The absurdity of the situation in our country when it comes to alternative service is apparent from the terminology used to describe conscientious objectors – a soldier doing military service through alternative service. With this definition, a person who clearly claims they never want to be a soldier is labeled a soldier two times before the term civilian is used. If we speak about absurdities, another one is the fact that regardless of numerous requests, universities have not yet been put on the list of appointed alternative service institutions. Owing to the rector of the Universities of Belgrade and Novi Sad, student vice-chancellors and student representatives, research was started which resulted in excellent programs which could be actualised at universities and are needed, but cannot be put into practice due to insufficient finances. Alternative service would make a perfect modulus for voluntary implementation of such programs as student info service, programs of support to students with special needs, assistance at computer centres and libraries. The Ministry of Defence does not recognise these programs as adequate for alternative service at the excuse that work at universities does not make a meaningful contribution to the society.

The new Act which puts into effect the Military Service Act Amendments was passed secretly and without any public debates. The new Act gives the military authorities full control of alternative service, which is absurd and unheard of in Europe and the world.

The problems which were used to amend the Act have existed since the introduction of alternative service and most of them are examples of early weaknesses of every newly-introduced system of alternative service; every

single European country encountered them at one time. We gave fair warning that these problems would occur and we also proposed measures to resolve them. The problems which occurred, such as the problem of assigning a variety of different jobs to conscientious objectors or unequal positions of individual conscientious objectors were used to pass the new Act in secrecy. Every provision of the new Act annuls or reduces the influence of one right as regulated by the previous Act.

What are the material problems of the new Act?

Direct military control of alternative service. We no longer have a single institute which makes decisions about alternative service or supervises it, which is not directly responsible to the General Headquarters. First- and second-level committees are appointed upon the proposals of military districts, which are primarily branches of the Headquarters, and as second, of the Ministry

of Defence. There is no longer an independent committee with the power to decide about our right to conscientious objection. This is contrary to the recommendations of the Council of Europe and the fundamental principles of conscientious objection. Another important thing is that from now on, conscientious objection will not have the power to postpone the decision, and we know well that according to the Law on the Armed Forces of Serbia and Montenegro, there is no legal protection for conscientious objectors in terms of regular proceedings, since administrative procedure is forbidden in case of recruitment. We are in a situation where we cannot properly object, there is no legal remedy, we only have extraordinary legal measures.

Also, the Act has introduced a deadline for making a claim for alternative service; when recruits are first notified they qualify for military service, they have eight days to register for alternative service. If they are not at their resident addresses over this time, if they are not familiar with this deadline or similar, they lose their right of conscientious objection. This is completely contrary not only to international documents, but also to common sense. The right to do alternative service in accordance with one's beliefs or education has been abolished; there were cases of breachment of this right during the old Act, but at times, this right would be incidentally respected. The rationale for abolishing alternative service is that this type of work contributing to the society may not be the same as education. As if education itself does not contribute the society. Using the back door, this looks like an attempt to make alternative service resemble a kind of punishment to be allowed only in cases of forced labour, placement in

utility companies, engagement in hard physical labour etc.

This is the year when we have to pass the Alternative Service Act, which we agreed to do in 2002 when we were admitted into the Council of Europe. We entered 2005 with the new Act which causes the Council of Europe concern, while organisations dealing with this issue say that our rights are jeopardised.

What was the new Act really put into force?



Peace Caravan in West Balkans

Between 1-15 May 2005, the Regional Network of Initiatives Working on Conscientious Objection in Southeastern Europe 'Objection for Peace' will organise a peaceful activist caravan which will pass through different towns in the region. On its way, the caravan will visit Zagreb, Rijeka, Mostar, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Banja Luka, Osijek, Novi Sad, Belgrade, Niš, Skopje and Prilep, ending its journey in Thessaloniki. The aim of the caravan is to familiarise the public of the West Balkans with the ideas of conscientious objection, pacifism, demilitarisation, nonviolence and culture of peace in a new, activist and creative way. Besides, we will take advantage of the joint effort of all activists, friends and associates of the Regional Network and caravan to show that young people from the whole region share common beliefs and wish to show and share this with people in their immediate and broader environments.

The caravan is organised by the Regional Network of Initiatives Working on Conscientious Objection in Southeastern Europe 'Objection for Peace' (which involves the Croatian Anti-War Campaign, Conscientious Objection Campaign in B&H, Regional Center

for Conscientious Objection in Vojvodina, EBCO Balkan, Youth House Niš, Macedonia's Peace Action and Nansen Dialogue Centre Montenegro) with support of the Citizens' Pact for Southeastern Europe and War Resisters International, as well as many associates, activists and various other groups.

The regional network of initiatives for conscientious objection in southeastern Europe 'Objection for Peace' formed as a network of activists working jointly to achieve the recognition of the right to conscientious objection in the region of the West Balkans and on the promotion of antimilitaristic, pacifist and activist beliefs. The regional caravan is the main activity of the Regional Network in 2005, and it aims to achieve the following:

- Promotion of activities to demilitarise the region by strengthening the culture of peace, demilitarisation of the mind and building trust between people and connecting them
- Launch of the regional initiative campaign to abolish compulsory military service in the West Balkans
- Promotion of the freedom of movement and meeting other people as one of the most powerful means to demilitarise people's minds

which have been allowed to accept conscientious objectors. Alternative service will be abolished at the excuse of being too liberal and of featuring standards which alternative service in European countries had towards the end of their existence. Yes, but Great Britain introduced alternative service in 1916, while the majority of European countries had alternative service in the fifties, and it would only be logical to compare ourselves with Germany in the fifties!

The conclusion of this story is that, given its strict military control and nonexistence of its legal protection, alternative service is currently only a surrogate. It is not an institution which would be capable of addressing many social issues, as planned originally.'

Milica Vasiljević

- Initiation of activist movements and activation of young people in the region
 - Support to creative activist ways of expression of creative groups and individuals in the region in order to connect and continue the operations of activist, art and other interest groups
 - Reinforcement of the regional activist network by means of joint activities
- The aim of the activities planned during the journey of the caravan through West Balkan towns is to involve the biggest possible number of people in the promotion of the idea

Thanks to Miodrag Lovrić, professor of statistics, students at the Belgrade Faculty of Economics can now cope more easily with the rather difficult contents of this subject. Namely, Prof. Lovrić and his associates created the statistics software EduStat, which is unique in the world of software programs. After many years of teaching students in New Zealand and Australia, Prof. Lovrić came up with the idea to create one such program. He said: 'I have been teaching a long time, and I have repeatedly seen how difficult it is to learn, acquire or pass statistics. There are numerous



Statistics Rendered Easy

reasons why. It is not only about knowing or not knowing mathematics, whose instruments are indispensable in calculating various parameters or values. The problem lies in the dullness of the subject, which frequently kills the students' enthusiasm to work and learn, despite their strong motivation. On the other hand, this is the 21st century, and it is only normal to involve computers and adequate software programs when teaching statistics. My New Zealand students, where I taught for a while, had difficulty in using the current statistics software at that time, which produced results without giving any explanations in an utterly dull and boring way, and which were also impractical. I had to listen to their complaints every day. This made me start to explore statistics software, and that was the beginning of the history of EduStat.'

The program has been designed for a range of users. Along with students and professors working on their master theses and doctoral dissertations, it can be used by students and teachers of secondary schools of economics, as well as those who need statistics for various research, analyses and reports in companies, banks, insurance companies, institutes, market and public opinion research agencies, etc., simply for all forms of statistical analysis.

This unique educational software is in the Serbian language and is comprehensible to

all those who speak Serbian or other related languages. Unlike the previous program MINITAB, which only gave out problem solutions without explaining the process of calculation or comments, this program explains the solution, allowing students to learn about the process itself. The program offers the so-called decision-making tree, a feature which allows the user to choose the best decision-making method. We should not forget the hyperlinked statistics glossary, which significantly facilitates the process of learning and comprehending statistics.

Professor Lovrić adds that EduStat is

an extremely comfortable, user-friendly program, with rich and sensitive HELP options, and over 280 photographs. This program is already used at the Belgrade Faculty of Economics, and professor Lovrić shares with us his experience of working with students: 'Students like the new program very much, as it makes it easy to learn this complicated subject, and it is also praised by my colleagues. We will launch a series of presentations of the program at all our faculties where statistics is taught, and our plan is to also present it to statistics teachers worldwide. We have two different prices – the price for students will be 25 euros, while it will cost 100 euros for all other users. The price of such software programs in the world is around 1,000 euros.'

The program EduStat offers a simulation of the statistics examination, which allows students to see how much they have learnt and can be used as a general test before the actual examination. It also offers virtual lectures, which students can hear, and, while listening, they can simultaneously follow a visual demonstration on the screen – which all makes this program special and unique. We are hopeful that such properties will make the program attractive enough for the local stakeholders in the sector of education as well.

Radmila Pejić

ECTS Glossary - Handout

European Credit Transfer System, ECTS

– This is a common credit system which provides a way of measuring and comparing study programs at European universities or other higher education institutions. ECTS is based on the principle that credits measure the workload of a full-time student in completing their program of study (60 credits per academic year, 30 per semester, 20 per trimester). ECTS in higher education supports European-wide mobility and is an effective instrument for transferring and accumulating credits awarded at different higher education institutions, which makes it a basis for successful academic cooperation involving students and teachers.

Credits

– They make the key feature of ECTS. Credits are allocated to all educational components of a study programme, such as modules, courses, and subjects, but also other forms of academic work, such as seminars, projects, practical placements, dissertation work, etc. They reflect the total quantity of work necessary to complete a program of study successfully and are awarded after the completion of a study program.

Student workload

– The workload required to complete a program/subject/course – it reflects the relative time expressed in credits required to complete all planned learning activities, which includes direct teaching, such as attending lectures, practicals, seminars and tuition, as well as time needed for lesson preparation, private study, preparation of projects, seminar and other work, placements, and so forth. Student workload is expressed in credits in relation to the total quantity of work necessary to complete a full year of study successfully (60 credits)

Student Application Form

– Filled in when applying for transfer to another higher education institution
– ECTS document which contains student's personal data and home institution data. It is filled in with support of the home institution ECTS coordinator. The proposed learning agreement and the candidate's transcript of records are attached to the Student Application Form.

Learning Agreement

– A document agreed with the host institution – this document contains the list of courses to be taken by a student. It has to be agreed by and signed by the student and the two institutions concerned. The Learning Agreement ensures the recognition of the study period completed at the receiving institution by the sending institution. It is made before the student's departure and may be updated if changes occur with the approval of all three parties involved.

Transcript of Records

– A document issued to a student applying for transfer which is sent to the proposed receiving institution as a document showing the complete list of courses taken by a student at the home institution, credits gained for each subject/course and their overall achievement. It documents a student's achievements by showing local or national credits or grades and ECTS grades awarded.

Information Package

– This is a regular publication of a higher education institution containing its course catalogue/curriculum and study requirements. It must provide complete information about offered programs and degrees, subjects/courses taught (both compulsory and elective), and its study system. It must also contain the syllabus of every subject, work load necessary for their completion with credits awarded, and a detailed description of the system of examination and grading. Also, the booklet needs to contain and provide information to all interested students and teachers on the institution itself, living and working conditions (accommodation, life insurance, medical insurance) and other activities run at the university, faculty and its departments.

Recognition of Diplomas/Qualifications

– The process of recognition of qualifications obtained in a foreign system of education by measuring and comparing a diploma/academic title/qualifications with the national system of education in terms of its norms and requirements.

Source: European Credit Transfer System in higher education - Guide through ECTS, AAOM, Beograd, 2002.

Academic Palm Decorations to Belgrade University Professors



Belgrade – French Ambassador to Serbia and Montenegro, Hugues Pemet, presented three professors of Belgrade University with Academic Palm decorations for their contributions in the area of education. Decorations were awarded to Vesna Besarović, Chair of the Department of Civil Law at the Faculty of Law, Božidar Cerović, former Dean of the Faculty of Economics, and Mijat Damjanović, former Dean of the Faculty of Political Science.

The Ambassador said medals were awarded on behalf of the French Prime Minister and they symbolised the gratitude which France has and shows to all those participating in academic collaboration between the two countries.

Professor Božidar Cerović said that the Faculty of Economics and l'Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Paris have successfully completed a project in the area of business studies and thanked the French Government for recognising the efforts of all those who participated in the project by presenting the awards.

- I believe our fellow academics from the University will greatly appreciate your efforts, but also the efforts of all other European Union states, and they will surely express the same enthusiasm in accepting all initiatives which can help us approach Europe faster, at least in the sector of education – professor Mijat Damjanović said.

V. S.

Average Student Cost at Least 160 Thousand Kunas

What is the cost which the state has to pay for one student? Roughly, the average cost of one academic year is six and a half thousand kunas, while the average length of studies is seven years and seven months. This means that the cost of school fees only is around fifty thousand kunas. If we add the cost of living to this amount, that means another five hundred kunas per month, but only if the student is accommodated at a hall of residence. The discrepancy between this sum and the average cost of living (for example, a room may cost 700 kunas, while 1,500 kunas is spent on food) is more than one thousand and a half kunas per month. If calculated for a period of ten months, this amounts to fifteen thousand kunas, which should then be multiplied by 7.7 years, which eventually equals to 115 thousand kunas. If we add around fifty thousand kunas of school fees to this sum, it turns out that the state has to pay approximately 160 thousand kunas for one student.

Chomsky Awarded Honorary PhD in Ljubljana

One of the world's greatest contemporary linguists, Noam Chomsky, was recently awarded the honorary title of Doctor of Philosophy at Ljubljana University...

On that occasion, he delivered a lecture 'Manufacturing Consent' about the role of media in political opinion, which attracted a lot of public attention in Slovenia.

The father of generative grammar, who is also known for his interest and research into small languages, was awarded this honorary title for his long-standing cooperation with Slovenian sociologists and political scientists.

Along with Chomski, an honorary PhD will be awarded to the Nobel Prize winner Lawrence R. Klein.

Source: Student HR Service



Milan Zver
Slovenian Minister of Education

Discrimination at work

Milan Zver, the Slovenian Minister of Education, decided to solve the problem of Romany students in one primary school by separating them from the other children.

Around 400 parents warned the Primary School 'Bršljin' management they would not let their children come to school again if 86 Romany children 'are not equally distributed and placed in other schools in the municipality'. Minister Zver resolved the situation by segregating children, so the Romany children will only continue to attend the courses of physical education and art with the rest of the children.

Zver said this move was in line with the reformed nine-year schooling system, where education is provided on different levels, which will, in his opinion, resolve the existing problem and 'eliminate cultural differences'.

Slovenian media and experts in pedagogy say that children are divided exclusively on the basis of their learning

abilities, and only for three subjects in forms eight and nine, not during the whole period of schooling and according to children's race, nationality or religion. The representative of the Romany community in that municipality warned that this solution might offend the parents of the Romany children, who are thus put in an inferior position in school.

This resolution of the problem is contrary the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, European Constitution and Lisbon Strategy, which Slovenia agreed to, and which promotes discipline with respect to children's dignity, principles of democratic equality and stimulation of social involvement, LDS warned.

At the same time, Dimitrij Rupel, Slovenian Foreign Minister and OSCE Chairman announced a fight against discrimination in his speech given at the session of the UN Human Rights Committee. Rupel said there is need for a special focus on the education of young people in order to root fundamental human rights deeply in societies, for which reason Slovenia will direct its efforts to the area of human rights education during its OSCE Presidency.

The opposition party Liberal Democrats of Slovenia said that this was yet another instance of misuse of children for narrow party interests and that systematic crisis generation and encouragement of intolerance in that municipality are out of control. LDS reminds of the organised protest of citizens of Novo Mesto, who requested the demolition of Romany habitations and the expulsion of Romanies from that

Source B92

Model of Council of Ministers

Within the project 'Model of Council of Ministers', the first genuine simulation of the work of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina was organised. This is a special project which enables young people to participate in simulated work of institutions where crucial decisions are prepared and made.

Eighteen young people of different backgrounds from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina took part in the first session, and on day two, they were cast the roles of members of different ministries. The topic of the session was VAT, and the Council of Ministers will be directly informed about the conclusions of the simulation session, as well as all other future sessions, which will serve to express the opinions of young people about current issues and the work of the Council of Ministers. This project is implemented by the B&H Council of Ministers with support of the Integrated Youth Programme of United Nations Volunteers and United Nations Development Program in B&H.

'This program will allow over 120 young people, senior undergraduate students from different B&H universities, to gain insight into the state organisation and work of the Council of Ministers. In the next phase of the program, the best participants in state ministries simulations will be offered internships, which will concretely contribute to young people in B&H to gain experience', explained Aldin Medjedović, an adviser to the President of the Council of Ministers. Students Mersiha Smajić, Afrin Hajdari and Sanin Smajić said this was a very important experience for them and a signal that young people should stay in this country, as they can use their creativity to help improve the work of the Council of Ministers.

Source: Youth info

Diploma Supplement

What is Diploma Supplement?

The Diploma Supplement is a document attached to a college or university diploma to provide more detailed insight into the level, nature, context, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed by a student. This document is complementary with the awarded diploma, which customarily contains a student's most basic personal data and short information about the type and duration of studies, and obtained professional title. The Diploma Supplement does not belong to the basic ECTS document set, but it is based on ECTS principles and objectives.

The purpose of this additional document is to improve international transparency and enable easier academic and professional measuring and recognition of the obtained qualifications after the successful completion of a specific study program.

This document should be free from any value-judgments, equivalence statements or suggestions about recognition. The Diploma Supplement may under no conditions be considered a valid replacement of the basic document / diploma and will not guarantee immediate unquestioned recognition of the diploma by another academic institution or employer.

Reasons for introducing the Diploma Supplement

Since the diploma and qualifications stated in it do not provide sufficient information for detailed measuring of gained competences, professional skills and their applications, this document provides a more detailed description of the content, context and status of a student's completed studies and achievements. This allows for a basis for objective measuring of applications of gained professional competences and skills in the global labour market, as well conditions for a student to continue education at any world

Ministry Support for Grammar School

'A Serbian grammar school will most certainly be opened, but I am not in a position to say anything else, as there are unresolved ownership and legal issues regarding the SOC



college or university (higher degrees of education, lifelong learning).

Who awards the Diploma Supplement?

The Diploma Supplement is an official document awarded by the national institution of higher education which awards the diploma, and it is complementary to a student's diploma. It may be written in the language of the country where it is awarded, and/or in one of the world languages, which will depend on the purpose of awarding the document itself.

Diploma Supplement model

This document is prepared according to the basic model of the joint working group of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO. The Diploma Supplement is sufficiently flexible to be adjusted to local requirements. It is recommended that every institution creates its own model based on the general recommended formula. The Diploma Supplement should contain:

1. Information identifying the holder of the qualification;
2. Information identifying the qualification;
3. Information on the level of the qualification;
4. Information on the contents and results gained;
5. Information on the function of the qualification.;
6. Additional information;
7. Certification of the Supplement;
8. Information on the national higher education system.

Information in all eight sections should be provided. Where information is not provided, an explanation should give the reason why, and it should be kept short to prevent the document becoming unclear.

The institution awarding the basic document, ie the diploma, has to secure the same degree of authenticity in awarding and certifying the Diploma Supplement in order to minimise chances of counterfeiting. The description of the national system

(Serbian Orthodox Church) property restitution in Zagreb.' Milenko Popović, SOC Zagreb priest told us in a short telephone conversation about the recently announced initiative to open a Serbian grammar school in Zagreb. Except for the location at Sveti Duh 122 owned by the SSOC, planned for the construction of the school building for 2006-2007 academic year, Father Popović said that it would be improper at this time to disclose the location at which classes will take place in the meantime.

of higher education at the time when a student obtained qualifications stated in the diploma must be enclosed with the Diploma Supplement. For most European countries, this description may be obtained from the National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARICs), which may be found at the following web address: www.enic-naric.net under relevant ministries or national rectors' conferences.

What are the advantages of the Diploma Supplement?

A precise description of completed studies will enable precise and adequate measuring of obtained qualifications and achievements of a student, which will lead to enhanced mobility of students and their passing to higher levels of education at universities worldwide and their employment in the continuously growing labour market. This will also enhance the reputation of the student's higher education institution in the international market. Experience has shown that employers are more and more interested in employing candidates who, along with their diploma, submit the supplement document when applying to a post. Accepting this common framework as a flexible model adopted in Europe will at the same time secure the protection of autonomy of one institution and its respective national system of education. This document will provide answers to the series of questions most frequently asked to HE institutions, which will considerably reduce the amount of time necessary to communicate with the environment.

Additional information on the process of recognising qualifications and diplomas, as well as Diploma Supplements and their recommended models in eleven official languages of the European Union may be found at the following address: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/recognition/diploma.html>.

Source: European Credit Transfer System in higher education - Guide through ECTS, AAOM, Beograd, 2002.

- Attempts to reconstitute Orthodox Church property have been going on for some time now. So far, we have not been returned even half of our property, nor have we received any adequate compensation for it.

Velimir Sekulić from the Serbian Cultural Society 'Prosvjeta' says that there was a Serbian Orthodox primary school in Zagreb as early as the 1880s. At the time, the school was attended by a small number of children,



International Education Fair Held in Belgrade

Belgrade - Under the slogan 'What are you going to study', the second international education fair, or EDUfair™ was held in Belgrade between 14-16 April, intended for secondary school seniors to help them choose more easily their future colleges or FE schools, and thus choose their professional careers.

During the fair, state and private schools and universities presented their new curricula, enrollment terms, school fees and scholarships, as well as employment prospects both in the country and abroad after the completion of their study programs. Along with state and private schools and faculties from Serbia and Montenegro, there were presentations of universities and colleges from England, France, Croatia, Italy, Canada, Malta, the Republic of Srpska, Slovenia, Switzerland and the USA. During the fair, a series of related happenings were organised which addressed such issues as education system transformation, challenges of private and state education systems, financing...

Fair sponsors provided free presents for visitors, ranging from scholarships and free trips to computer products.

V. S.

resulting in frequent exchanges of poorly paid teachers due to financing problems. However, the new initiative might receive support from the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport (MSES). Želimir Janjić, State Secretary for High School Education, confirmed that the Ministry of Education responded in the affirmative to the written request to open a traditional-type grammar school in the Serbian language.

Source: Hina

Bologna Declaration

Joint Declaration of the European Ministers of Education
Convened in Bologna on the 19th of June 1999

The European process, thanks to the extraordinary achievements of the last few years, has become an increasingly concrete and relevant reality for the Union and its citizens. Enlargement prospects together with deepening relations with other European countries, provide even wider dimensions to that reality. Meanwhile, we are witnessing a growing awareness in large parts of the political and academic world and in public opinion of the need to establish a more complete and far-reaching Europe, in particular building upon and strengthening its intellectual, cultural, social and scientific and technological dimensions.

A Europe of Knowledge is now widely recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competences to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space.

The importance of education and educational co-operation in the development and strengthening of stable, peaceful and democratic societies is universally acknowledged as paramount, the more so in view of the situation in South East Europe.

The Sorbonne Declaration of 25th of May 1998, which was underpinned by these considerations, stressed the Universities' central role in developing European cultural dimensions. It emphasised the creation of the European area of higher education as a key way to promote citizens' mobility and employability and the Continent's overall development.

Several European countries have accepted the invitation to commit themselves to achieving the objectives set out in the declaration, by signing it or expressing their agreement in principle. The direction taken by several higher education reforms launched in the meantime in Europe has proved many Governments' determination to act.

European higher education institutions, for their part, have accepted the challenge and taken up a main role in constructing the European area of higher education, also in the wake of the fundamental principles

laid down in the Bologna Magna Charta Universitatum of 1988. This is of the highest importance, given that Universities' independence and autonomy ensure that higher education and research systems continuously adapt to changing needs, society's demands and advances in scientific knowledge.

The course has been set in the right direction and with meaningful purpose. The achievement of greater compatibility and comparability of the systems of higher education nevertheless requires continual momentum in order to be fully accomplished. We need to support it through promoting concrete measures to achieve tangible forward steps. The 18th June meeting saw participation by authoritative experts and scholars from all our countries and provides us with very useful suggestions on the initiatives to be taken.

We must in particular look at the objective of increasing the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education. The vitality and efficiency of any civilisation can be measured by the appeal that its culture has for other countries. We need to ensure that the European higher education system acquires a world-wide degree of attraction equal to our extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions.

While affirming our support to the general principles laid down in the Sorbonne declaration, we engage in co-ordinating our policies to reach in the short term, and in any case within the first decade of the third millennium, the following objectives, which we consider to be of primary relevance in order to establish the European area of higher education and to promote the European system of higher education world-wide:

Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees, also through the implementation of the Diploma Supplement, in order to promote European citizens employability and the international competitiveness of the European higher education system

Adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate. Access to the second cycle shall require successful completion of first cycle

studies, lasting a minimum of three years. The degree awarded after the first cycle shall also be relevant to the European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification. The second cycle should lead to the master and/or doctorate degree as in many European countries.

Establishment of a system of credits - such as in the ECTS system - as a proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility. Credits could also be acquired in non-higher education contexts, including lifelong learning, provided they are recognised by receiving Universities concerned.

Promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement with particular attention to:

- for students, access to study and training opportunities and to related services
- for teachers, researchers and administrative staff, recognition and valorisation of periods spent in a European context researching, teaching and training, without prejudicing their statutory rights.

- Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies

- Promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education, particularly with regards to curricular development, inter-institutional co-operation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research.

We hereby undertake to attain these objectives - within the framework of our institutional competences and taking full respect of the diversity of cultures, languages, national education systems and of University autonomy - to consolidate the European area of higher education.

To that end, we will pursue the ways of intergovernmental co-operation, together with those of non governmental European organisations with competence on higher education. We expect Universities again to respond promptly and positively and to contribute actively to the success of our endeavour.

Convinced that the establishment of the European area of higher education requires constant support, supervision and adaptation to the continuously evolving needs, we decide to meet again within two years in order to assess the progress achieved and the new steps to be taken.

Virtual Library with over 2,500 documents.
Comprehensive collection on education systems on past and ongoing education reforms in SEE, with the key documents on languages (mostly in English), also in Albanian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Macedonian, Slovenian)

News

Calendar of Events from the field of education linked with South Eastern Europe

230 registered Members (Ministries, international organizations, Universities, Schools, Institutes and NGOs)

130 registered Experts (References and CVs available on-line)

2,000 recipients of SEE ECN Newsletter

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<http://www.see-educoop.net/>



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CENTRE FOR
EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES



The Centre is active in the field of educational policy studies. It participates in national and international activities in this field, particularly in research, development and consultancy projects. The Centre's activities support study programmes and are aligned with other research at the Faculty of Education. Its members are professors and researchers of the Faculty of Education and other faculties of the University of Ljubljana and from other institutions.

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European higher education institutions, for their part, have accepted the challenge and taken up a main role in constructing the European area of higher education, also in the wake of the fundamental principles

laid down in the Bologna Magna Charta Universitatum of 1988. This is of the highest importance, given that Universities' independence and autonomy ensure that higher education and research systems continuously adapt to changing needs, society's demands and advances in scientific knowledge.

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