TEACHERS FOR THE FUTURE
TEACHER DEVELOPMENT FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

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PREPARED FOR THE ETF BY NATAŠA PANTIĆ, ALISON CLOSS AND VANJA IVOŠEVIĆ
August, 2010

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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1   Under UNSCR 1244/1999.

FOREWORD

'Who dares to teach must never cease to learn.'
J. C. Dana (1856-1929)

The people involved in the research study – the Centre for Education Policy and SCIENTER, the EU mentors, the ETF social inclusion team and the researchers for the seven Western Balkan countries – comprised 12 nationalities and rather more languages, but all shared two passionate and enduring interests to which they are committed: education, especially the work of teachers, and the Western Balkan region. We believe that teaching as a profession is fundamental to civil society and that teachers as individuals play key roles in the development, education and wellbeing of the children and young people who are their students and in the lives of their schools and local communities. At its best, their work is an important although indirect contribution to their countries' economies. However, it also establishes a shared universal humanity, especially regarding children and young people, irrespective of their particular abilities, ethnolinguistic or religious backgrounds, socioeconomic or educational status or other individual or familial characteristics. Teachers lay the foundations for social inclusion by modelling it in their approach to the students in their classes and their families and by ensuring that students reflect such approaches in their own relationships with each other.

The recent history of the Western Balkans has been one of conflict, poverty, extreme uncertainty and loss of individual and civic trust, and a time when diversity, one of the region's human characteristics, potentially became a source of trouble and division rather than of human interest and enrichment. Many people in the region suffered acutely and the impact on their lives cannot really be fully grasped by those who are not of the region and who were not there but who are now ready, perhaps over-ready, with advice, criticism and help of various kinds, but also with recommendations and even commands. Little wonder that this could generate an uncomfortable mixture of resentment and guarded gratitude, with some anxiety that changes are possibly being imposed externally. But within the region there is a wish to move forward to better times, to ensure that the next generations will not have to go through the extreme hardship and conflict experienced by their parents and grandparents and to give them better prospects and a real future, possibly within the European Union (EU).

A powerful vehicle for that journey forward is inclusive education – subsuming within it education for all as a principle supported by all seven of the Western Balkan countries and addressing, in its ideal form, the many inequities which the education system (and its teachers) have perpetuated over many years: unregistered children rejected or simply not encouraged to enrol, able students held back by the rigid curriculum and traditional whole-class teaching, slower students condemned to repeat years or to attend special schools inappropriately, children whose mother tongue is not the language of instruction at the local school or who are driven 20 kilometres to a school where they share their language but where they have no local friends, students with mobility problems who have the choice of either struggling up flights of stairs or attending a boarding school 300 kilometres from home, students who are bullied at break time because their accent is from the mountainous north but their families now live in poverty on the edge of a southern city. Even at its most powerful, inclusive education will require time to break down the very many barriers and inequalities that have been erected between children, which prevent the progress of far too many children and which reduce and distort their worlds both now and for the future. Recent research asserts that an unequal country – unequal economically but also in other ways – offers its citizens a fundamentally unhealthy and unbalanced life (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009). Inclusive education can undoubtedly make a significant contribution to a fairer country.

But it will be impossible to introduce inclusive education with confidence until teachers are ready to engage with it and commit to it and to develop competences for the work involved. This will not be an easy process but, for teachers who are professional, it is possible and is, moreover, rewarding. It is also an opportunity for teachers to enhance their local and national standing. Teachers' standing in local communities and nationally is only in part vested in their role, with many teachers saying that even that part has been damaged with changes in societal values. But status is also something that has to be earned by teachers, by constantly working in the best interests of their students and by engaging in a continuing process of self-development that addresses both personal and professional competences.

The overall aim of the study was to map the issues, challenges and opportunities for teacher development for inclusive education in the Western Balkans and to analyse those issues against relevant European and international trends. The primary purpose of this exploration was to provide evidence for improving policy and practice for the pre-service and in-service development of teachers in the Western Balkans. The views and ideas of many people from the region went into the seven country reports: parents, community representatives, student teachers, teachers, teacher educators and local authority and national policy makers. The country research teams covered the length and breadth of the seven countries in their field research and spent months perusing relevant documentation during a desk research period before analysing the data and drafting their research reports. These in turn were subject to the scrutiny of the ETF social

inclusion team, the core research team and national and international delegates at ETF and other regional meetings, leading to suggestions for additional investigation and sources of evidence.

One of the very positive outcomes of the work done has been the establishment, with the ETF support, of an informal collegial network, comprising all researchers and team members who wish to participate but with no formal outer boundaries. A round-table presentation of the regional report and five of the country reports was made at the European Conference of Educational Research held in Helsinki in August 2010. Other publications are planned and professional e-correspondence continually circulates in the region and around Europe.

The country reports are now available on the ETF website and this regional report draws on both the country reports and wider sources. They have highlighted the fact that there is already some good inclusive practice in the seven Western Balkan countries: in schools and among individual school principals, student teachers, teachers and teacher educators. Some of this success has been achieved against the odds and owes more to goodwill, collaboration with others and hard work than to substantial extra funding. There are also many other examples of schools, communities, parents and teachers located somewhere on long and winding pathways to improving the quality of teaching and learning in low key but still important ways. So, inclusive education is a viable aim, even if a long-term one.

The tone of the country reports, however, could be described as broadly critical. But is the criticism fair and is it useful? The researchers did find policies and practices that were not in the best interests of student development, educational attainment and wellbeing; they described and explained them, while making suggestions that might help redress the situations. Education is a public service and, as such, is open to scrutiny and the critical process will not halt or lessen within the EU. The Czech Republic has experienced almost non-stop fully justified criticism of its discriminatory educational policies and practices in relation to the education of Roma students before, during and after its accession to the EU (League of Human Rights [Czech Republic], 2007), while Scotland was recently rightly condemned by the OECD because its comprehensive secondary school system shows poor learning outcomes for 12% of its pupils, specifically those at greatest socioeconomic disadvantage (Lee, 2010). Justified criticism can be useful, especially if ways ahead are also suggested, but only if those who are implicated in the criticism listen, think and act.

The country reports and the regional report are hopeful offerings – reference texts for positive change to which the various governments, professionals and parents may or may not commit. Individuals will achieve most in collaboration with others in their schools and in their local or wider communities and by engaging nationally and regionally with universities and NGOs. Just a single teacher working inclusively can make a positive difference to the learning outcomes, self-esteem and general wellbeing of 30 students every day of every year of their entire working career. His/her students will recognise this, even at the time, and will probably continue to remember later, individually and collectively, that their teacher made this effort on their behalf, no matter whether the former student is a young recently graduated Bosnian Roma woman or a deaf young man from a small Kosovo village who qualified as a computer engineer and no matter whether the current students are in a composite grade 1-3 class in a rural, ethnolinguistically mixed primary school in Croatia or are a crowd of nearly adult young mechanical engineering students of both sexes in an urban vocational school in Montenegro.

Has the research team put too great a burden of responsibility on the shoulders of teachers and teacher educators when we know that being an effectively inclusive teacher is extremely demanding and that life itself is still difficult for many in the Western Balkans? Do we think they can cure all the ills in society in the Western Balkans? Of course not – but we do believe that teachers and teacher educators in the seven countries of the Western Balkans *can* be key agents for positive change in terms of the education and social inclusion of all children and young people in the seven countries. We also believe that the best starting challenge in that process is their own development. The research team very much hopes that they will accept that challenge and that they will be well supported by their colleagues across the region, by their own governments, by their employers and their local communities. Finally, we hope that they and policy makers and implementers at all levels in the seven Western Balkan countries and beyond will find this ETF report useful in their endeavours.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Teachers for the Future is a regional report that draws together and analyses research findings from a study commissioned by the European Training Foundation (ETF) in seven countries in the Western Balkan region, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo[2], Montenegro and Serbia. The overall objectives of this study were as follows:

■ to identify and map issues, challenges and opportunities in teacher preparation for inclusive education in the Western Balkans and to analyse these against relevant European and international trends;
■ to provide evidence for improving policies and practices in pre-service and in-service teacher development for inclusive education in the Western Balkans.

Inclusive education is broadly conceptualised in this study as the process by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals by reconsidering and restructuring curricular organisation and provision and by allocating resources to enhance equality of opportunity. This process enables schools to increase their capacity to accept all the pupils from the local community who wish to attend and, in so doing, reduces all forms of exclusion and degradation of students on the basis of disability, ethnicity or anything that could render the school life of some children unnecessarily difficult (Sebba and Sachdev, 1997; Booth and Ainscow, 1998; Florian and Rouse, 2009).

The study and its reports (a country report for each of the seven countries and this regional report) are part of the ETF's Social Inclusion through Education and Training in the Western Balkans project. Its rationale is that education must be equitable for all people in the region and should take into account their socioeconomic and political contexts. The complexity and diversity of populations in the Western Balkans, with many languages, ethnic communities and religions (as highlighted in recent conflicts), has an impact on education provision and also leads to polarisation: between a small but relatively wealthy minority and large numbers of poor people; between people with ability, talent and opportunities and people with disabilities and other disadvantages; between sophisticated urban societies and isolated underdeveloped rural hamlets; and between settled communities and populations that are unsettled or transient, whether through choice and tradition or as a consequence of internal migration and post-conflict displacement or return.

This regional report describes changes in the political and economic contexts that are also having an impact on education. Six of the seven Western Balkan countries mentioned above (the exception is Croatia) are among the 10 poorest countries in Europe; all seven are in transition from a communist past and recent conflicts to membership of the European Union (EU); and all seven are included in the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) group of ETF partner countries and territories and so are eligible for assistance to strengthen social and economic cohesion in the employment, education and training spheres. Increasing social inclusion and protecting minority rights in the region are seen as essential to progress towards EU integration. The quality of education and training and the quality of teachers and of teacher development are all high on the EU policy agenda. The European Commission document, *Common European Principles for Teacher Competencies and Qualifications*, suggests that teachers should 'respond to the needs of individual learners in an inclusive way' and should be trained to have, 'an understanding of the social and cultural dimension of education' (European Commission, 2005, p. 2).

In Phase 1 of the ETF study, a team of researchers from each country, supported by a core research team and the ETF, sought answers to the following questions:

■ What teacher competences (i.e. the integrated set of knowledge, skills and dispositions) for inclusive education are needed in situations of social and cultural diversity?
■ What is the current situation regarding inputs, processes and outcomes in both pre-service and in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education?
■ How can improvements be made regarding both pre-service and in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education?

Phase 1 covered desk research to analyse national education legislation and guidelines and national and international studies teacher education and teacher development systems in each of the countries. Field research, based on a largely qualitative methodology, comprised semi-structured interviews with key informants (senior policy makers in national and local government, teacher trainers and national and international non-governmental (NGO) representatives) and focus-group discussions with teachers, student teachers, parents (including parents of students from minority groups) and community representatives. An e-questionnaire invited responses from teachers, teacher trainers and student teachers. Although the central topic was teacher development, outcomes could only be explored thoroughly by also investigating school and teacher practices; evidence in this case came in the voices of the teachers themselves, from other professional groups and from the parents of students from a range of backgrounds.

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2   Under UNSCR 1244/1999, hereinafter referred to as 'Kosovo' for the purposes of this document.

Phase 2 consisted of a detailed thematic analysis of the findings for all seven country studies by the authors of this regional report. This analysis was complemented by the informed comments of delegates at ETF meetings and the authors' own knowledge and experience of the region. Findings were considered in the context of relevant European and international research and literature so as to establish a regional overview that sought to answer three key questions:

■ What issues, challenges and good policies and practices can be identified in the Western Balkans, considering the regional, European and international contexts of teacher development for inclusive education in situations of social and cultural diversity?

■ How do regional specificities relevant to this topic link with the wider thematic fields of teacher development for inclusive education identified in the international research literature and the EU agenda?

■ How can the design and implementation of relevant future policies and practices in the Western Balkans be improved to respond to regionally identified challenges in relation to teacher development for inclusive education?

A total of 28 issues representing significant challenges were identified in relation to teacher development for inclusive education in the Western Balkans.

Issue 1, referring to an overly limited and narrow concept of inclusive education, was identified as an overarching meta-issue that permeates all the other issues discussed in this regional report. Reported for all seven countries was a limited concept of inclusive education, related very narrowly to bringing children and young people with special education needs (SEN) – especially those with disabilities and, less frequently, Roma – into education (usually mainstream schools but sometimes special classes). There is, furthermore, a tendency to omit reference to the prevalent cultural, linguistic, geographic and socioeconomic reasons for educational disadvantage and exclusion. This limited concept of inclusive education represents a major barrier to constructive planning and progress towards social and educational inclusion.

Issues 2 to 10 refer to policy and long-established practices in the education systems that impact directly and indirectly on the inclusiveness of schools. Many children and young people are educationally disenfranchised (non-enrolled pupils, irregular attenders, dropouts and early leavers). There is an almost total lack of recognition of the potential of vocational schools for building educational and social inclusion. There are great discrepancies and lengthy delays between declared inclusion intentions (as recorded in legislation and official guidelines) and actual practice. There is a lack of clarity in responsibilities and developments in the devolution of educational responsibilities to local authorities. The prevalence of teachers who work in isolation with their students and in their classrooms highlights the lack of in-school collaboration and the insufficient recognition and development of the potential of key school staff (principals, psychologists, speech therapists, pedagogues

and practical assistants); this is further echoed by evidence of poor school-home relationships and a lack of partnership in the education of children and young people. Some initiatives and constructive steps in terms of greater educational and social inclusion and the building of schools as agents for change were noted; however, they fall far short of being sufficient and, even in their limited range of action, are not always effective, indicating weak support for schools in this regard.

Issues 11 to 16 focus on the teaching profession and teacher employment, with special reference to working in contexts of social and cultural diversity. Teacher status and conditions of employment impact on quality professional recruitment, as the outcome is teacher training institutions with little or no choice in terms of candidates. Teaching staff are not generally representative of population diversity and the recruitment of minority student teachers is not generally prioritised; this deprives students of positive role models and culturally sensitive approaches to education (especially given the low or non-existent awareness among teachers of intercultural education and bi- or multilingualism). It is also widely accepted that teachers do not have a sufficiently strong grasp of what their competences should be and that they often lack the necessary confidence to put them into practice. Teacher classroom practices are rarely observed by school managers or inspectors; according to parents and the teachers themselves, teaching and classroom practices are generally didactic, inflexible and non-inclusive and there is a great deal of doubt regarding teacher capacities and willingness to foster social cohesion and inclusion in their students. Finally, there is a dearth of structured opportunities for developing competences for inclusive education.

Issues 17 to 22 focus on challenges that impact on pre- and in-service teacher development. The unconnected professional education systems for all levels of school staff present a challenge to systemic change. The limited concept of inclusive education, if the issue is addressed at all, results in programmes that instruct student teachers in how to remedy deficits rather than on more generic, holistic and constructivist educational approaches. Quality assurance systems in education are not fully effective and lack formative links, both in general and in relation to inclusive education. Although teachers would welcome competence-based teacher standards (currently lacking), their concept of competences is too narrow to achieve inclusive education through the application of such standards. Quality assurance and accreditation systems for pre- and in-service teacher development providers and programmes are insufficiently developed. Finally, there is a lack of systemic opportunities for teaching practice in teacher development.

Issue 23 highlights a major concern that implicates mainly faculty-based teacher trainers who largely work in pre-service teacher development. These trainers are severely challenged as developers of teachers for contexts of social and cultural diversity in terms of relevant knowledge of inclusive education and of attitudes and motivation towards inclusive education; moreover,

their own teaching approaches and ways of working are out-of-date, non-inclusive and distant from students.

Issues 24 and 25, which focus specifically on the challenges facing pre-service teacher education, may have a knock-on impact on subsequent continuing professional development (CPD). There is insufficient and inadequate preparation of vocational teachers due to the absence of an effective, coherent and collaborative system of teacher preparation. Furthermore, pre-service teacher development is subject- and content-focused rather than aimed at building systemic holistic competences for inclusive education.

Issues 26 to 28 focus the spotlight on continuing professional development (CPD), which includes specific in-service teacher education. CPD is inadequate, poorly coordinated and rarely properly evaluated; moreover, participation is not linked to conditions of service. More courses on inclusive approaches would be welcomed by teachers but learning is often not followed up adequately or implemented effectively. International donors and national and international NGOs have led CPD in inclusive education, resulting in some countries becoming overly dependent on these bodies and also in patchwork provision, some of which is excellent, yet at risk because of transient involvement (and, in some situations, the termination of involvement) of donors and international NGOs.

As a conclusion to this executive summary, we return to the three key questions listed above specifically addressed by this report and list 12 messages that have been elucidated from the discussions around the issues raised here.

What issues, challenges and good policies and practices can be identified in the Western Balkans, considering the regional, European and international contexts of teacher development for inclusive education in situations of social and cultural diversity?

Message 1. Existing policies and practices in the region are generally not well oriented towards the development of teachers for inclusive education in the broad sense, nor do they enable teachers to contribute as much as they could to social inclusion and social cohesion.This single all-encompassing message should be of deep concern to anyone involved in the current education and future lives of children and young people, especially those at risk of social and educational exclusion or disadvantage in the Western Balkan countries. Examples of good practice among professionals, faculties and schools do exist and are illustrated in this regional report – but the overall message still holds true.

How do regional specificities relevant to this topic link with the wider thematic fields of teacher development for inclusive education identified in the international research literature and the EU agenda?

Message 2. While there seem to be many good intentions and much activity in the region in terms of

targeting inclusive education, the underlying restricted and narrow understanding of the concept of inclusive education likely serves to maintain counter-inclusive practices and may even reinforce practices leading to exclusion and/or negative stereotyping of some students and groups of students.

Message 3. The countries in the region have generally adopted policies and regulations granting minorities entitlement to culturally and linguistically sensitive education, but this, in some cases, has contributed to the segregated education of students from different ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Message 4. Although there is a widespread belief in the importance of values and of a developmental moral role for teachers in the region, there is little focus on enabling teachers to acquire relevant competences for this role, including reflexivity (the capacity to appraise their own thoughts, feelings and actions self-critically and to take any appropriate remediating action).

Message 5. Although teacher education has expanded and been academically elevated as its importance is increasingly recognised, it does not seem to provide more adequate opportunities for teacher development either in the initial training and novice teacher stages or throughout a teacher's career.

Message 6. Policies and practices targeting inclusive education do not cover the vocational education and training (VET) sector, which serves the largest proportion of secondary students and which is being promoted within the EU as playing a key role in enhancing social inclusion and cohesion.

Message 7. Although international partners have been valuable developmental factors in the region, their influence and activities have in some ways also been restrictive.

How can the design and implementation of relevant future policies and practices in the Western Balkans be improved to respond to regionally identified challenges in relation to teacher development for inclusive education?

Message 8. If schools and their teachers are to fulfil their potential as important vehicles and agents for positive change in their communities, all sections and levels of the education and training system need to work together to promote teacher learning for inclusive education and to sustain this throughout teaching careers.

Message 9. Cooperation between teacher training institutions and schools needs to be institutionalised to enable mutual learning by staff, to enhance the quality of teaching, learning and staff-student relations and to link theory and research to school practice, for example, through action research and communities of practice and by shared responsibilities for student teacher practice and novice teachers.

Message 10. There is much need for further research into relevant issues in the region and, in general, for strengthening research capacities in education.

Message 11. Although improved and coherent quality assurance systems in education in general, including in teacher development, are fundamental to positive change, the education system cannot build a more inclusive and cohesive society on its own. Inter-ministerial and other high level cooperation is also needed.

Message 12. It is clear that commonalities in the problems and challenges that relate to teacher education for inclusive education co-exist with variations across the region and between countries. The commonalities, allied with limited resources and shared uncertainties as to ways ahead, suggest that regional and inter-country collaboration in developing and implementing policies and practices potentially offer economies of scale and support for peer learning and would thus improve prospects for attracting funding from within and outside the region.

This final message is a particularly encouraging one for the seven countries and their education system representatives, as it clearly points to the way forward towards improved teacher development for inclusive education in the Western Balkans.

1. STUDY OVERVIEW

1.1 RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

This regional report is produced as part of the study titled Mapping Policies and Practices for the Preparation of Teachers for Inclusive Education in Contexts of Social and Cultural Diversity, commissioned by the European Training Foundation (ETF) with the aim of contributing to the promotion of inclusive education and training policies and practices in contexts of social and cultural diversity in the Western Balkans.

Current changes in education in the seven countries in the Western Balkan region, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia, are strongly influenced by the aspirations of these countries to join the European Union (EU). In this perspective, increased attention from policy makers, planners and teacher educators to all learners in these contexts of diversity is considered essential for inclusive education, social inclusion and cohesion.

The preparation of teachers for working in real-life contexts of social and cultural diversity is considered fundamental to inclusive education. Teacher preparation in the region has tended to assume homogenous school populations, despite a troubled history and great social and cultural diversity. A number of changes are now being introduced in legislation and education policies and practices with the intention of ensuring equity and inclusion in relation to the diverse cultural backgrounds, socioeconomic status, abilities and the religious identities of students. However, research evidence that could inform the development of policies and practices for teacher preparation in the region is scarce.

The objective of this study was to map the issues, challenges and opportunities for teacher preparation for inclusive education in the Western Balkans and to analyse these issues, challenges and opportunities in the context of European and international trends. The primary purpose of this exploration is to provide evidence aimed at improving policies and practices for pre-service and in-service teacher development in the Western Balkans.

The study was carried out in two phases. Phase 1 involved the mapping of policies and practices to prepare teachers for inclusive education in the seven individual Western Balkan countries and territories. Phase 2 consisted of a cross-country analysis of findings from the individual country reports. The cross-country analysis, described in this regional report, will be used to inform country and regional-level discussions involving country teams, the European Commission's Directorate Generals for Employment, Enlargement and Education and Culture and other relevant development partners.

1.2 COUNTRY REPORTS

The main sources of information for the cross-country analysis were the country reports for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia produced in Phase 1 of the ETF study (see Bibliography). The country reports were prepared by research teams operating in each country; these teams were coordinated by a core research team that included the authors of this regional report. The country reports cover common information components providing data on regulation, policy environment and practices referring to pre-service and in-service teacher preparation. Each country report describes the education and inclusion context in the given country and current policies and practices of teacher preparation for inclusive education. Findings are discussed critically to identify current initiatives, challenges and constructive approaches to the development of inclusive education through relevant teacher development in the respective countries. The country reports describe cases referring to our topic and also highlight key issues, some common to all the countries in the region and others particular to individual countries.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The country reports addressed the following three main research questions:

- What teacher competences (i.e. the integrated set of knowledge, skills and dispositions) for inclusive education are needed in situations of social and cultural diversity?
- What is the current situation regarding inputs, processes and outcomes in both pre-service and in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education?
- How can improvements be made regarding both pre-service and in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education?

The cross-country study analysed the main findings of the country reports by addressing the above questions and adding a new layer of interpretation in regard to the contextual and conceptual backgrounds of the countries in the Western Balkan region.

This regional report addresses three additional research questions:

- What issues, challenges and good policies and practices can be identified in the Western Balkans in view of regional, European and international contexts of teacher development for inclusive education in situations of social and cultural diversity?

- How do regional specificities relevant to this topic link with the wider thematic fields of teacher development for inclusive education identified in the international research literature and the EU agenda?
- How can the design and implementation of relevant future policies and practices in the Western Balkans be improved to respond to regionally identified challenges facing teacher development for inclusive education?

1.4 REPORT STRUCTURE

This introductory chapter of the regional report is followed by **Chapter 2**, which presents the analytical framework for identifying and analysing issues, challenges and opportunities for teacher development aimed at building social inclusion and social cohesion. The analytical framework is built around (1) a description of the contextual background of the Western Balkans, including the EU agenda; and (2) a description of the conceptual background, covering key concepts and relevant international research evidence.

Chapter 3 outlines the study design in terms of the research method, data sources and research limitations.

Chapter 4 depicts the context in which teachers learn and work in the Western Balkans, including the situation with regard to access and rights to education and the policy and the working environments of teachers. The primary purpose of this chapter is to set the scene for Chapter 5 (teacher competence issues) and Chapter 6 (teacher development policies and practices), which address the main focus of this report. Contextual issues are discussed in terms of important implications for teachers and teacher development. Raffo et al. (2009) noted that too little research addressed issues of real power but focused instead on individuals in families, communities, schools (as pupils or teachers) and peer groups, and especially on the institutions mediating between individuals and national and global powers. The description of the contextual background within which teacher improvement and development is now targeted in the region raises broader issues that need to be acknowledged, as they may represent challenges, barriers or opportunities that should be considered when the findings on teachers and teacher development are drawn together in Chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 5 considers the kind of teachers needed to make educational practices in the region more inclusive and more likely to contribute to the aim of building social inclusion and social cohesion. It also considers the effects of status and working conditions on teacher motivation to embrace change. After considering the issues related to attracting and diversifying the teaching force, we turn to the central question: what competences do teachers require daily in the classroom, in terms of school practices and in their interactions with students, families and broader communities? We also consider issues related to teacher self-confidence, attitudes towards inclusion and change and teacher experiences of diversity, reflection and values.

Chapter 6 discusses how teachers could be encouraged and supported to develop the necessary competences in initial training and throughout their working lives. Teacher development is regarded as a continuing process that requires a coherent framework built on the relevant elements and stages of training, induction and lifelong professional development. The themes covered include overarching issues such as: building holistic approaches to teacher preparation and development; assuring quality teacher preparation and development for inclusive education; linking theory and practice; challenges for teacher educators; and issues specific to pre-service teacher preparation and in-service teacher development.

Chapter 7 considers the major overall findings of the report in terms of 12 key messages and discusses what could be done to improve the situation with regard to teacher development for inclusive education in the Western Balkans. It also provides recommendations for actions that could be undertaken by policy makers, external support agencies, teacher educators, expert advisors, schools and teachers themselves and suggests some avenues for further relevant research.

The report concludes with **Chapter 8**, which presents overall reflections by the authors of this report, including an outlook on the future.

1.5 HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

This regional report has been organised and presented with a view to meeting the different needs and interests of the wide readership for which it has been prepared. Its main chapters are organised in thematic sections and sub-sections that address 28 identified issues – one to three per chapter. An issue in the context of this report is defined as a significant challenge identified in relation to teacher development for inclusive education. Each issue is highlighted and followed by illustrative examples or cases from individual country reports, discussion with reference to international research and literature (with some relevant practices highlighted in boxes) and a conclusion in one or more paragraphs that set out the implications for teacher development for inclusive education.

Issue 1, which refers to the narrow understanding of the very concept of inclusive education in the Western Balkan region, has been identified as an overarching meta-issue that permeates all the other issues discussed. This is why it is introduced as early as Chapter 2, which discusses the concept of inclusive education. The remaining 27 issues are covered in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, depending on whether they relate to the context in which teachers work (issues 2-10), teachers and their competencies (issues 11-16) or teacher development (issues 17-28). When related issues are discussed, they are first dealt with as a set and then individually.

This organisation and presentation of issues is designed to facilitate location of the main findings regarding each issue and the identification of issues that may be of particular interest to particular readers. The executive summary and Chapter 7 draw a bigger overall picture, pulled together from the findings on the individual issues. The authors of this report therefore particularly recommend these for the attention of all readers.

2. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

2.1.1 The Western Balkans

Discourses about diversity appear to be relatively new on policy making agendas and in public and academic debates in the Western Balkans. However, diversity itself is not a new phenomenon, as cultural diversity characterises the geopolitical history of the region since (at least) the division of the Roman Empire into its eastern and western parts, through a number of subsequent divisions and (re)unifications with the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires, to the most recent violent conflicts in the part of the region that constituted the former Yugoslavia. Ethnic, linguistic, religious and other forms of diversity, which have been present in the Balkans throughout its entire troubled history, have been both a source of cultural richness and a curse at times of use and abuse of the complex mix of identities and shifting allegiances. Attempts made in the second half of the 20th century to homogenise the societies in the region for political and ideological purposes – through multiple social media (education institutions, media outlets, art and culture) – failed to mask the diversity. Many would argue, in fact, that such endeavours contributed to making the divisions in the region more uneasy. Diversity has always been and always will be a feature of the Western Balkans and can only be expected to increase with membership of the EU and growing international mobility. This has happened with other eastern European countries that previously had little experience of immigration, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2010). Thus, learning to manage diversity in the Western Balkans is a matter of necessity involving high stakes for the region's stability and prosperity.

What is new, perhaps, in recent discourses about diversity in the region are approaches towards managing cultural and linguistic diversity. Some commentators on policies regarding minority integration and diversity in post-communist countries (Nikolić, 2009) argue that the framework has shifted from assimilation aimed at the desired socialist homogeneity to greater concern for the protection of human and minority rights, but also particularisation according to ethnic identities sometimes leading to segregation. Ethnic identities in the Western Balkans cross country borders and seem to matter more than nation states. It is sometimes suggested that there is no majority ethnic group in the region as a whole and that all groups are, in some sense, minorities, and should be regarded as such (OECD, 2003).

Diversity in the Western Balkans, as in other places, is a multifaceted phenomenon. Unfortunately, the recent history of conflicts makes the ethnic and religious diversity of the region vulnerable to portrayal as a problem to be solved (e.g. by violence or force of law) rather than, more rationally, as an important factor to be taken into account in development and planning. Indeed, ethnicity in the Western Balkans, sometimes aligned with religious identity, is 'the elephant in the room' in the consideration of approaches to diversity management. However, this focus on ethnicity as the main dividing line seems to have contributed to a downplaying of other dimensions of diversity, resulting in stereotypical and often oversimplified perceptions of the region (both internally and externally) and resulting, in turn, in erroneous strategies for resolving diversity management issues in the region. In regard to the topic of developing teachers for inclusive education in contexts of diversity, we consider it paramount to recognise the many lines along which societies are heterogeneous in this region (as will be discussed later). One of the most salient divisions between populations is socioeconomic. According to the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report (UNDP, 2009) there is a public perception of greater friction between rich and poor than between different ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina, one of the most ethnically divided countries in the region (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 31). Societies in the Western Balkans are stratified, as in other places (OECD, 2010), by different interrelated layers of diversity, e.g. living conditions in urban and rural environments, social and family cultures, ability and educational status, religious and secular worldviews, gender, and so on. Which particular dimensions of diversity come to the forefront in public debate or rise to the top of policy agendas is guided by the political concerns of the moment and the context.

In post-socialist Western Balkan countries and territories – many of which are also post-conflict societies – several parallel change processes make for a complex contextual background as far as the management of diversity and public education is concerned. Transition from a centrally planned to a market economy, democratisation and Europeanisation are occurring concurrently with processes of nation building and religious affiliation revival, creating multiple schisms in the values held by many parents and teachers. According to Džihić and Wieser (2008), the simultaneity of transforming state, regime and society in the Western Balkans is similar to that experienced in central and eastern Europe and yet is also specific to the former Yugoslav part of the region. Unlike other examples in which an existing state was weakened by communist rule, the Yugoslav dissolution brought additional nation-building challenges, with 'the value of nationalism for state-building […] conflicting with the state of democracy' (Džihić and Wieser, 2008, p. 85). At the same time, specific religious affiliations are associated with belongingness to particular ethnic groups and also,

frequently, with nationalistic sentiments based on the notion that the collective wellbeing of the (ethnic) nation overrules individual security and rights. On the other hand, the idea of a state based on civil rights and freedoms seems to be associated with the notion of Europe as a synonym for prosperity, democracy and the valuing of liberty and diversity (Džihić and Wieser, 2008, pp. 85-7).

Education, like other public spheres but perhaps even more so, is not free of interests vested in the various agendas of state and nation building. Different interpretations of recent events in history books are but one example of uses and abuses of education for potent political indoctrination – persisting despite liberalised choice in textbooks. Education policy makers are faced with complex policy and cultural decisions – e.g. about the approach to adopt regarding the re-introduction of religious instruction in public schools – but lack reliable evidence that could inform such decisions (Glanzer, 2008). In such circumstances, the struggle for the hearts and minds of future generations is too often left to competing political agendas, while teachers, who mainly hold the belief that politics and religion should stay out of public schools[3], remain inadequately prepared to deal with public schooling issues in ethically, religiously and otherwise diverse environments.

Education policies and practices inherited from communist states seem to be generally unhelpful to the cause of appreciating difference. A view of teaching as a profession with strong normative and even authoritarian connotations and the value attached to academic excellence (or its semblance) admitted only limited tolerance of diversity or individual difference of any kind. Closs (1995) hypothesised that inadequate preparation of teachers was one reason for this deficiency: the official value system was taught 'either so blindly that its vices went uncriticised and its virtues unnoticed, or so cynically that the end result was similar. The occasional discrete avoidance of the topic by a conscientiously objecting teacher did not allow for the introduction of alternatives' (p. 205). Academic curricula are laden with facts and pseudo-facts, often to be learned by rote memory, discouraging the search for truth from a range of perspectives. We will argue in this report that Western Balkan education systems are still placing their present and future pupils at risk in similar ways. Schools and teacher education institutions alike seem to be unduly disconnected from the increasingly multifaceted environments in which they operate.

2.1.2 Policy background and the EU agenda

The fact that all seven countries referred to in this report are at various stages of the EU accession process[4] significantly contributes to the shaping of new social inclusion policies and legislation. In EU policy debates, the concept of social inclusion started to acquire importance

at the beginning of 1985; the turning point occurred in Lisbon in 2000 when a ten-year strategic plan determined that, inter alia, there should be greater social cohesion in Europe. Today, social inclusion forms the foundation for social policies in EU member states and the basis for mutual coordination at EU level. 2010 was designated the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (European Parliament and Council, 2008, Art. 11), with the Western Balkan countries featuring in the list of participating nations.

Social inclusion is conceived as a process that provides people exposed to the risk of poverty and social exclusion with the opportunity and means for full participation in economic, social and cultural life and for achieving the standards of living and wellbeing of the society in which they live (European Commission, 2004). Linking education and training to social inclusion is high on policy agendas in EU countries, as inclusive education is seen as a necessary, although not a sufficient, condition for social inclusion; social inclusion is no guarantee of social cohesion, however. Linking inclusive education to both social inclusion and social cohesion requires intersectoral coordination of both strategy development and implementation (Holmes, 2009).

Social cohesion is defined as 'the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members by minimising disparities and avoiding polarisation' (McGinn, 2008, p. 291). The concept of social cohesion in policy and scientific literature is emphasised differently in different contexts, being interpreted as shared norms and values; a sense of shared identity or belonging to a common community; a society with institutions for sharing risks and providing collective welfare; or the equitable distribution of rights, opportunities, wealth and income. A distinctive feature of social cohesion is that it involves harmonious inter-community relations and trust (Green et al., 2003). Research has not yet clarified the link between education and social cohesion. For instance, it is not at all clear that higher mean levels of education in OECD countries enhance social cohesion as measured by levels of trust (Green et al., 2003); nevertheless, these authors hypothesise that education affects societal cohesion through socialisation (inculcation of the values and attitudes conducive to social cohesion through the curriculum and the school ethos), by enhancing the skills useful to building communities (such as cross-cultural understanding and civic participation) and by distributing opportunities. While there is little evidence in support of the effects of socialisation (mainly because effective socialisation is very hard to define and measure), there is some evidence to support the link between skills and opportunities distribution and social cohesion and there is a strong correlation between social cohesion and educational equality (Green et al., 2003). Therefore, one important way education may influence social cohesion is in the degree to which it generates relatively equal educational outcomes for people.

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3   Empirical research under the Tempus project on Curriculum Reform in Teacher Education at the Faculty of Education of the University of Kragujevac in Serbia.

4   Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro (as of December 2010) have the status of candidate countries, while the remaining countries (except for Kosovo, which has special status) have signed Stabilisation and Association Agreements.

This report focuses on the development of teachers for inclusive education in the Western Balkans, given the potentially significant contribution of teachers to social inclusion and social cohesion. We therefore consider context, teacher competences and the development opportunities needed for teachers to be able to contribute to reducing inequality and increasing educational opportunities for students at risk of exclusion. This report also discusses the development of inclusive and cooperative values and attitudes, the assumption being that these play a potentially significant role – even if difficult to examine scientifically – in social inclusion and cohesion.

The EU has identified policy areas and priorities relevant to inclusive education and training in its Enlargement Strategy 2008-09 (European Commission, 2008a). The progress of the Western Balkan countries can be tracked in their respective progress reports. Generally speaking, recognised is the fact that a major exclusion factor is poverty, often intertwined with ethnicity, gender, disability and other factors. The Western Balkan country reports point to a particularly complex situation for the Roma as an ethnic minority that faces long-standing multifaceted disadvantages. The term 'disadvantaged' is also applicable to children from remote and rural areas, refugees, internally displaced people, children in families deported from foreign countries (mostly within the EU) and others. All countries have reported a number of actions taken to combat disadvantage and exclusion, as will be discussed later in this report (issue 5).

The Western Balkan countries also belong to the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) group of EU partner countries and territories. The EU introduced the IPA in 2007 as an external assistance instrument for strengthening social inclusion as a component of human resource development in candidate and potential candidate countries. IPA funds may be used to strengthen social and economic cohesion in the employment, education and training spheres based on the principles elaborated in the Copenhagen EU-accession criteria, such as respect for, and protection of, minorities. The Western Balkan countries are also required to comply with EU legislative *acquis*[5] in the field of anti-discrimination and equal opportunities (currently being adopted).

EU membership criteria and observance of the relevant international norms are an important driving force for strengthening social inclusion through the promotion of human rights and anti-discrimination standards. The seven Western Balkan countries are signatories to a number of European and other relevant international documents, such as the European Convention on Human Rights (1950); the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960); the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989); the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995), not as yet ratified by Kosovo; the revised European Social Charter (1995);

the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992); the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006); and initiatives such as the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005-15).

At the Informal Conference of European Ministers of Education in Oslo on 5-6 June 2008, education ministers representing south eastern European countries signed a joint statement making a commitment to human capital development as a long-term investment. This statement expressed a commitment to promote – as key prerequisites for the prosperity and sustainable development of the Western Balkan countries and their integration with the EU – the following: quality, diversity and equitable access to education; innovatory capacity within education systems; and the intercultural capacities of education institutions. The ministers stated their intention to promote intercultural dialogue and cooperation at the local, regional, national and international levels and to foster environments conducive to creativity and innovation, inter alia, by encouraging cooperation between education, higher education and research (Ministers of Education from South Eastern Europe, 2008).

All the country reports reported efforts to overcome educational disadvantage through various strategies, laws and policy documents. The reports frequently linked these policies to aspirations for EU membership. As one example, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms has been incorporated in the constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina and supersedes all domestic legislation (see Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 33). A number of laws and policies to protect the rights of minorities in Croatia – implemented since the country was formally accepted as a candidate for EU membership – are aimed at meeting EU accession criteria (see Croatia country report, p. 35). In Albania, the implementation of policies aimed at preventing early school leaving by particularly marginalised students, described in a document called the Social Inclusion Cross-cutting Strategy 2007-13, is to be closely monitored and evaluated in the process of EU accession, along with the EU Stabilisation and Association Agreement (see Albania country report, p. 32).

In summary, the promotion of social inclusion and the protection of minority rights in the Western Balkans are seen as essential for progress towards integration in the EU. Moreover, the significant majority of the Western Balkan populations see their future within the EU, with the integration process reported to have had a catalytic effect on the consolidation of strategic planning under a more systematic approach (see, e.g. UNDP and ORI, 2007).

The international community has provided substantial support (even leadership in some countries) for social inclusion and inclusive education. International organisations together with the growing civil sector have proved to be essential in the promotion of minority rights in the region. The Organisation for Security and

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5 The Community *acquis* is the body of common rights and obligations which bind all the member states together within the EU. It comprises Community law as well as common objectives laid down in EU treaties.

Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe relaunched the discourse on minority rights in the early 1990s through a security prism, given western European fears about ethnic violence and war in the Western Balkans threatening security in south eastern Europe and potentially spreading beyond the Balkans. In 1992 the OSCE set up the High Comissioner on National Minorities to be responsible for monitoring and preventing ethnic conflicts. In 1994 the Council of Europe drafted the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which became the first internationally legally binding agreement formulating specific minority rights and norms. Such bodies and documents, and the presence of international organisations in the Western Balkans, have contributed to positive shifts in the treatment and status of minorities in education. Unfortunately, dependence on international engagement has also been reported to have contributed to minority integration not always being valued for its intrinsic worth (e.g. as positively affecting institutional performance) but as representing, rather, a symbolic engagement to comply with international demands (Agarin and Brosig, 2009). Additionally, education and training are still not sufficiently high on the agenda, although their importance is increasingly recognised through eligibility for funding as a tool for other goals such as minority rights and social inclusion (ETF, 2009b, p. 13).

International organisations and national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have played and continue to play an important role in setting good practice parameters and in reducing tensions between ethnic communities, promoting equality and, in particular, combating discrimination – not an easy task in the Western Balkans. In the region's approach to societal diversity management, an important difference with west European states is the concurrent engagement in state-building processes and the completion of nation-building projects. Political elites in the region have persuaded societies that statehood belongs largely, if not entirely, to the dominant group in society. Although – with the help of international organisations – the Western Balkan countries are attempting to preserve and develop minority cultures and protect individuals against discrimination, they are far less sophisticated in their approach to creating and sustaining group bonds. Stereotypical and simplistic assumptions based on ethnicity greatly affect social participation and educational choices in the region. Acceptance of particular versions of national history, proficiency in the state language and enthusiasm for the culture of the majority are the dominant criteria for social inclusion (Agarin and Brosig, 2009).

The quality of education and training, and with it the quality of teachers and teacher development, are high on the policy agenda in the EU countries. A key reference document is the Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications (European Commission, 2005), which suggests that 'teachers should be able to respond to the needs of individual learners in an inclusive way' and that their education should ensure 'an understanding of the social and cultural dimensions of education' (p. 2). The importance of teachers and their development is also stressed in the EU document titled Improving Competences for the 21st Century: An Agenda for European Cooperation on Schools (European Commission, 2008b):

> It is essential that those who enter the profession are supported in developing a deeper understanding of the historical, social and cultural contexts within which they work. Teacher education also needs to present teaching as a problem-solving or research-in-action activity during which teaching methods and strategies, formal or informal, are examined in relation to children's learning and their process (p. 5).

The emphasis on teacher reflectivity and teacher capacities to contextualise teaching strategies represents a substantial change and expansion of the teaching role, which is why teachers need to be adequately prepared and supported throughout their professional lives. This report considers how teachers in the Western Balkans could be prepared and supported by policy makers, teacher education providers, their schools and their communities, so as to be able to rise to the challenge of becoming the advanced professionals for the 21st century proposed by the EU.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1 Key concepts

Before looking at what international research and literature has to say about teacher competences for inclusive education in the context of diversity and before discussing some instances of the relevant issues identified in the seven Western Balkan country reports, it would be useful to look briefly at our understanding, use of and the links between diversity, socioeconomic disadvantage, educational disadvantage, inclusive education, teacher competence and teacher development.

Diversity

For the purposes of this report diversity is a multifaceted and multilayered concept that includes a number of meanings in the contexts of Western Balkan societies. Diversity not only refers to cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious differences among members of a society; it also covers various other kinds of social differences that interrelate with cultural and other forms of diversity, such as socioeconomic dimensions and factors affecting the social and educational status of groups and individuals (physical and mental ability, social milieu, family culture, secular or religious worldview, urban or rural environment, gender, sexual orientation, and so on). Different group cultures also exist, based on lifestyles, professional sub-cultures or differing modes of communication and learning styles (e.g. the deaf culture or bilingualism). Different individual, cultural and social factors can be intertwined in multiple dynamic identities and experiences of exclusion or greater freedom and wider social inclusion.

Agarin and Brosig (2009) rightly remind us that individual choices do not always result from culturally determined or other group-determined action patterns. They suggest that preferences for interaction strategies are more often made from contextual situations than from individual cultural belief systems. Other studies show that this is perhaps truer for children, who seem less attentive to ethnic or religious identity in their social activities than their adult educators (Bekerman et al., 2009). Different approaches to multicultural education have different implications for learners, with some even reinforcing stereotypes or divides between different groups by overlooking intra-group differences. Besides, individuals belonging to different groups can have similar claims, e.g. parents belonging to different cultural groups might wish their children to be educated in line with their own cultural values but might also share, with parents from other cultural groups, a concern for the educational quality and ultimate employability of their children. Intercultural approaches are often commended (see, e.g. Hudson, 2009), since they require interdependence and foster the mutual respect and understanding that can help build trust and cohesion in communities and the broader society. A major challenge for intercultural ideas in the Western Balkans regarding non-ethnocentric curricula and intercultural pedagogy is how to overcome the problems of national and mono-ethnic thinking and prejudice (OECD, 2010).

Socioeconomic disadvantage

When we describe students, families or groups of people as being socioeconomically disadvantaged we mean that they are among the poorer people in their country, usually without employment and without a regular income sufficient to ensure a secure lifestyle or any expenditure over and above that for basic needs (food and shelter). In terms of the crude measure of gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, only one of the seven countries in the study, namely, Croatia, is not in the list of the ten poorest countries in Europe. However, for certain poor groups and individuals, their poverty is accentuated by the increasing gap between them and a small population of relatively wealthy co-citizens.

Economically disadvantaged groups and their children are also likely to be socially marginalised, sometimes as a result of their incapacity to function economically in mainstream society but also because other factors (which may also have led to their economic disadvantage) contribute to their social exclusion: e.g. people with disabilities may experience both disability discrimination and societal discrimination; internal migrants who do not speak the local dialect may be marginalised by local populations because they are perceived as incomprehensible newcomers who threaten local employment and housing security; and illiterate people may be disenfranchised from social benefits because they are unable to complete claim forms.

Educational disadvantage

Educationally disadvantaged children or students are those who do not benefit from school attendance and education as their peers do and whose educational

potential is not achieved. This group also includes those who receive little or no schooling at all, whether because they are officially and systematically excluded or because they are unable or choose not to attend even intermittently. Although some non-attenders are not from socioeconomically disadvantaged families, there is little doubt that most do have such backgrounds.

We need, nonetheless, to be aware of the groups of students and families from minorities who are not necessarily socioeconomically or educationally disadvantaged, yet whose level of educational and even social inclusion can be questioned. Some may come from extremely wealthy backgrounds, live in gated communities and attend fee-paying schools; others may be members of a well-established and influential community that grew up in or near their present location at a time when national borders were different and who are still proud to use their original national language, e.g. the Italian-speaking community in Istria or the Greek-speaking community in southern Albania. Yet these are choices made by the adults concerned and, we have to assume, also for their children.

Inclusive education

Inclusive education is a widely researched topic that involves a number of challenges for policy making and policy implementation processes. Conceptualisations of inclusive education vary from narrow to broad views. A narrow definition is given by Michailakis and Reich (2009): 'the attempt to educate persons with intellectual disabilities by integrating them as closely as possible into the regular structures of the education system'. A broader definition from Acedo (2008) refers to: '[a] guiding principle helping to accomplish quality education for all – education systems that benefit from diversity, aiming to build a more just, democratic society.'

For the purposes of this report, inclusive education is broadly understood to be the process by means of which schools attempt to respond to all pupils as individuals by reconsidering and restructuring curriculum organisation and provision and by allocating resources to enhance equality of opportunity. This process enables schools to increase their capacity to accept all pupils from the local community who wish to attend and, in so doing, reduces all forms of exclusion and degradation of students on the basis of disability, ethnicity or anything that could render the school life of some children unnecessarily difficult (Sebba and Sachdev, 1997; Booth and Ainscow, 1998; Florian and Rouse, 2009). Hence, inclusive education needs to become a mainstream general policy and practice in education, rather than just a specific intervention addressing a particular disadvantaged group. In this broader sense, inclusion is a process that increases participation and reduces exclusion, whereas participation means greater recognition, acceptance and respect, which, along with inclusion in the learning process and in social activities, ultimately fosters a sense of belonging in society.

Teachers also have a wider professional role to play that goes beyond their direct personal impact on individual

schools operating at various levels of the education system, including the local level. Decentralisation of education systems in Western Balkan countries could imply increased autonomy and responsibility for schools (see issue 7 in Chapter 4), which may in turn lead to increased rights for professional decision making by teachers, suitably informed by a broader conceptualisation of the sociocultural aims of education and schooling. Liston and Zeichner (1990) assert that such reflection need not focus only on implicit social and cultural frameworks but also on the institutional features of schooling; teaching professionals, they argue, must be able to analyse and change particular institutional arrangements and working conditions, especially those that might counteract their professional aims.

At this point it is appropriate to introduce, in this section on the definition of key concepts, the first issue, which is an overarching one referring to understanding of the concept of inclusive education in the Western Balkans – which, as it happens, differs greatly from the conceptualisation of inclusive education presented above. This mismatch is a major overall finding of the study as it permeates most of the other issues identified and so has important implications for teacher development policies and practices.

ISSUE 1	THE PREVAILING CONCEPT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IS OVERLY LIMITED AND NARROW

Reported in all the Western Balkan countries was a limited concept of inclusive education that was very narrowly related to bringing specific children into the education system, usually into mainstream classes but often in special classes, namely, children perceived to have special educational needs (SEN), especially children and young people with disabilities and, less frequently, Roma children. The cultural, linguistic, geographic and socioeconomic reasons underlying educational disadvantage and exclusion tend to be overlooked or ignored, in some cases possibly for historical reasons.

At the regional meeting held in Turin in December 2009, Pavel Zgaga (ETF, 2009b, p. 2) reminded participants that, in the heterogeneous Western Balkan region, schools have often been assumed to be mono-ethnic institutions with homogenous classes, suggesting that this assumption was rooted in political traditions (all people were equal), academic traditions (in ex-Yugoslav countries, defectology was a field of study that viewed differences as defects) and educational traditions that meant that children identified as 'defective' would either attend a special school staffed by defectologists or be excluded from education; hence, mainstream schools and teachers were never equipped with the knowledge, strategies and tools to address differences in students. In some country reports the practices and modus operandi of education ministry staff are also perceived to be at

fault, with many being described as insufficiently knowledgeable or motivated regarding inclusion and its social and educational advantages.

The problem with this narrow concept of inclusion is that many of the efforts to develop inclusion have resulted in measures and training that are specific rather than generic and that are, debatably, more focused on what is wrong with groups and how this may be remedied rather than on systemic and whole-school approaches, such as anti-discrimination practices and interactive, student-centred, peer-support strategies. This narrow conceptualisation of inclusive education permeates other issues discussed in this report, e.g. regarding local initiatives to combat exclusion and segregation in the education of certain groups of students (issues 2, 4 and 10 in Chapter 4), perceptions of teacher competences for inclusive education (issues 13-15 in Chapter 5 and issue 20 in Chapter 6) and teacher education and development (issues 18 and 25-28 in Chapter 6).

Teacher competence

In this study a view is adopted of competences as an integrated set of knowledge, skills and dispositions, sometimes also referred to as attitudes. With regard to teacher knowledge and skills for inclusive education, we agree with Florian and Rouse (2009), who suggested that teacher competence for inclusive education should include broad knowledge and generic skills relevant to the improvement of teaching and learning for all, including the capacity to reduce barriers to learning and participation. This involves an understanding of the sociocultural factors that produce individual differences, an awareness of educational and social issues that can affect learning, a multifaceted pedagogy that recognises how decisions informing teaching should take account of individual student characteristics, learning that takes place outside school and previous knowledge, individual and cultural experiences and interests (Florian and Rouse, 2009).

According to this view, the body of knowledge for inclusive education is much broader than the specialist knowledge of disability and learning needs required for working with 'special' students – because the view of inclusive education we adopt is not just about such students. Even the most comprehensive coverage of relevant special themes is unlikely to anticipate every difficulty teachers might encounter in their professional lives. In order to develop teacher competence for inclusive education it is crucial that teachers accept responsibility for improving the learning and participation of *all* the students in their classes. Teachers therefore need to develop dispositions towards equitable teaching and the promotion of learning among all their pupils.

Dispositions are tendencies for an individual to act in a particular manner under particular circumstances, based on their beliefs, however formed (Villegas, 2007). Dispositions in teachers involve beliefs about the purpose of education, the nature of knowledge and learning and the educability of students. This last item is of particular importance for inclusive education, as teacher beliefs form the basis of teacher expectations regarding their

students. Thus, poor estimations of a student with resulting low teacher expectations can lead teachers to treat some students more negatively than others, resulting in lower student attainment, fewer aspirations and a poorer self-image. The converse is also naturally true.

Teachers also need to be able to seek and use the support of others who can provide valuable resources, such as specialist and support staff, parents, colleagues, communities, school authorities and relevant others. Pre-service and in-service teacher education and training should address inclusive educational approaches so as to build the teacher capacities necessary to succeed with diverse kinds of students (teacher competences identified as useful for inclusive education are listed on p. 56).

Teacher development

Our concept of teacher development encompasses teacher preparation, whether through formal pre-service and in-service education or through other forms of learning such as experience, collaboration with peers and reflection. In other words, we understand teacher development to be a dynamic, lifelong and context-bound process rather than a matter of one-off preparation. The process starts with the pre-service education that trainee teachers are expected to undergo in order to qualify as teachers, involving programmes designed specifically for future teachers and programmes referring to a disciplinary area equivalent to a school subject, which may or may not have a special track for future teachers. Teachers develop competences for inclusive education in continual learning in interaction with real contexts of diversity. This implies the need for policies and practices that are not limited to formal education programmes. Teacher development thus necessitates the creation of lifelong learning opportunities and relies on the motivation of teachers to engage in both formal in-service teacher development activities following certification and other school-based activities intended to improve individual and collective professional knowledge, skills and attitudes for inclusive education in contexts of social and cultural diversity.

2.2.2 International research evidence

Here we briefly outline some of the major literature and research evidence that guided our selection of the 28 issues covered in this report and the organisation of the report into relevant sections and themes. This evidence and other research and literature will be discussed at length in the chapters where we consider individual issues and potential improvements related to those issues.

Teacher status and general standing in society matter

There is evidence that according greater status to teachers as professionals positively affects the selection and quality of teachers, which, in turn, positively affects

educational outcomes. Teacher status and standing in society are reflected in pay levels and working conditions; the respect given to the profession; requirements for entry, licensing and career progression; degree of professional autonomy; and teacher education and quality assurance (OECD, 2005; Hoyle, 2001; Wubbels, 1995).

Early education increases equality of opportunities, especially for disadvantaged students

A number of good-quality research studies, including longitudinal studies involving repeated observations over lengthy periods, confirm the benefits of early education for the subsequent educational progress, employment, social inclusion and pro-social attitudes and behaviour of disadvantaged children and students (OECD, 2007; Fraser 1997; Siraj-Blatchford, 2004; Sylva et al., 2004).

Parent/community involvement enhances educational achievement in disadvantaged areas

Studies of schools with successful educational achievement in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas – including a longitudinal study-in-progress – make the case for involving parents and local organisations in school routines and decision making. Successful schools were found to do the following: cater for learning for both students and parents within the school premises; provide stronger links between school life and home educational practices; practice egalitarian dialogue and democratic decision making; allow parents to participate to different degrees in curriculum development, classroom practices and evaluation; and, together with all the community, hold high expectations with respect to educational achievement (Brown and Gatt, 2009).

Teacher beliefs matter

Literature on teacher professionalism in general and studies specifically referring to teacher beliefs in contexts of diversity invariably show that what teachers believe is reflected in their practice and in their students' performance. As one example, teacher beliefs about the purpose of education and ways of knowing and learning are reflected in their perceptions of their role and sense of mission. Teacher beliefs about the educability of students are reflected in their expectations and treatment of students, which, in turn, affect student performance and aspirations. This evidence also explains why parents in their at-home good-parenting role are the greatest influence on students up to and throughout primary education (Day, 2002; Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003; Fives and Buehl, 2008; Korthagen, 2004; Villegas, 2007).

Teacher development is embedded in sociocultural practices

The sociocultural theory of learning points to the need for a holistic approach to teacher education and development. Teachers learn through participation in sociocultural practices, of which teacher education is but one example. Teachers also learn and change through contact with other

people in various contexts. According to this view, teachers orientate themselves towards the values and goals of the cultural and political setting of the schooling practices in which they engage and try to make participation in those practices personally meaningful (Huizen et al.*,* 2005; Korthagen, 2004; Lasky, 2005; Vygotsky, 1997).

Practice and reflectivity matter

Other influential theories, such as Kolb's theory of experiential learning and Schön's notion of the reflective practitioner suggest that the learning processes of professionals are associated with making sense of concrete experiences. Professionals do not just apply theories; they learn by doing and by engaging in on-the-spot problem-framing and experimentation followed by reflection. They also need opportunities to exercise their judgement in practice (Kolb, 1984; Korthagen, 2001; Schön, 1983).

Constructivist teacher education is more diversity-friendly

Research evidence on the effects of teacher education for diversity on educational achievement and social inclusion is unfortunately scant. Some studies based on comparisons of programmes and teacher self-reporting suggest that constructivist approaches are more effective in preparation for diversity than conventional technical views of teaching and learning that separate subject matter and pedagogy from practice. Constructivist approaches provide opportunities for learning through discussion; focus on issues of culture, diversity, poverty and social justice; incorporate practical experiences in diverse classrooms; interact with diverse families; and encourage critical reflection on and challenges to traditional conceptions of teacher and learner roles, subject matter and pedagogy (Kidd et al., 2008; OECD, 2010; Tatto,1999).

3. STUDY DESIGN

3.1 RESEARCH METHODS

We took a regional approach as an overarching framework for this report, which is based on the most interesting issues emerging from one or more countries. This approach was designed to highlight regional characteristics, including country commonalities and differences, and to open up new insights and possibilities through an interpretative and illuminative approach that would inform future regional interventions.

We started identifying the regional issues by systematically examining the country reports. The criteria for selecting regional issues to be reported in this report was not that an issue be reported in all or even most of the countries but its relevance in the contextual background and against the conceptual background presented above. For instance, we examined whether some country reports could be used to illustrate different issues or aspects of our topic or whether there were any consistent messages that seemed to be coming through from key groups of respondents in the different countries. Thus, whether or not there was a certain specific common issue in a couple or all seven of the countries was less meaningful than deeper insights from one country that could be of interest to the other countries. Furthermore, we also identified issues that were not in any of the reports because of our knowledge of this topic internationally and of the regional context.

We used an analytical regional framework and conceptual background in a thematic approach to analysing issues associated with teacher preparation for their contribution to inclusive education. Such an interpretative approach involved reading and re-reading the country reports and referring back to the principles and concepts of each theme, asking what we learned that was of most interest for the region. Although the process is presented as following a particular order (indeed some stages logically precede others), our analytical thinking and writing involved both jumping ahead and returning to rework earlier ideas, while heavily relying on creative and conceptual abilities to determine meaning, salience and connections (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994). For drawing and verifying conclusions, the authors engaged in elaborate argumentation with a view to developing an 'inter-subjective consensus' (Miles and Hubermann, 1994). We also consulted other colleagues (such as country researchers, reviewers and colleagues from the ETF social inclusion team).

In line with the policy-oriented nature of this study the focus of the analysis at each stage was on increasing the understanding of the specificities of the Western Balkan region as a possible basis for the development of future policies and practices for teacher development for inclusive education. We finish with recommendations for future actions based on the issues identified and with conclusions aimed at informing policy discussions in the individual countries and the region as a whole. Finally, we also consider avenues for future research.

3.2 DATA SOURCES

This regional report draws primarily on the seven Western Balkan country reports produced in the initial phase of research conducted by the country teams. Data collection in the seven countries was conducted through desk research, focus groups discussions and interviews involving parents, teachers, teacher educators, student teachers, education policy makers, NGOs, school managers and community representatives. Relevant policy documents and legislation were studied critically and a small-scale online survey was conducted among teachers, teacher educators and student teachers.

The country reports adopted a predominantly qualitative research methodology, designed to provide a holistic description and critical interpretation of the situation. Country research teams were guided by a core research team so as to collect the same type of data from documents and field visits. The concept of inclusive education adopted in this study (see Section 2.2.1) was presented to all research participants in each country as part of the interview and focus group protocols and in the online survey. Each team was also given the liberty to interpret the data and to follow up promising or interesting lines of enquiry in each country. The teams were asked to paint a picture or portrait of each country's situation in relation to a commonly adopted understanding of inclusive education. Consequently, the findings were produced through in-depth conversations and engagement between the country researchers and country contexts. We capitalised on the knowledge of the in-country researchers regarding the situation in their country – over and above the information presented in the text of the country reports – by referring back to and consulting with country researchers to ensure accuracy and, occasionally, to elaborate on data that were of particular interest regarding an identified issue.

The regional report also makes use of the presentations, discussions, feedback and conclusions of two ETF-hosted regional meetings held in Pula and Brijuni (Croatia) in September 2009 and in Turin (Italy) in December 2009. The country reports were discussed by stakeholders from the region and EU representatives: a mixed profile of academics, policy makers and practitioners from public institutions and NGOs, representatives of international organisations active in the region and the EU Directorates General for Enlargement, Education and Culture and Employment. The discussions offered a rich insight into

relevant issues for analysis and possible future peer learning and cooperation at the regional level.

3.3 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

Generalising regarding a region as diverse as the Western Balkans is very problematic. Given the sensitivities of the topic of inclusive education, we found it particularly challenging to ensure that the analytical approach applied in this regional report does not itself make assumptions which hold more true for certain contexts or cultures in the region.

Care was taken when disaggregating or extracting fragments of data that were only part of the bigger picture presented in each country report, e.g. when the regional report highlights instances of interesting or good practice identified in some countries in the hope that they could be useful for other countries.

Finally, the time and funding allocated to this study limited the choice of data-collection techniques, precluding, for instance, classroom observations to complement the data collected in interviews and focus groups discussing perceived and implemented teacher competences. This constraint was, however, mitigated by frequent visits by us and the country researchers to classrooms in the seven Western Balkan countries.

4. TEACHER DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEXT

In this chapter we discuss issues 2 and 3, related to combating exclusion in education at different levels, and issue 4, referring to the challenge of combating segregation in education (Section 4.1). Next we discuss interrelated issues 5, 6 and 7, which deal with relevant policies and their implementation at different levels (Section 4.2). Finally, we discuss issue 8, which depicts the school working environment for teachers, and issues 9 and 10, referring to families and local communities in terms of their relevance for teacher development for inclusive education and their contributions to social inclusion and social cohesion (Section 4.3).

4.1 ACCESS AND RIGHTS IN EDUCATION: INCLUSION AND SEGREGATION

4.1.1 Combating social exclusion

This section examines two issues which receive, we believe, insufficient attention in the seven countries and in their country reports: the partial or total educational disenfranchisement of many potential students from education (issue 2) and the neglect of the vocational education and training (VET) sector (issue 3). Schools are potential vehicles and agents for social inclusion; therefore, any inadequacy of education systems that excludes potential students, deliberately or otherwise, makes schools unable to fulfil this vital role. Enduring poverty and social marginalisation are mentioned in the reports but only in passing, perhaps because of their apparent distance from the key focus of the research, namely, teacher development. However, it could also be hypothesised that poverty and social marginalisation in the Western Balkans, along with the stigmatisation of groups and individuals such as Roma and people with disabilities, are simply accepted by too many people in society, local communities and, as some sociologists assert, in schools, where negative societal norms are inevitably replicated in the education system (Grenfell and James 1998; Raffo et al., 2009, p. 342).

The fact that, as some studies (Paul Hamlyn Foundation, 1996; OECD, 2007) suggest, education policies and individual schools and their teachers can make a positive difference to potentially educationally disadvantaged students makes the issues of disenfranchisement and neglect of VET significant to teacher development.

ISSUE 2   FORMS OF EDUCATIONAL DISENFRANCHISEMENT ARE VARIED AND EXTENSIVE

Varying but significant numbers of children and young people are not enrolled in school at all in the Western Balkan countries for a variety of reasons including overt discrimination. Many other children, especially those from certain minorities and from economically and/or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, drop out during compulsory education or leave school at the earliest permitted opportunity. Those attending school are further disadvantaged by lack of pre-school experience. While this last issue is beyond the scope of the ETF's remit, it is briefly mentioned because of its later implications for affected individuals in their school and post-school careers.

Non-enrolment, early school leaving, dropping out and irregular attendance are regional problems. Ensuring full enrolment and completion of compulsory education is a necessary but insufficient precondition for building inclusive schools and societies. Most countries have switched (Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina) or are intending to switch (Albania and Serbia) from eight to nine years of compulsory education; some countries are planning a compulsory pre-school period (Serbia and Kosovo); and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is currently introducing compulsory secondary education. While increasing the years of statutory education must be seen as a largely positive development, this costly and work-intensive change may also have sidelined the issue of addressing inclusive developments, which is more contentious for governments and the majority populations of the various countries.

While most children and young people receive free public education for 12 or 13 years, others may not attend school at all, only irregularly or for a very short time, with the outcome that later life choices are limited. Recently, countries have tended to shift their policies and actions from increasing access to improving the quality of existing educational provision (International Association of Universities, 2008, p. 20). Such a change in focus in poor countries results in those at greatest educational disadvantage being yet further penalised in terms of difficulties in accessing school. It is interesting that Croatia has chosen to retain eight-year compulsory schooling but debatably provides a wider range of inclusive measures than other countries that are moving to nine-year compulsory education (Croatia country report, p. 35).

Although all seven Western Balkan countries are signatories to UNESCO's Education for All programme (UNESCO, 2002), the target set for 2015 seems unlikely to be reached. Exclusive actions by schools and education systems still take place. The Serbian Law on the Fundamentals of Education of 2009 means that children no longer have to pass an entrance assessment to enrol in school, but many children with special education needs (SEN) – potential students – in the seven countries are not enrolled in any special or mainstream school; this is surely a breach of the UN 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (Save the Children UK, 2009; UNICEF, 2011; Albania country report, p. 35).

The groups noted in the country reports to be at the greatest risk of exclusion include Roma students (especially older girls), students with severe disabilities and serious health problems, students (especially from rural areas) in domestic and agricultural work, street children and students from isolated and inaccessible areas. At the country workshop at the Turin regional meeting in December 2009, a UNDP delegate from Montenegro described how – despite many positive national measures associated with the country's National Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion – a school had turned away Roma children on the grounds that they did not speak Monetenegrin, the language of instruction.

In Montenegro, as in Serbia until 2009, school enrolment is also dependent legally on the correct identification documents being produced by parents – not always possible for Roma families – although there is no formal record of this being used to turn children away (Montenegro country report, p. 39).

Population changes, prevalent in the Western Balkans (Kupiszewski et al., 2009), may also affect enrolment and class size and, therefore, quality and accessibility of education in a variety of complex ways. Internal migration may result in small non-viable classes and school closures in rural areas, while it may lead to large classes with two or three shifts in each school building and late-enrolling students in cities and large towns. Even outside such extreme circumstances, students who require special access, equipment and support may find that this is simply unavailable (see **BOX 1**).

Research suggests that incomplete or late registration, irregular attendance and truancy may all be precursors to dropping out (Epstein and Sheldon, 2002). Poverty may be a significant factor in dropout rates, poor attendance and non-enrolment. Albania is in most extreme need in this respect; 35% of 10-14 year-old students drop out and fail to complete their school studies (Albania country report, p. 36). A fifth of dropouts interviewed in five areas of Albania gave boredom and their perception of the irrelevance of programmes as their main reasons for dropping out (Albania country report, p. 37). There is surely a message here for teachers, policy makers and teacher educators.

The Kosovo country report (p. 35) mentions student dropout research undertaken by the Kosovo Institute of Pedagogy, pointing to dropout prevalence at points of educational transition:

> Dropouts are prevalent during transition grades 1, 5, and 9 of primary and lower secondary education (with girls dropping out more than boys) and in upper secondary education in general (this time with boys dropping out more than girls). RAE (Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian) communities appear more vulnerable to dropping out . . . [and other] factors behind dropout: low family income, geographical location, cultural factors, social aspects, security in schools, discrimination, general mentality [etc.] (Kosovo country report, p. 36).

Recommendations from this research call for systemic approaches involving legal, social, cultural, health and educational measures to ensure school attendance for students who attend irregularly and who drop out and for students with SEN.

While many steps to reduce the causes of exclusion and truancy are essentially applied by schools at the meso- (institutional) and micro- (individual) relationship levels (Raffo et al., 2009), far-reaching macro-level measures (by governments and international bodies), such as national poverty reduction programmes and legislation to ensure collaboration between education, health and social services, are also vital.

At the Pula/Brijuni regional meeting held in September 2009, some country delegations reported progress in school enrolment of students from disadvantaged groups. However, a lack of reliable data precludes an accurate evaluation of the significance of this progress. It was rightly pointed out by Alan Philips (Chairman of the Advisory Committee of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities) that a lack of data can feed pervasive prejudice pertaining to, for instance, dropout rates and levels of attainment among students from minority groups and that data on vulnerable students should therefore be regularly collected and compared to mainstream data (ETF, 2009a, p. 5).

BOX 1 EXCLUSION FROM LOCAL SCHOOLS

One of the authors of this regional report evaluated a home-visiting teaching and rehabilitation service in Bosnia and Herzegovina, run by the NGO Edinburgh Direct Aid in 2010. She observed a cognitively able five-year-old child, sociable and talking intelligibly and with humour, who would make a good school student. He has severe cerebral palsy, must use a wheelchair and requires help with all limb movements. No local school offers wheelchair access nor does Bosnia and Herzegovina's legislation allow for classroom assistants yet. He will therefore either attend an accessible special school for students with cognitive impairments or stay at home.

Source: Authors

BOX 2 CONSTRAINTS ON DATA GATHERING AND ANALYSIS IN KOSOVO

School data collection and education management information systems are among the weakest points in the Kosovo education system for the following reasons:

■ The education management information systems office is under-staffed (one official employee).

■ Although municipalities also try to gather data, the responsibility for this task is dispersed/not assigned.

■ Annual attempts to gather data from schools result in very basic and insufficient information that is not comparable to data collected in other countries or organisations (e.g. the OECD).

■ The data are collected and processed in a spreadsheet and data losses occur in transmission from schools to the central education authority (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology).

■ Usefulness of the data gathered is further compromised because the collection process and information gathered vary from one municipality to the next and so lack consistency.

■ No data at all are collected from schools providing instruction in the Serbian language.

■ Schools and municipalities sometimes collect and send total dropout numbers to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology but without lists of names. Consequently, a student who has moved home and/or school may count as a dropout.

■ School funding is on a student per-capita basis, so municipalities have a vested interest in apparently maintaining school populations by not reporting dropouts.

Source: Kosovo country report researcher

Indeed, reports from countries in which such data are systematically collected and analysed (OECD, 2010) show that, contrary to widespread erroneous beliefs about the low motivation levels of immigrant students, their motivation is actually high even though their scholastic performance is low. Accurate quantitative and qualitative data feedback would also assist the Balkan countries in making fair and inclusive education provision. Currently some countries struggle to gather such information, as illustrated above in the critique provided by a member of the Kosovo research team for this regional report when he was unable to obtain even approximate quantitative data on out-of-school children, despite the gathering of such data being the final education-for-all indicator on UNESCO's list (UNESCO, 2002).

In the light of the above critique, it is heartening to report that the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), supported by experts from the International Institute for Educational Planning in Paris, has recently funded the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Kosovo to prepare a framework of indicators for its education management information systems that corresponds to those of other education-for-all and OECD countries.

The Pula/Brijuni regional meeting in September 2009 concluded with Peter Greenwood (Head of the ETF Operations Department) commending Croatia's access statistics showing overall positive trends. However, he also reiterated a point repeatedly made in the course of the event: enrolment initiatives in countries throughout the region seem to be specific rather than generic and the region as a whole has not yet achieved satisfactory progress towards its targets (ETF, 2009a, p. 13). Certainly Croatia's education management information system (see **BOX 3**), seems to be comprehensive and thorough.

The Croatian electronic system facilitates the implementation and close monitoring of compulsory school attendance at the national, local and school levels. If parents fail to enrol their youngster or if a student's attendance is poor, schools detect this readily in the system and contact and cooperate with social services. Social workers then work with the family to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

They may also organise learning support and deal with issues related to accommodation, nutrition, etc.

BOX 3 CROATIA'S EDUCATION MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SERVICE

Key problems in the previous matrix system: data were collected in different ways in different schools and was very labour-intensive for school staff (Golubić, 2010).

E-matrix was implemented in 2006/07 as a shared electronic registrar/database for primary and secondary education institutions.

All schools input data on staff, students, programmes, etc. in an easy-to-use interface.

The system enables monitoring and multiple analyses of the education system by providing data on individual students: ethnicity (based on self-declaration), student enrolment data, type of educational programme followed, list of subjects, progress through school years and levels, information on overall achievement, exam results, extra-curricular activities, absences, changes in education programmes, classes or schools and departure from education before completion.

Source: Croatia country report researcher

Let us turn now to a further form of educational disenfranchisement that is the source of learning difficulties in primary and secondary schools. Many students attending schools in the seven Western Balkan countries make slow progress and gradually fall further and further behind their peers as time progresses. Teachers tend to attribute these difficulties to lack of ability or lack of motivation and attention in the students concerned (see Section 5.2), many of whom come from disadvantaged and socially excluded groups and families. However, a positive link is now well established between experience of quality pre-school education and subsequent school progress and post-school life chances (HighScope, 2005; Campbell and Ramey, 1995; Sylva et al., 2004).

It is widely recognised (Sylva et al., 2004; Fraser, 1997; Siraj-Blatchford, 2004) that quality early education has four essential elements.

■ It must be of high quality especially in terms of staffing by trained early education teachers (i.e. it is not simply child-minding).
■ It must begin as early as possible (age two or three) and not at the age of five or six as envisaged by some Western Balkan countries and as implemented unsuccessfully with Roma children in the Czech Republic (Czech Ministry of Education, 1994).
■ It must be sustained over several years.
■ It must involve the family as partners.

Without such experiences pupils will tend to learn more slowly than their peers, with the learning gap widening over time (Essen and Wedge, 1982). Unfortunately, as the country reports noted, students already at a disadvantage are also least likely to have had the necessary positive experiences of early education:

■ There is insufficient pre-school provision to meet both parental demand and to ensure that all children benefit from it (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 64). The proportion of children accessing early education has actually dropped in some of the seven countries.
■ Access to existing pre-school provision is rarely planned consistently on a prioritised or subsidised basis. Mainly as a result of this, children at a disadvantage for various reasons and those from national minorities tend to be under-represented in pre-school provision (Montenegro country report, p. 40).
■ Pre-school education is predominantly provided in cities and towns so there is rural disadvantage in relation to this stage of education (information provided post-report by a Croatian researcher).

The eighth of the OECD's ten steps to equity in education (2007) included the recommendation that priority should be given to early childhood provision as a

vital step towards education for all (UNESCO, 2002). In our view, this issue has not yet been sufficiently addressed by the seven Western Balkan countries. As a result, students who do not have such experiences – and especially those from socioeconomically disadvantaged and socially excluded backgrounds – struggle disproportionately to learn and tend to fall further behind their peers as they progress through school. There is a strong likelihood that they may never attain their innate potential. Their best hope lies in well-informed and well-disposed teachers.

Working in a truly inclusive classroom in contexts of social and cultural diversity is demanding and challenging. We will look now at the messages for teacher development that come from this section on combating social and educational exclusion and educational disenfranchisement.

In conclusion, in terms of teacher competence for inclusion, it would seem that enabling the acquisition of dispositions (attitudes) that thrive on challenge, that empathise with and welcome outsiders and that enable teachers to be patient, persevering and good-humoured with students who have missed out on a positive early education or with specific or generalised learning difficulties, is probably *the* fundamental contribution of teacher development. Teachers need to recognise the downward spiral of disadvantage that leads to students dropping out and leaving school prematurely, Rather than contributing to this negative outcome for their students, they need to assume the challenge of preventing it and of supporting their students' continued struggle in vocational and other forms of secondary education.

Teachers also require knowledge, understanding and respect for their students' backgrounds and histories and need to develop positive working relations with these students and their families. They also need to develop good communication, information technology (IT) and interpersonal skills to assist them in these endeavours. Teachers also need to hold a perspective that considers poor attainment to derive, not from preconceived student defects, but from shortcomings in education systems, curricula and teaching approaches.

This part of the report has also indicated the importance of good information management systems in education. Nonetheless, quality student information has to be obtained from, and input by, teachers. A capacity to handle data also opens the way to practitioner research and to skilled research use.

The challenges presented by social exclusion and educational disenfranchisement are substantial for teachers and, therefore, also for those who select student teachers and provide pre-service and in-service development for teachers.

VET'S POTENTIAL FOR DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL COHESION IS UNRECOGNISED

VET and related teacher education require further development. Although the Western Balkan countries have recognised the importance to the economy and labour market of enhancing VET quality and are committed to reforming and modernising vocational curricula, VET's potential for enhancing social inclusion and cohesion seems to be underplayed in all respects in the region.

VET was a key element in creating a workforce during rapid industrialisation in the socialist period. However, the transition and subsequent conflicts have had devastating effects on the economy and labour market, particularly in the industrial and manufacturing sectors, making VET reforms in the region particularly urgent and challenging. The inability of the VET sector to respond to the challenges of today's economy and labour market has profound effects on social inclusion and cohesion in the countries under study. Under this issue we address VET's role in enhancing social inclusion and cohesion in the Western Balkan countries, while issue 24 (discussed in Chapter 6) addresses future aspects of pre-service and in-service development of vocational teachers.

Levels of education achieved in the Western Balkan countries play an important role in the production of inequalities in society (Leitner and Holzner, 2008). With regard to VET, a World Bank Policy Note (World Bank, 2007) points to two key issues in the region: the proportion of unemployed people with a VET background remains high in most south eastern European countries; and VET graduates are likely to earn less and are at greater risk of long-term unemployment than general secondary education graduates. These statements were demonstrated as true for Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina (World Bank, 2007) and corroborate studies conducted in other transition countries (Yemtsov et al., 2006). Both trends indicate the need to address VET reforms systematically in line with the transition to a market economy and changing labour markets.

Many young people enrolled in VET programmes are low achievers from primary education and from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds (Fetsi and Lorenčič, 2006). In addition, most secondary school students in the countries concerned are enrolled in the VET sector; e.g. over 60% of the upper secondary education student population in Kosovo (Kosovo country report, p. 51). A significant percentage of students enrolled in VET programmes have poor ability and the education and training they receive is of limited usefulness in providing them with marketable skills (Fetsi and Lorenčič, 2006). It seems, therefore, that VET effectively supports the vicious circle of disadvantage by contributing to the further downward social mobility of vocational students.

In response to the VET challenges lying ahead, education and labour ministers in the Western Balkans have, in several declarations, expressed a strong interest in planning VET reforms in line with EU policies, instruments and messages (ETF, 2006, p. 10).

Although VET reforms, as such, have not been addressed as a central issue, all the country reports have briefly documented recent reforms in VET systems. Reform strategies focus on modernising the VET system in line with economic demands, primarily through curriculum and management reforms and the implementation of quality assurance systems. **BOX 4** illustrates current VET reform trends in the region using Bosnia and Herzegovina as an example.

Although the Western Balkan countries have recognised the importance of enhancing the quality and capacity of the VET system to respond to the economy and labour market and have committed to modernising VET curricula, little consideration has been given to the social implications of VET reforms in the region. Fetsi and Lorenčič (2006) highlight the fact that schools in already depopulated or depopulating rural areas and in disadvantaged parts of cities are generally behind in the reform process. Another problem is that education and VET reforms do not yet include, as an objective, a particular focus on the needs of students from disadvantaged backgrounds, many of whom are low achievers for various reasons (see issue 2 above). Education and VET reform objectives are usually linked to the improvement of the system, with excellence being

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BOX 4 SOME VET REFORMS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Framework Law on Vocational Education and Training has been adopted at state level. A new Law on Secondary Vocational Education and Training (2008) was backed by the adoption of a strategic document on the reform of vocational education entitled Strategy for the Development of Vocational Education and Training in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2007-13 (2007) (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 35). One of the major aims is to improve the links between education and the employment sector through further VET reform, with particular reference to the following: (1) improved and integrated strategic planning; (2) increasing the attractiveness of VET by engaging social partners in all VET subjects; (3) restructuring and modernising the governance and management of the VET system at all decision-making levels; (4) improving investment in VET; (5) developing routes between the education and training sectors to enable students to transfer both between and within sectors; and (6) planning and implementing schemes to ease the transition from education to work for young graduates and adults (ETF Country Information Note for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2010, p. 3).

the ultimate aim; thus, better achievers are more suited to the reformed system. The efficiency of the education system is clearly a more important consideration than issues of equity. There are three reasons for the lack of attention given to the socially disadvantaged population in education strategies and in VET strategies in particular in the Western Balkans: (1) countries and territories give higher priority to their economic agenda; (2) human capital is not recognised as a contributor to socioeconomic development and so policies that would facilitate human capital development are neglected; and (3) there is insufficient awareness that wasting human resources may create a major drag on the socioeconomic development of the countries and their regions (Fetsi and Lorenčič, 2006).

This widespread practice of largely ignoring the potential role of VET in enhancing social inclusion and cohesion is also reflected in the country reports produced in the first phase of this project. In our view, one reason for the key focus of country reports on primary education is that the perspective of the researchers is similar to that of their fellow academically well-qualified citizens, the great majority of whom pay little attention to VET as means for social cohesion. Another reason is that governments in the region have focused on establishing primary education (and education for all within it) as the first step to creating an inclusive education system as whole. High dropout rates in primary education among vulnerable pupils combined with particularly high dropout rates occurring between primary and secondary schooling (see issue 2 above) may, debatably, lead to the view that problems should be solved at the primary level before turning to secondary level. In this context, continuing education towards higher education and accessing higher education are seen as almost impossible targets for disadvantaged students.

While we believe that primary (and pre-school) education are crucial in overcoming social exclusion, the impact of secondary education, and in particular VET, on creating social cohesion in societies should not be dismissed or taken lightly. Preston and Green (2008) assert that theoretically, in terms of maintaining social cohesion, VET can play a key coordinating role in social and system integration. These authors found strong support for the contention that VET can be used to promote value systems that favour social cohesion – although they also point out that this is highly dependent on a country's culture and institutions and the nature of its VET. They also found that educational equality is associated over time with greater civil and political liberties and, furthermore, found some evidence that VET is associated with general educational equity. However, this potential role of VET and its outcomes is simply not recognised in the region.

Regrettably, further areas of neglect in the countries' plans for VET reform are pre-service and in-service teacher development policies for vocational teachers. Secondary teachers, as well as having a widely reported lack of teacher competence relevant to inclusive practices, often seem to be unaware of their responsibility for making the education process more inclusive and for

offering more meaningful educational experiences to their students (see, e.g. Montenegro country report, p. 43). Yet strategies to reform VET in the region rarely highlight or prioritise teacher development as a key to ensuring successful reform (see also issue 6 below). The notion of what a good teacher and a quality (inclusive) education should be is associated primarily with general education, while the VET system is overlooked (see issue 24 in Section 6.2).

Secondary education and VET are of particular importance given that none of the countries, apart from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, has legislated for compulsory secondary education. The direct and indirect financial costs of continuing in education have a significant impact on the choice of whether or not to proceed to secondary school. If a decision in the affirmative is made then there is a further choice necessary between general or vocational education. Such choices have a profound impact on the social mobility of students from vulnerable and minority groups, as they determine not only the possibility of continuing education but also the student's position in the labour market and, indeed, in society.

Fetsi and Prina (2009) draw attention to the potential replication, in the current crisis, of education choice patterns among population groups observed in the transition period. In times of high unemployment, richer population groups tend to keep their offspring in education, whereas young people whose families have little or no financial resources are more likely to drop out or be excluded from access to secondary education and training. Special attention, therefore, needs to be given to young people from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds because of the risk of their leaving education and the training system prematurely or not entering secondary education of any kind. It is imperative to avoid this risk in view of the long-lasting impact of continuing in education and vocational training on poverty reduction as well as on skills acquisition and their availability for use in regional economic recovery (Fetsi and Prina, 2009, p. 7).

Ivošević and Miklavič (2009) indicate that improving access to higher education and making support systems available to students based on the principle of valuing academic achievement play an important role in the access opportunities and completion chances of students from more disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds and particularly those coming from underdeveloped regions within a country.

In conclusion, in terms of implications for teachers and their development, it can be said that vocational teachers have a challenging role to play in the contribution to social inclusion and cohesion, given the size and composition of the vocational student body (mostly primary education low achievers from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds). However, Preston and Green (2008) argue that VET can play an important role in building social cohesion and shaping values, but this is not taken into account in planning and implementing VET reforms, which rarely address teacher development policies targeting vocational teachers (to be discussed further under issue 24 in Section 6.2).

4.1.2 Challenges posed by linguistically and culturally sensitive education

ISSUE 4 **TENSIONS EXIST BETWEEN UPHOLDING ETHNIC AND LINGUISTIC MINORITY RIGHTS AND DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

The upholding of ethnic and linguistic minority rights, e.g. the right to a linguistically and culturally sensitive curriculum and environment and the right to education in the mother tongue, has sometimes inadvertently led to educational and social segregation in some countries, given that intercultural education is in its infancy. While most countries have made a start at combating some forms of segregation, mainly that of Roma and students with SEN, other forms of segregation related to recent conflicts are still a major challenge.

The advancement of social inclusion and non-discrimination initiatives in the Western Balkan countries has largely been linked to their efforts to formally adopt and observe international agreements formulating minority rights standards before EU enlargement. The Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and OSCE's conflict prevention approach have been fundamental in promoting rights to linguistically and culturally sensitive education in the region. The upholding of rights to education has been incorporated in various documents, including constitutions, legislation and other statutory and policy documents in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

A range of provisions on the rights of minorities to education in their own language have been reported across the region. In Croatia, for instance, the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities (2002) grants national minorities the right to education in their first language and script in pre-school, primary and secondary education, parallel to the right and obligation to learn the Croatian language and Latin script. Minorities can exercise this right through one of three models: model A foresees schooling in the national minority language (with the Croatian curriculum translated to the minority language) and four hours of Croatian language instruction a week; model B envisages bilingual teaching, with the social sciences and humanities taught in the minority language and natural sciences taught in the Croatian language and again with four hours of Croatian language instruction a week; and model C enables nurturing of the mother tongue and minority culture through five hours per week of instruction in the given minority language (Croatia country report, p. 36 and Annex 2, p. 59). In other countries too, the legislation allows for the provision of education in minority languages (Albania country report, p. 32; Montenegro country report, p. 35; Serbia country report, p. 32).

In Kosovo, there is a parallel system of schooling with instruction in the Serbian and Albanian languages (Kosovo country report, p. 32). In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia any community constituting 20% or more of the population of a municipality has the right to all levels of their education in the mother tongue, pursuant to the Ohrid Framework Agreement that sets an agenda for increased participation in public life, primarily by ethnic Albanians but also by members of other minority communities (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 30). The constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina and especially the Interim Agreement on Satisfying Special Needs and Rights to Returnee Children guarantee special rights in education to the members of any of the three constituent peoples (Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs) forming a minority in areas that are predominantly populated by the members of another constituent people. The agreement allows parents to opt for the curriculum of their choice in a national group of subjects, i.e. mother tongue and literature, geography, history and nature, society and religious instruction (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 32).

The upholding of linguistic and cultural rights has been helpful in creating a new framework for inclusive education practices that is more pluralist than the assimilative way of integrating minorities characteristic of socialist societies (Nikolić, 2009). However, the upholding of rights seems to have also unintentionally contributed to cases of segregated education in some countries or regions. Some of the most segregated schooling has been reported in Kosovo, where schools offering instruction in the Serbian and Albanian languages are de facto operated as two separate education systems without administrative links or collaboration, one system formulated in Belgrade and the other in Prishtina. Another case of deeply established segregation is Bosnia and Herzegovina, where schools are reported to be often 'still mono-ethnic, with pupils and teachers speaking only one language and using one alphabet depending on the ethnic and political affiliation of the local authorities' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 32), and with ethnically coloured curricula primarily in the national group of subjects listed above. An extreme example from Bosnia and Herzegovina is the two-schools-under-one-roof phenomenon, which is particularly prevalent in the Central Bosnia and Herzegovina-Neretva cantons; Bosniak and Croat students and teachers, in addition to using different curricula, are physically separated, use different entrances and different staff rooms and even have different break times. Another example is bus-transportation of students to schools outside their catchment areas to attend mostly mono-ethnic schools offering the desired curriculum (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 32).

A recently evident trend towards segregated education along ethnic and linguistic lines in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – in particular by ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians – has been reported as the greatest threat to developing a cohesive society (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 33). In the area of Vukovar in Croatia – where the Serb community opted for model A (education in their own language) – Croat and Serb students were separated in

different schools or shifts until September 2007, despite the fact that the Erdut Agreement of 1995 established a five-year limit for this arrangement. The two groups have been educated simultaneously in the same building since 2007 but are still in separate classes (Croatia country report, p. 36). Such modes of operations certainly do not enable teachers to model or promote inclusive attitudes and behaviour in their students.

Significant pockets of de facto segregation continue to exist in the Western Balkans, some the result of the uptake of ethnic and linguistic rights by families; in other cases, segregation is the result of demography (e.g. a school is in a village populated only by Roma) or is legally endorsed (e.g. when a medical commission decides that a child should be educated in a special school because there are no support arrangements for children with disabilities in mainstream schools).

Many countries focused earlier efforts on bringing Roma children and students with SEN into regular mainstream education through measures to improve access and prevent discrimination and segregation (see issue 5 in Section 4.2). However, moves towards inclusion have often been restricted to attempts to include just these two groups. In a study of the integration of Roma in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Nikolić (2009, pp. 286-7) remarked that the majority of ethnic Macedonians 'do not perceive Roma as intimidating or threatening when put in the context of the persistent tensions with the much larger and politically stronger Albanian majority'; this might explain why it is politically less controversial to embrace policies aimed at including the Roma minority. Besides, the extremely impoverished Roma minority that does not neatly link to a culture or language has in many places been found to be in greater need of resource redistributive measures than of cultural recognition (Agarin and Brosig, 2009); this is also suggested in citations of Roma parents in Albania, who thought it more important to learn basic literacy and numeracy in the Albanian language than in their mother tongue, since they believed this would be more instrumental in enhancing integration in society and the labour market (Albania country report, p. 36).

Widening the concept of inclusive education to embrace the full diversity of children who might be at a potential disadvantage in accessing and participating in education has to account for a range of different reasons for exclusion and discrimination, including segregation involving different contexts, different histories and different problems. For instance, differences in minority status in a society clearly have implications for the design and implementation of policies and measures aimed at protecting minority rights. In Albania the existence of only two qualified Roma teachers as opposed to many of Greek or Macedonian ethnic backgrounds was reported (Albania country report, p. 36). An Italian school in Istria, visited by regional delegations during the Pula/Brijuni regional meeting in September 2009, had more favourable student-teacher ratios than an average number of students per class in Croatia overall; it was also very well equipped thanks also to financial support received from

Italy. These are significantly different circumstances from those of many less vocal minorities in the region or other groups whose inclusion is more problematic for a range of reasons.

Another factor affecting relations between ethnic, cultural and linguistic communities in the Western Balkans is the degree of linguistic difference between languages, which has significant implications for possible intercultural cooperation between segregated schools and classes and also for the necessary teacher competence. Given willingness on the part of school staff in a given local community, such cooperation is easily implemented between segregated schools, e.g. for Bosniak and Croat students in Bosnia and Herzegovina or between Croat and Serb students in schools in Vukovar (Croatia). Intercultural cooperation between Albanian and Serb schools in Kosovo, on the other hand, would require the mutual learning of languages.

The inclusion of ethnic and linguistic minorities/ communities is particularly challenging in places that are very diverse and where there is a history of exclusion and conflict within and between communities. Some reports mention the political impact of recent inter-country and intra-country conflicts and tensions (see, e.g. the country reports from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). In general, this recent history is a painful and often silent memory for adults, including teachers, and one that remains unexplained and little understood and that often remains an unknown and unresolved issue for younger and sometimes older students.

Ethnocentric agendas in the post-conflict areas of the Western Balkans continue a tendency of embedding the ethnic, cultural and linguistic interests of a 'state-bearing' group in the design of state institutions, which prefer to be dealing with culturally homogeneous societies (Agarin and Brosig, 2009); the situation is even more complex in countries with more than one such state-bearing group (e.g. Bosnia and Herzegovina). Schools and other education institutions are at the forefront of nation-building projects supported by dominant groups, while minorities usually seek to increase their own group integrity and stability by securing the status of their group.

It is often suggested that policy makers should look for intercultural solutions in day-to-day interactions between individuals with various cultural, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds (Agarin and Brosig, 2009, pp. 14-5). This seems to remain a challenging task for schools in some places. For instance, in Kosovo numerous attempts made by local and international institutions to develop inter-community cooperation in education between Serb and Albanian communities have failed, despite a report of 'general openness to discussion of all issues by school principals and teachers' (Kosovo country report, p. 35). Learning the language of the other and curriculum development are reported to be the most contentious points in these attempts of cooperation. This has clear implications for the recruitment and development of teachers (discussed under issue 12 in Section 4.2).

Agarin and Brosig (2009) have argued that group-based approaches to minority integration are likely to miss the envisaged goals because they emphasise the significance of cultural communities conceived to be internally homogeneous. Across the post-socialist world, public policy approaches to the management of cultural diversity tend to address the collective rights inherent to members of minority groups while dispensing with questions of individual autonomy. The problem with this homogenising of groups for policy purposes – even where there is a degree of interaction between the groups – is that interactions take place between individuals who classify each other exclusively in terms of belonging to specific ethnic or cultural communities. Indeed, emphasising groups while bringing about their convergence seem to be difficult outcomes to reconcile, as can be illustrated by the Mostar Gymnasium experience (see **BOX 5**).

BOX 5 SIMULTANEOUS UNIFICATION AND SEGREGATION IN MOSTAR GYMNASIUM

An article by Hromadžić (2008) discusses the case of integration of the Mostar Gymnasium as an instance of the tension between international community-promoted integration and reunification and the local ethno-nationalist quest for segregation in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina. Building on 22 months of ethnographic fieldwork, the author argues that the international community's failure to fully integrate the Mostar Gymnasium should be understood in terms of the tension between the agendas of the international community and the national minorities. The historically diverse city of Mostar emerged from the Bosnia and Herzegovina war as administratively and otherwise divided between the Bosniak and Croat communities. The international community initiated the integration of the Mostar Gymnasium (attended by Bosniak and Croat students), while the Croat political community claimed its right to autonomy through segregated education on the pretext of protecting its community, culture and especially its language. In response, the international community modified its rhetoric of integration to the rhetoric of unification of the school. The school is now administratively unified, while preserving two separate curricula and the ethos of ethnic segregation characteristic of two-schools-under-one-roof. According to Hromadžić,(2008), this collision and transformation of the integration process created a new type of concurrently shared and separated school in Bosnia and Herzegovina, based on the ideology of ethnic symmetry and polarisation of youth. The author uses student discourse analysis to illustrate how this reordering generates segregated young citizens coming of age in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina society.

From a number of case studies of minority integration in central and eastern Europe, Agarin and Brosig (2009) conclude that safeguarding diversity is only possible by accounting for the multiple identities and preferences of individuals within different groups and communities. There are, therefore, a number of questions about the potential contribution of schools and teachers towards this aim. Are schools with students from diverse groups more likely to be inclusive? If so, what more precisely contributes to the process? And do inclusive schools necessarily lead to more socially inclusive societies? Is there perhaps some risk of placing too many societal responsibilities on schools and on teachers, both collectively and individually?

The issue of national and regional reconciliation remains one of the biggest challenges in the post-conflict areas of the Western Balkans. It seems that temporary separate schooling arrangements for students from previously warring ethnic groups that are targeted at gradual unification seem to be hard to root out once they become established as an institution's way of being. This raises questions about the effectiveness of directly conciliatory approaches in making communities with a history of violent conflicts more peaceful and cohesive in a lasting way.

Some clues to potentially effective education practices can be sought in research conducted in contexts with similar histories of conflict (UNESCO, 2004). The challenges are many, ranging from the determination of language policies in multilingual and multicultural societies, sensitive and sometimes contentious learning content related to the reinterpretation of national history and the development of a sense of common citizenship and shared destiny. This certainly has implications for the preparation of teachers, e.g. when handling sensitive learning content. Tibbitts (2006) reports how a serious revision of history education by South African education policy makers took account of the central role of teachers, who were provided with systematic professional development support in implementing the curriculum (see **BOX 6**).

Research from other conflict and post-conflict societies makes a case for teacher development and support, as teachers seem to be a critical factor in education for peace and social cohesion (Bekerman et al., 2009; Davies, 2004; McGlynn, 2010). The findings suggest that conciliation often relies on the interpersonal contact that arises from sharing classrooms. In a comparative study of the perceptions of the role of education in reconciling children and young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Northern Ireland, respondents from Bosnia and Herzegovina tended to emphasise the need for contact between schools with pupils of different ethnicities (Magill et al., 2009).

McGlynn (2010) showed how school principals can make a difference in initiating conciliatory approaches in their schools. In post-report correspondence, the country report researchers from Bosnia and Herzegovina reported examples of small efforts to make conciliatory moves that

BOX 6 A HISTORY CURRICULUM SUPPORT PROJECT FOR TEACHERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The revised national curriculum in South Africa was designed to allow engagement with history without imposing a single dominant narrative, but rather a rigour in the application of historical inquiry and interpretation. Critically, the introduction of the new curriculum was accompanied by a country-wide curriculum support project for teachers called Facing the Past – Transforming Our Future, intended to help them to address human rights issues and individual responsibility in their classrooms. The model of professional development support involved a seminar for mixed groups of teachers, initial implementation supported by online resources and lesson suggestions and follow-up school-based workshops in which teachers shared their experiences in implementing the programme and received newly developed materials, inputs, methodologies, videos, etc. These materials were intended to help teachers engage their students in an examination of prejudice, anti-Semitism and racism, and to encourage them to develop the knowledge, courage and compassion necessary to deal with intolerance in their own lives. The programme was designed to help teachers and learners approach history by exploring how issues of guilt and responsibility applied to historic developments from the Holocaust to contemporary genocide in Darfur, as well as apartheid. The culture of the project was described as fostering a community of learners. A central aspect was providing teachers with the support needed to begin to examine the ways in which the country's past had affected them as individuals and educators, and to confront the influences of apartheid on them personally (Tibbitts, 2006, p. 304).

they make daily on their own initiative, as in a school in the municipality of Fojnica (see **BOX 7**).

We strongly agree with the views expressed by Alan Philips at the Pula/Brijuni regional meeting suggesting that there are no quick-fix solutions for the complex historically and politically rooted cases of social and educational segregation. Reconciliation processes take time and require a great deal of patience. Strategies need to be well thought through and need to take a long-term perspective if they are to lead to lasting peace and social cohesion in the Western Balkans. Rushing into fragmented policies unsupported by evidence is potentially more harmful than useful in pursuing reconciliation. Authentic approaches must be sought for the various cases of segregation in their various contexts. For instance, learning the language of the other can

facilitate intercultural education for communities with several ethno-linguistic populations. Useful lessons can be learned from research conducted in similar post-conflict contexts, but there is also much need for research that could inform policies at regional, national and local levels. There is a need to recognise how critical teachers and school principals are for the promotion of reconciliation through inclusive educational practices and to address inclusion in teacher preparation and development initiatives. Researchers ready to engage in exploring the sensitive issues of reconciliation, values and identities should be supported; support should also be extended to conscientiously objecting teachers, school principals and other education professionals willing to embrace new ideas and actively engage in innovative practices that take them beyond the previous boundaries set in their classrooms, schools and environments.

4.2 POLICY ENVIRONMENT

Under the three interrelated issues in this section we first present the policy initiatives undertaken to combat some of the above-mentioned reasons for exclusion (issue 5). We then consider some of the reasons for the gaps between intended policies and their actual implementation (issue 6), including the unclear initial steps to decentralise some responsibilities in education to the local level (issue 7). These issues have implications for the transposition of national policies, which often reflect commitments to the relevant international agreements, to both the local communities and schools where inclusive practices are to be implemented and to arrangements for the relevant teacher development.

BOX 7 NASCENT INTERCULTURAL COOPERATION BETWEEN TWO SCHOOLS UNDER ONE ROOF IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Two administratively unified primary schools in the municipality of Fojnica, Ivan Goran Kovačić following the Croat curriculum and Muhsin Rizvić following the Bosniak curriculum, reported the following ways of cooperating initiated by the school managements: common duties arranged among students and teachers from the two schools; celebrating religious holidays of the two communities in the schools; using a common exhibition space to promote positive attitudes towards cultural and linguistic diversity as a source of enrichment rather than a problem; students from the two schools cooperating in various projects and event organisation in the school and with the local community and NGOs; and the organisation of joint actions for cleaning the school courtyard.

Source: Country researchers

*Although policies and measures to reduce educational
disadvantage and initiatives taken at different levels in
relation to students and families at greatest
socioeconomic risk have been reported, more needs
to be done in all the countries*.

Step nine of the ten steps to equity in education (OECD,
2007), advising countries to direct resources to students
and regions with the greatest needs, is effectively a call for
affirmative action. The nature and definitions of affirmative
action are widely debated (Luciak, 2010; Rudenstein, 2001;
Agarin and Brosig, 2009). Arguments for and against its use
also abound in both international literature and the country
reports. Rudenstein (2001) advocated affirmative action for
university entrance selection, i.e. accepting lower
qualifications for minority students, to ensure the
educational benefits of diversity on the grounds that this
diversity was 'important to the development of civic values
. . . [and] vital to the health and effective functioning of our
democracy' (pp. 38-9). Roma parents in Montenegro seek
affirmative action in relation to their children's education by
requesting free school books and clothes which other
parents must provide for their children (Montenegro
country report, p. 39). However, 'positive discrimination
policies often marginalise these groups (of Roma) further
and distance them from the broader Albanian community,
proving detrimental to interventions on inclusion' (Albania
country report, p. 36).

Experiences from other contexts of diversity in Europe
have taught that the application of preferential measures
requires careful analysis of each case in its real context
(Agarin and Brosig, 2009). Although Burns and
Shadoian-Gersing (2010, pp. 21-3) remind us of the
significance of diversity in relation to the far-spread OECD
countries, even in the geographically close seven Western
Balkan countries there is very real diversity as well as
similarities. As authors of this report, we decided
pragmatically to select country report examples of specific
policies, measures and actions that seem to go significantly
beyond the previous norms of their countries and schools
in trying to expand the diversity of pupils in schools and
reduce educational disadvantage and social exclusion.

Raffo et al. (2009) acknowledge that, if the enduring
negative links between socioeconomic disadvantage,
certain forms of cultural diversity, educational
disadvantage and low academic attainment are ever to be
broken, coherent and sustained policy and practice
interventions at *all* levels will be needed. These authors
ally themselves with Anyon (2005) in suggesting that
there is a case for democratic grass-roots movements in
local communities, schools and classrooms and for a
greater student voice and democratic pedagogies.

Plainly identifying ways forward on a global or national
scale – as, for example, when education issues are

addressed under national poverty reduction strategies
(Serbia country report, p. 31) – is essential. However, an
important role can also be played by lower-level local and
individual efforts to facilitate escape from poverty, social
exclusion and educational disadvantage through individual
communities and schools. The two case studies of
schools (Section 5.2) illustrate small-scale efforts to
improve attendance and staying-on rates, which, in terms
of children's life chances, result in substantial gains.

Turning now to examples of positive policies and
measures from the country reports, it was evident that
they could be logically stratified into national, local,
community and school-level initiatives. Identifying just one
or two examples of each, we classified them into the five
levels described below.

National measures of a general nature

The establishment of suitable national education
management information systems is vital in preventing
school dropout and ensuring school registration and regular
attendance. Reference has already been made in this
regional report (under issue 2, discussed above) to
completed education management information system
initiatives in Croatia and preliminary moves in Kosovo.
Montenegro has undertaken a more limited initiative in
relation to data on their Roma population (Montenegro
country report, p. 38). In Serbia a broad-ranging and inclusive
Law on the Fundamentals of Education (2009) has
introduced important changes for students from
marginalised social groups, such as the possibility of
enrolment in primary and secondary school without
residence, birth or other normally required documentation
(Serbia country report, p. 32). Albania's Ministry of Labour,
Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities' Social Inclusion
Cross-cutting Strategy 2007-13 aims to reduce educational
exclusion and prevent students leaving education
prematurely (Albania country report, p. 32) and the Croatian
government permits smaller than standard class sizes for
minority language students (Croatia country report, p. 34).

**National measures to reduce financial barriers to
educational and social inclusion for disadvantaged
families**

A range of national measures are in place and functioning
in several countries; those to do with Roma children and
students relate to specific funded initiatives such as the
Decade of Roma Inclusion. In Croatia the cost of both
textbooks and pre-school fees is set according to the
socioeconomic status of parents. The Croatian Ministry of
Health and Social Welfare provides funding for various
forms of pro-school material support for
socioeconomically disadvantaged families, e.g. transport
for high-school students who are social welfare
beneficiaries and for students with SEN (information
provided post-report by a Croatian team member).
Socioeconomically disadvantaged secondary education
students receive government bursaries (former Yugoslav
Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 18), as do
Montenegrin students from the RAE population
(Montenegro country report, p. 41).

Local authority and community-based measures to reduce financial barriers to educational and social inclusion for disadvantaged families

Local government in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is seen, or perhaps sees itself, more often in a support role rather than as an initiator of inclusive practices (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 39; see also issue 10 in Section 4.3.3). In some areas of Serbia free snacks and after-school projects are arranged for disadvantaged children, but this provision very much depends on whether the local authorities have the necessary funds. The Vojvodina regional government subsidises school fees for the third and subsequent children in families to the tune of 50% of the base rate set in 2005 (information provided post-report by a Serbia country report team member). Pro-school financial measures at Croatian local government level for socioeconomically disadvantaged families typically, but not invariably, include subsidised pre-school places, subsidised school meals in primary school and help with vacation placements for students (information provided post-report by a Croatian team member). From the examples above it can be seen that local positive measures that support diversity and inclusion in schools are rather few and uncertain. Ultimately their development and reliability will depend on successful decentralisation of powers and devolution of the necessary funding (see issue 7 below).

School-level positive measures

Most measures of this nature identified in the country reports are, in reality, national initiatives and programmes that function at the school level rather than school initiatives as such. Many, however, require the cooperation and collaboration of teachers. The introduction of Roma assistants into schools and classes with significant numbers of Roma pupils is one such example (Croatia country report, p. 38; Serbia country report, p. 33). Measures to encourage the inclusion of students with SEN in Croatia are detailed and realistic (Croatia country report, pp. 37-8); students with sensory or physical impairment may attend extended specialist programmes run by education rehabilitation specialists and integral to the whole educational programme for individual students, before or after their regular classes (Croatia country report, p. 61). In some cases, lifts have been installed in school buildings with the help of local community fundraising (Croatia country report, p. 60).

International and national NGO measures

The part played by NGOs in in-service teacher training in inclusive education in the Western Balkan countries is enormous (see Section 6.3 below), with many large and small NGOs fostering greater inclusion in many schools and education services through very diverse actions. Albania has positive measures in place to facilitate the inclusion of students with SEN (Albania country report, p. 33) that were piloted in a programme funded by the local MEDPAK NGO and Save the Children Norway

(see the Prrenjas School profiled in **BOX 11** in Section 5.2). In Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo, the Balkan Sunflowers organisation[6] is active in providing human and material resources, including clothing, shoes and personal school equipment, to children in a range of needy situations, as has Save the Children in Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Albania (information provided post-report by Serbia and Kosovo country report team members). Several international NGOs and donors, including Save the Children UK and the Open Society Institute (OSI), promote inclusive education through the establishment of model or practice schools and providing intensive training and material support. One of the markers of UNICEF's Child-Friendly Schools initiative (UNICEF, 2004) is that these schools are also child-seeking schools that address the issues of non-enrolment, irregular attendance, truancy and dropouts.

In conclusion, having considered the various levels at which significantly positive action in support of inclusive schools was reported in the seven country reports, it is evident that much vital work needs to take place at the school level, not just in terms of their own initiatives but in implementing those launched at other levels. This is where teachers' own positive actions and positive attitudes, supported by relevant pre-service and in-service teacher development, will always have a major role to play.

> **ISSUE 6 DISCREPANCIES AND EXTENDED DELAYS EXIST BETWEEN DECLARED INCLUSION INTENTIONS AND IMPLEMENTED PRACTICES**

The Western Balkan country reports have identified considerable gaps between policy maker intentions to ensure more equity and educational justice – as reflected in policies, regulations and legislation – and implemented practices.

Low prioritisation of inclusive education in national funding is often cited as one of the major barriers to translating policy intentions into practice. Education, generally, does not seem to feature among the national priorities in the region, judging by the percentage of GDP allocated to the sector. The percentage of GDP allocated to education in 2008 in Albania ranges between 2.9% according to the World Bank's estimate and 3.5% according to official national data (Albania country report, p. 31). The implications of the funding available for teacher development are discussed under issue 26 in Section 6.3).

Funding arrangements and levels of management responsibility for education provision are complex; Bosnia and Herzegovina is the most extreme example, with 14 ministries of education (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 31). Layered management is not a new or inherently inefficient or confused way of working,

provided communications are good and all the layers function effectively. However, decentralisation from governments to local governments or districts is still relatively in its infancy in many of the Western Balkan countries (see issue 7 below). If it were to develop poor, heavy and inefficient government, management might become dispersed into multiple smaller – but equally, or more, inefficient – management units, since it would become almost impossible to translate national policies (or even to create those policies) into quality provision.

Another barrier to the implementation of policies is often recognised in the fact that education policies are fragmented. A few country reports have commented on the non-existence of an overarching policy on inclusive education (see, e.g. former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 30). Instead, inclusive education provisions are scattered across a variety of policies and strategies, such as poverty reduction, protection of minority rights and strategies for the social inclusion of particularly disadvantaged groups, most often Roma and people with disabilities (see, e.g. Serbia country report, p. 31). In this situation, building holistic approaches to teacher education and development in line with the broad understanding of inclusive education promoted in this report is a major challenge, as is the development of coherent systems of quality assurance for schools, teachers and teacher education and development programmes (aspects discussed further in Sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.2).

Other examples of fragmented education policies and systems are common in the region, leading, for instance, to the neglect of secondary education and, in particular, VET, in the planning and implementation of policies for inclusive education practices (see issue 3 in Section 4.1.1 and issue 24 in Section 6.2). As one example, limited data on students with additional support needs in vocational schools was reported, as well limited training opportunities for vocational teachers (Serbia country report, pp. 45-6).

Another reason for the gap between policies and practice has been identified in poorly articulated paths towards the implementation of inclusive education. A number of country studies report a lack of practical strategies to support communities, schools and teachers on how to implement inclusive education practices; they also point to insufficiently developed monitoring mechanisms (see, e.g. Kosovo country report, p. 37; see also issue 14 in Section 5.2), leading to slow implementation of policies and legal provisions, e.g. in relation to the institutional protection of minority rights (see, e.g. Croatia country report, p. 34). Systematic and substantial investment in the development and support of teachers and other education professionals is recommended as useful to ensure better translation of policy intentions to actual practices, especially in the contexts of transition (Radó,

2001). Experience from a number of countries also indicates that, unless teachers and their representatives help formulate reform policies and feel a sense of ownership of them, it is unlikely that substantial change will transpire (OECD, 2005, p. 213). An International Labour Organisation (ILO) report with a global focus attributed the repeated failure of national reforms for real change in VET to 'the exclusion of teachers and trainers in TVET [technical and vocational education and training] as stakeholders from the reform process' (ILO, 2010, p. 17).

Another related problem often raised in the country reports is the question of the sustainability of the existing inventory of inclusion-related policies and activities, much of it initiated by donors and international organisations that have left or are leaving the region (see issue 28 in Section 6.3). There seem to be two kinds of problem impeding the sustainability of such initiatives. One is that the donor and international organisations themselves, while often significantly contributing to the development of inclusive policies and practice in the area of their activity, have also contributed to a fragmented approach to problems in line with their own projects and missions. The second problem is that the national education authorities have not ensured comprehensive coverage and adequate coordination of the relevant activity (see issue 28 in Section 6.3); this seems to be true not only in places where such coordination is precluded by divided systems and complex structural arrangements (the case of Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina), but also in countries where, although they have more straightforward education administration systems, there is a lack of coherence and coordination between different projects and implementing institutions (see, e.g. Serbia country report, p. 44).

In conclusion, legislation seems to be understood as an instrument for incorporating future planning but is often passed without any clear expectation that the legally prescribed mechanisms will actually be implemented. Evidently, it is not enough to include mechanisms in a law in order for them to be actually made use of, although ensuring the necessary administrative and legal environment is obviously the first call for legislators and policy makers, who can, however, put forward ideas and offer opportunities and incentives for teachers and other actors engaged in changing practices. Ultimately, however, the effectiveness of policy implementation depends on the willingness of teachers to assume new roles and to perceive change as an opportunity rather than a threat. As David Frost (2009, p. 3) put it, 'learning rests on human interaction in which teachers, driven by their moral purpose use their intelligence, skills and creativity to shape that interaction'. Teachers need to share an understanding of the purpose and implications of policies and to develop competences to implement them in their daily work with students.

ISSUE 7 **THE DEVOLUTION OF EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES LACKS CLARITY AND DEVELOPMENT**

Local authority/municipality responsibilities for some aspects of education do not seem to be clear and devolution of any responsibilities from the centre (governments and education ministries) to local authorities is still at an early stage of development in most countries.

All countries are reported to be engaged in moves towards decentralising decision making in education. Examples exist of varying degrees of public administration decentralisation (the management approach), focused on the redistribution of authority at different levels (Radó, 2010), and service delivery decentralisation (the educational approach), focused on the scope and extent of school autonomy (Radó, 2010, p. 64). Radó (2010) mentions, for instance, efforts to increase school autonomy by decentralising management and setting up performance-based quality assurance mechanisms at different levels (Albania country report, p. 31). In Serbia, decentralisation and democratisation were cited as underlying principles for overall education reforms initiated in 2001, focusing on curricula, school development, in-service teacher development and liberalisation of the textbook market (Serbia country report, p. 31). In Montenegro certain functions have been reallocated from the Ministry of Education to certain newly established institutions including the Montenegrin Bureau for Education Services, Centre for Vocational Education and the Examination Centre (Montenegro country report, p. 34). In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia reorganisation of responsibilities at the local level has been undertaken following the Ohrid Framework Agreement, but progress in its implementation has been reported as uneven (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 32). Decentralisation of education in Croatia is administrative and financial but there is no devolution of responsibility for curriculum development or planning of teacher development at the local level (Croatia country report, p. 39). By contrast, Kosovo's Law on Education in the Municipalities was reported to have marked a meaningful devolution of responsibilities in education from central to municipal authorities, including some responsibilities for the in-service education of teachers (Kosovo country report, p. 34). In Bosnia and Herzegovina's fragmented constitutional arrangements[7], the education governance and financing systems appear at first sight to be decentralised but the reality is that highly centralised small education management systems exist (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 31).

Radó (2001) rightly remarks that, due to the complex nature of educational transition in the region, decentralisation should not be regarded in the narrow, technical sense as a mere change in the location of decision making, but rather as the 'extent to which central governmental responsibility is shared with other actors at lower levels' (Radó, 2001, p. 64). The international literature on decentralisation in education points to difficulties with the imprecise term 'decentralisation', which can mean different things in different institutional, political and cultural contexts (see, e.g. Bray, 2003), for instance, in small and big countries (Gaber, 2000) or in countries with fragmented education systems like Bosnia and Herzegovina. The instances of decentralisation in education reported in the Western Balkan region seem to involve varying degrees and types of decentralisation as distinguished in the literature[8].

Different types of decentralisation allow varying degrees of autonomy to schools and teachers and this may have varying effects on the development of teacher capacities to engage in innovation. Devolution of responsibilities to schools may lead to increased professional decision-making authority by teachers, both in subject-specific and more general education design (Sleegers and Wesselingh 1995), as teachers are not only entrusted to implement a scientifically grounded pedagogy but also to reflect on the sociocultural purposes of education and schooling (Carr, 1999; Lauglo, 1995). Certain other forms of decentralisation may reduce teachers' professional autonomy, since decentralisation is often accompanied by accountability procedures that arguably restrict the scope for teachers' professional autonomy (see issue 20 in Section 6.1.2). An ILO report argues that some level of local authority autonomy, or even autonomy of individual institutions and their staff, would enable VET to be more responsive to local enterprises and communities (ILO, 2010, p. 16). From there, the report extends the implications of such vertically devolved responsibility, from central government through local provision to aspects of teacher education and curriculum planning. It is beyond the scope of this report to try to grasp the great diversity of regional patterns of decentralisation, although it would make a worthwhile subject for further research with the view of identifying the effects on teacher involvement in innovation.

One common feature of decentralisation efforts in different countries seems to be linked to the previously mentioned lack of comprehensive education sector strategies, since different education reforms have tended

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7 In post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina, the decentralisation setting has been set by the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (i.e. the Dayton Peace Accords), which established two entities with separate systems of education and differing degrees of decentralisation. In the Federation, the authority over education policy and legislation and content has been decentralised to the level of canton (10 administrative units between the central authority and the municipalities), whereas in the Republika Srpska this power is centralised at the government level. Within the state system there is also the separate Brčko District with an education department of its own.

8 Bray (2003), for instance, distinguishes between functional and territorial decentralisation. The former refers to the dispersal of control over particular activities, such as when an education ministry gives some of its functions to parallel bodies (e.g. to operate the examination system). The latter, referring to a downward distribution of control to geographic tiers of government, is commonly understood to include the following: (1) de-concentration, the process through which a central authority establishes field units staffing them with its own officers; (2) delegation, implying a stronger degree of decision making at the local level but with powers basically still retained by the central authority which has chosen to 'lend' them to the local one; and (3) devolution, the most extreme form of decentralisation in which powers are formally held by local bodies which do not need to seek higher-level approval for their actions.

to occur as part of structural transformations in other sectors, rather than as components of a coherent reform strategy developed within education policy (Radó, 2001). For instance, decentralisation of education governance is connected to overall changes in public administration; transformation of the textbook publishing system is driven by liberalisation of the entire publishing business; new systems for financing education are part of finance reforms, etc. As a result, some decisions are transferred to the regional or local level (school maintenance and in-service teacher education, in most countries), while others are retained at higher levels (typically, curriculum development and teacher salaries).

In-service teacher development is typically transferred to the local authorities, yet without any corresponding allocation of funds to budget for the planning and implementation of teacher education activities. Such discrepancy between the allocation of responsibilities and resources to lower levels of authority has been reported in almost all the countries concerned. For instance, Bosnia and Herzegovina's schools were reported to lack the financial resources to be able to send teachers to attend in-service training seminars (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 44). This lack of coordination in the allocation of financial resources effectively nullifies real authority at certain levels and results in decision making diverting to informal channels, leading, in turn, to gaps in implementation (see issue 6 in Section 4.2).

Perhaps particularly important to our topic is the question of the extent to which different levels of government are able to govern effectively, as a lack of social cohesion and political stability or ethnic tensions make decentralisation a politically risky endeavour. This again points to the need to build the capacities of education professionals to perform the new responsibilities entrusted to them. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, for instance, varying proportions of the curricula are locally adapted in several cantons or at the entity level, amounting overall to 30% – an example of a highly decentralised curriculum by any standards. At the same time, low levels of adaptation of implemented curricula in consultation with local communities have also been reported (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, pp. 50-1). Could this be due to the fact that, with the exception of some in-service programmes dealing with the adaptation of curricula for students with SEN, curriculum design and adaptation do not feature in teacher development programmes?

In conclusion, the diverse forms of decentralisation reported in the region may imply varying needs for an extended competence base for teaching professionals; this is not yet certain, however, as the initial moves to decentralise responsibilities are unclear. However, there are indications that the devolution of some responsibilities to lower levels is not accompanied by the transfer of the resources needed for the implementation of additional responsibilities, e.g. for in-service teacher development. This is not helpful in improving a situation in which school staff do not have the necessary capacities and motivation to use even their current degree of autonomy to adapt curricula and instructional strategies, select textbooks, participate in self-evaluation and institutional development

or cooperate with parents and communities. This has clear implications for the need to establish systems of support for the development of teachers and other relevant players, such as local education authorities.

4.3 TEACHING ENVIRONMENTS

The issues discussed in this section, depicting the environments in which teachers in the region work in schools, with families and in their local communities, are linked to questions about core competences for inclusive education discussed in Chapter 5 (Sections 5.2 and 5.3) and to relevant teacher development discussed in Chapter 6.

4.3.1 Working at school

ISSUE 8   **TEACHER ISOLATION IS MORE PREVALENT THAN COLLABORATION AND KEY SCHOOL STAFF POTENTIAL IS NOT SUFFICIENTLY RECOGNISED**

Teaching and learning seem to be perceived as individualistic teacher-class activities rather than as a collaborative school-based activity. Regarding the development of quality inclusive education, there is some limited recognition of the importance of school principals and the insufficient development of leadership skills and collaboration among school staff and the wider school community.

The perceptions of the roles and competence of teachers in the region seem to be influenced by an individualistic, classroom-oriented conception of professionalism. The country reports often cited teachers and other participants in fieldwork referring to competences related to work in the classroom; meanwhile, competences relevant to working in collaboration with colleagues and building a culture of collaborative learning in schools were only rarely recognised as relevant for building inclusive schools. Student-teacher ratios were recognised as a barrier in many reports (see issue 14 in Section 5.2) and some measures to address this barrier were reported; in Montenegro the number of students per class was reported to have decreased by 10% in schools with students with SEN (Montenegro country report, p. 44).

One of the factors most often reported to contribute to such individualistic understanding of teacher professionalism is rigid, factual curricula, often largely prescribed (see issue 14a in Section 5.2). There is, however, a noticeable trend to allow some flexibility in curricular alignment at the school level, with least freedom represented by Croatia – full central responsibility is retained over curricula, even in schools run by linguistic minorities (Croatia country report, p. 36) – and Bosnia and Herzegovina representing the other extreme, with the above-mentioned possibility of adapting up to 30% of

curricula. When possibilities of adapting the curricula exist they are mainly related to satisfying the rights of linguistic minorities. In Montenegro, for instance, the curriculum in Albanian is identical to the mainstream curriculum in Montenegrin except for the inclusion of an Albanian language and literature class. Teachers, parents and the school are jointly responsible for 20% of the curriculum in cooperation with the local community, usually used to promote language, culture and mutual tolerance (Montenegro country report, p. 37).

Although all the country reports discussed the importance of cooperation with specialist staff and services, they also reported that current practices are not conducive to building inclusive school environments. For instance, here is how cooperation with support staff has been described in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia:

> Although most teachers described their cooperation with pedagogues, psychologists and special needs advisory staff in positive terms, their view of this cooperation (a view also generally shared by members of the professional staff themselves) amounts to the continuation of long-standing practices of separating students with special needs from other students … The professional staff generally work with children in separate offices where they conduct an assessment of the child, try to correct the problem and provide the teacher with some suggestions on to how to treat the student (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, pp. 39-40).

The fact that such practices both reinforce stereotypes regarding the role of professional staff and stigmatise students as a result of the ensuing labelling is discussed under issue 15 in Section 5.2.

A similar view is reported in other studies from the region. Radó (2010) observed that eastern European countries, especially the countries of the former Yugoslavia, are extremely generous in financing the employment of various specialists in schools. For instance, in Croatia (similarly to other ex-Yugoslav systems) school staff include a large number of expert associates (*strucni suradnici*), including education advisors (*pedagog*), special education specialists (*defectolog*), psychologists (*psiholog*) and speech therapists (*logoped*). Health and social workers and librarians might also be employed as expert associates. However, in Radó's view a school is not designed to accumulate knowledge on the specific services these specialists provide; rather, the setting has the advantage of bringing the specialist closer to the teachers whose work they support. However, their expertise is closed into a ghetto within the school. Thus, subject teachers do not deal with pedagogical methodological problems – because, according to a primary school teacher in Serbia, 'that's the job of the pedagogist' (Radó. 2010, p. 205).

One of the authors of this report noticed, during her visit to schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, similar kinds of small, informal, self-selected groupings of teachers that sometimes, but not necessarily, coincided with the subjects they taught. Such groupings are as a

rule characterised by what Hargreaves (1994) classified as a teacher 'balkanisation' subculture, 'characterised by the insulation of subgroups from each other, little movement between them and strong identification with that subgroup, and by concern with micro-political issues of status, promotion and power dynamics.'

Another unfavourable factor for building whole-school inclusive approaches is a tradition of regarding schools as institutions that implement a centrally designed curriculum and policies, while innovation is to be led from above or by a relevant expert body. This view seems to be rooted in the perceptions of teachers as well as other stakeholders (see issue 14 in Section 5.2). By and large, the feedback from focus-group discussions with teachers across the region reflected individual teachers' reactions to the school situations; only occasionally did some teachers speak as agents of change in their schools, reporting that innovation often meant that they needed to act as rule breakers and that support from school principals was a critical factor (see, e.g. Kosovo county report, p. 33; see also issue 17b in Section 6.1.1). This is also supported by research on education leadership (Day et al., 2000; Harris, 2002; Hopkins, 2001). Hopkins (2001) suggested that change at the school level can be driven by skilful leadership, by allowing 'structured communication opportunities' for teachers to act as protagonists of change, or by a combination of both. The latest research into school improvement increasingly promotes a notion of extended professionalism, as a more collective concept of teachers' engagement in professional learning communities. This concept involves dispersed responsibility, whereby teachers feel able to take risks in their attempts to develop pedagogies but also share a sense of responsibility for what happens in the school as a whole (Frost, 2009). Such extended professionalism, which relies on a sharing of goals and values, is closely linked to the issues of school culture. The evidence of research into the characteristics of leadership in effective schools demonstrates that the best way to create a culture of learning in a school is to delegate real responsibilities. This requires making it possible for staff to participate in school policy decisions and creating opportunities for the development of all school staff (as will be discussed in Section 6.1.1).

The principles of decentralisation and democratisation that have been built into ongoing education reforms in the region have created an important space for schools to exercise their autonomy. In many of the countries, new education laws provide opportunities for parents and community members to become involved in selecting school boards and principals and for those most interested in substantial school improvement, such as students, parents, community and school employees, to participate in school decision making. Therefore, there is some room for bottom-up initiation of change using existing institutional development tools, such as the self-evaluation systems that some countries have started to establish (see issue 19 in Section 6.1.2). It is however doubtful whether school staff has the collaborative skills required for these practices (see issue 14 in Section 5.2).

In conclusion, the scale and success of stakeholder engagement in school improvement is critically dependent on a change in attitudes and in the development of the capacities of all players – but primarily school staff and management – who could take on the role of protagonists of change and mobilise other relevant stakeholders. This underlines the importance of various forms of staff development strategies, including training opportunities in schools, involving staff in decision making and encouraging collaboration (see issue 17b in Section 6.1.1). It also requires providing built-in time for whole-school activities – e.g. for engagement in self-evaluation – based on the formation of working groups in charge of different aspects of school improvement. The building of teacher motivation through links to career progression should also be rewarded, e.g. for engagement in collaborative projects.

4.3.2 Working with families

ISSUE 9 **MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS ARE NOT SUFFICIENTLY ENCOURAGED**

The fact that home-school relationships tend not to be mutually supportive impedes building inclusive education practices in general and particularly affects parents and students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Home-school relationships subsume multiple complex relationships from school principal or teacher with parents or individual parent to all school staff with collective parents. Further subsumed relationships are those of parents of disadvantaged students or from minority backgrounds with school staff and with other parents. Teachers' ways of working and relating to their students in school is addressed under issue 15 in Section 5.2. The quality of relations, communications and school leadership will be strongly mutually reflected (see issue 8 in Section 4.3.1).

Troubled or simply non-existent relationships will now be exemplified from the country reports. International research and literature provide a perspective on the significance of the findings for inclusive education in the seven countries and, therefore, for teacher development. As commented by a parent from a focus group: 'We ordinary people are not really asked what we think about the education of our children' (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 38). This comment represents a pervasive theme in many of the country reports, albeit not always so clearly and succinctly expressed. It reflects parents' feelings of being excluded from something that deeply concerns them and about which they have in-depth knowledge and a wish to have their views taken into account (see also Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 49).

Differences between the culture and values of families and those of the teachers who work with their children

may also be a contributing factor, especially if these differences are not recognised and factored into the relationship between them (Montenegro country report, p. 42; Albania country report, p. 35). It is significant to note that, in the two south Serbian schools whose successful efforts to improve inclusion are profiled in Section 5.2, the training course that school staff had identified as the most influential focused on improving teachers' listening skills in relation to working with Roma parents (Došen, 2008). Better listening and the resulting improvement in understanding would help prevent mutual misunderstandings and poor communication (see Croatia country report, p. 39). However, teachers also point to scant parental support. As commented by a teacher in a focus-group discussion: 'We don't have support from the parents themselves' (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 40).

But do parent-teacher and home-school relationships need to be so negatively adversarial, unproductive and even destructive? What do research studies and the literature say regarding the possibility of improving home-school relations for all students, but especially for those most at risk of educational disadvantage in the particular country and local contexts in which they live? Can both social inclusion and educational progress benefit from improved home-school relations? And what are the implications for teacher development? The OSI and the Centre for Education Policy Studies (CEPS) of Ljubljana University undertook two detailed surveys (2008 and 2009) in the south eastern European region, including the seven countries in this study. The first was of school principals' views on the involvement of parents in school life and especially governance; the second examined parents' expectations of schools and what parents thought schools expected of them. The findings and the resulting reports and conclusions (Pop et al., 2009; Miljević, 2009; Cartwright, 2009; Durbin et al., 2009) are therefore very salient in providing a broader background for this regional report.

Durbin et al. (2009) conclude that the survey findings establish 'the willingness and the open-minded perspective that the majority of the school principals surveyed possess towards parental involvement' and that the findings will allow 'schools to give parents or guardians a voice in school governance' (p. 23). They also assert that 'power-sharing will allow the community to invest more emotionally and financially in the education and future of its children and community.' OSI's motivation for the surveys, reflected in their recommendations, is clearly towards greater social inclusion, with the forum provided by school governance. They make no rash forecast for the early achievement of this aim, which must surely lie some time ahead along the chain of devolution of powers from central government (see issue 7 in Section 4.2).

Cartwright (2009, pp. 39-41), however, raises the complex and as yet unanswered question of the benefits and beneficiaries of *individual* parents' involvement. Is this a question of altruistic involvement for the benefit of the community, the school, the teachers and all the students or is it simply of benefit for that parent's child or children?

Is it about improved school governance, about more effective and inclusive education or about individual influence and interest? Who is willing and able to be involved: all parents (as plainly intended by the OSI), some parents or merely selected and approved parents?

A further task for the OSI and the Centre for Education Policy Studies (Ljubljana University) would be to investigate the views of teachers on parental involvement with their children's education and their relationships with teachers. Principals do not speak on behalf of their teachers in this respect: the role of teachers is played out at the 'chalk face' in the classroom and across the table at meetings with parents. The country reports suggest, but cannot conclude, that many teachers in the seven countries have feelings of ambivalence, with some feeling hostile towards or critical of some groups (see issue 15 in Section 5.2).

Cartwright (2009, p. 38) also found some evidence of negativity and lack of trust in parents' perspectives on relations with teachers. Petrović (2009) asserts as follows:

> [There is] a substantial amount of research evidence suggesting that parental involvement is important in improving the overall academic achievement of children as well as in developing a general positive attitude towards school and schooling: there is no doubt that parents engaging in education is an essential part of high performing schools (p. 14).

However, Petrović also notes how Theodorou (2007) disagrees that improved home-school relations are widely attainable and will result in more effective and improved schools and educational achievements and how Theodorou further argues that many of the home-school movement's underlying assumptions are potentially socially exclusive of minority groups (Petrović, 2009, p. 92). Plevyak (2003) is also cited by Petrović (2009) in regard to research that illuminates the fear, anger and aggression that contact with school may elicit in at-risk members of minorities and that lists the numerous practical, financial, logistical, linguistic and culturally determined barriers to their participation. Theodorou (2007) also questions how closer parent-school relationships could affect child-parent relationships, suggesting that schools should focus more on developing flexible approaches to disadvantaged families and developing individual family-appropriate forms of communication that may involve translators and interpreters, free transport and childcare and flexible scheduling of meetings. Theodorou calls for the provision of opportunities for student teachers to encounter diversity among pupils and parents prior to their employment, a recommendation that the authors of this report endorse.

Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) reviewed two sets of studies: spontaneous parental engagement with their children's education and interventions designed to enhance levels of parental engagement. The aim was to identify the impact of parental involvement, parental support and family education on student achievements and [social] adjustment. A parent's involvement with their youngster's school was not a prerequisite for positive impact, although in many of the studies reviewed it was beneficial. Some of their key findings, also supported by the more recent cross-European findings of Sylva et al. (2004), were that parental engagement has many forms, including at-home good parenting, which has a greater positive impact on children's achievements and behaviour at the primary stage than any other forms of parental engagement. This very important finding, incidentally, applies across all social classes and all ethnic groups (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003, pp. 4-5).

A large number of ways of increasing parental involvement with their children's development have been trialled, including parent training programmes, enhanced home-school links and family education schemes. According to Desforges and Abouchaar (2003, p. 51), the home context is key to school outcomes. However, although it seems probable that levels of parental involvement with their children's education can be raised (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003, p. 70), it is not certain that intervention-led improvements will raise children's achievements. In relation to home-school involvement programmes, the limited but sound research evidence available suggests they have best chance of working if the following prerequisites are met: positive commitment; intervention plans involving the whole school; specific plans embedded in whole-school development plans; sustained support, resources and training; community involvement at all levels; and commitment to evidence-based development and review.

In conclusion, the need for teacher pre- and in-service development is evident. Any improvement in school-home relations and parental involvement would require teachers to be respectful and supportive of the greater potential contribution of a parent's at-home role in children's educational achievements, to be sensitive to and proactive in facilitating the engagement of families from minority and/or socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds in home-school activities and to be willing to play their part fully and on a long-term basis in whole-school programmes. This is an enormous challenge facing teachers and teacher educators in the Western Balkan countries. The suggestion by Theodorou (2007), discussed above, that student teachers should have the opportunity to encounter diversity among pupils and parents, clearly links to points made under issue 16 in Section 5.3).

4.3.3 Working with the local community

ISSUE 10 **BUILDING SCHOOLS AS AGENTS FOR CHANGE NEEDS FURTHER SUPPORT FROM ALL LEVELS**

Some country researchers and participants in the Pula and Brijuni and Turin regional meetings reported the need to widen the concept of inclusive schools to incorporate schools that are responsive to their social contexts and that adopt inclusive approaches towards all their intake students.

Many country reports recognised the value of partnerships at the local level for improvements in access to and conditions for schooling. For instance, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia projects and initiatives involving co-funding arrangements between the government, local governments, NGOs and international organisations have supported the inclusion of significant numbers of Roma students in pre-school, primary and secondary education in a number of municipalities (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 30).

Nikolić (2009) commented that more positive attitudes towards Roma among teachers and increased interest in intercultural education in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was a result of cooperation with Roma NGOs (the principal actors for integration of Roma) and with local governments in terms of providing inputs to local policy development and local action plans. In Tetovo, for instance, a Decade of Roma Inclusion team was formed to develop a local action plan, adopted by the municipal council, which guaranteed ten years of municipal financial support for Roma inclusion activities (Nikolić, 2009, p. 293).

Similar local initiatives have been reported for Montenegro that target the inclusion of students with SEN by increasing the involvement of parents and local communities; the municipality of Herceg Novi, for instance, initiated a project to provide students with SEN with teaching assistants (Montenegro country report, p. 40). There are other examples in the country reports; for instance, existing projects and future plans for funding activities aimed at building links between schools and local communities have been described for Serbia, e.g. using Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance funds as of 2010 to provide 120 additional assistants and community liaison coordinators for Roma students (Serbia country report, p. 33; and see issue 5 in Section 4.2).

A number of these projects and initiatives at the local level have been reported to have had a significant impact on improving access and resources for addressing the needs of some of the most disadvantaged groups of students in the region. Nonetheless, in line with the narrow understanding of inclusion in the Western Balkan region (see issue 1 in Section 2.2.1), such local initiatives have to date largely focused on Roma students and students with SEN. Some of the reports point to the need (as well as to

some emerging initiatives) to exploit the full potential of local cooperation to address a range of issues encompassed by the broader concept of inclusion (as underpins this study). Some examples of problems relevant to educational and social inclusion, for which local strategies are to be sought in cooperation between schools and communities, are the poor road infrastructure and long distances children have to travel to school in rural and mountainous parts of Albania (Albania country report, p. 37) or dealing with segregated schooling of Croat and Serb students as part of a reconsideration of social relations and teacher roles within the Vukovar community (Croatia country report, pp. 36-7).

Building the capacities of all partners would certainly help coordinated action at the local level. Amartya Sen, a leading international name in approaches to human development and combating social disadvantage, argues that the expansion of the capabilities of the disadvantaged is relational rather than individual and depends both on individual agency as well as on the capacity of society to create a framework for the realisation of these capabilities (Sen, 1999). Or in the words of an often quoted proverb: it takes a village to raise a child. Much work needs to be done in the region to create such local frameworks and thus ensure the implementation of policy measures targeting inclusion where inclusion takes place – closer to the communities.

Furio Radin, the Chair of the Committee on Human and Minority Rights of the Croatian Parliament, told a regional meeting that he felt that tolerance in Istria was the result of local efforts and not due to any intervention of the national authorities and further reminded participants that inclusion was an issue on everybody's doorstep, not just on a political agenda (ETF, 2009a, pp. 5-6).

Much capacity building seems to be needed across the region to build cooperative skills and encourage suitable attitudes among all the stakeholders involved. Participants at the Pula/Brijuni regional meeting repeatedly pointed to the challenges for social inclusion posed by the lack of political will to change the status quo and to the fact that many politicians, parents, school principals and teachers themselves do not see any problems with, for instance, the segregated schooling of minorities. Other challenges mentioned include raising awareness of the issues in society at large and supporting and promoting good practice. Some inspiring policy avenues can be opened up locally (see **BOX 8**).

Building schools as places of interface between society with its politics and cultures and students with their individual potential seems to be a worthwhile starting point. Inclusive schools seek to respond to the linguistic or cultural needs of the communities in their catchment area. However, it is equally important to remember that cultures are not fully internally homogeneous – that there is also diversity within cultures. Apparently responsive measures in relation to cultural groups (e.g. religious observation in line with the religion of an ethnic group in school) may actually disadvantage or isolate group members who hold other values or lead different kinds of lives from the majority of the same ethnic group

(e.g. practising a different religion or no religion). Thus, simplistic and specific responses that aspire to cultural sensitivity may actually further embed bias and reinforce the vicious circle of segregation driven by dominant perceptions of politics, society and culture. Tools such as the Index for Inclusion (Booth and Ainscow (2002); see also issue 19b in Section 6.1.2) could be used to powerful advantage in building inclusive schools. Research into the effects of its implementation in pilot schools could also encourage other schools if they saw evidence of inclusive schools actually working in their region or country (Sieber, 2009).

The need for institutional building and support to schools might seem obvious in environments with ethnically and linguistically heterogeneous populations. For instance, an inclusive education project in Serbia targets schools which, 'given the composition of their student population, have a need for an inclusive approach', so the schools will be supported in training teachers for the preparation of individualised curricula, standards and educational outcomes and the development of active learning and assessment methods (Serbia country report, p. 35). The question is whether there is any need to focus on inclusive approaches in schools that have seemingly ethnically and linguistically homogeneous populations.

In conclusion, we believe that teachers need to be educated in generic approaches to inclusive practices. There may be hidden diversity or segregation in a class and many reasons why a student may need additional support at any given time: bullying, violence, divorcing parents, the death of a relative or pet and many others. Development involves personal growth and building capacity for empathy among teachers and is not just a question of teachers preparing for the class in front of them at a particular time and place. The challenge of developing teachers for inclusive education is even greater where teachers are exposed to less diversity and have fewer opportunities to maximise the learning benefits of diversity for themselves or their students yet must prepare their students for participation in an increasingly diverse society.

BOX 8 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FUNDING POLICY PROGRAMME IN PUBLIC EDUCATION IN HUNGARY

Hungary's Equal Opportunity Funding Policy Programme in Public Education (Pallaghy, 2009) has been cited as a leading example of addressing exclusion. It obliges all applicants for EU funds (municipalities) to elaborate an anti-segregation plan targeting the development of schools rather than any specific group. In the Western Balkans, according to the country reports and other sources, education institutions are inadequately prepared to address the real grievances of disadvantaged or other non-dominant members of societies. For this reason, building multicultural accountability and the capacity of schools as institutions is necessary.

5. INCLUSIVE TEACHING IN CONTEXTS OF DIVERSITY

This chapter, covering issues 11 to 16, has as its central focus teachers and their competences, practices and attitudes in relation to inclusive education (Section 5.2). However, since the literature suggests that the way teachers teach depends on their motivation, background, values and experiences as much as on their knowledge and skills (Hargreaves, 1998), before we look at teacher competence, we consider issues relevant to attracting and retaining teachers for inclusive education (Section 5.1). Finally, we discuss the implications of the normative dimensions of teaching and teacher development in a context of changing values (Section 5.3).

5.1 ATTRACTING AND RETAINING INCLUSIVE TEACHERS

When commenting on existing teacher preparation in the region, some participants in the study raised the question of the selection of candidates who enter teaching as one of the most important factors affecting the quality of teachers. The two issues discussed in this section are the impact of teacher status on the attractiveness of the teaching profession and the diversification of the teaching force by making teacher preparation itself more inclusive.

ISSUE 11 TEACHER STATUS AND EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS AFFECT QUALITY PROFESSIONAL RECRUITMENT

Many of the country reports noted the low status of teaching as a profession, the lower pay of teachers compared to the average pay for public service jobs, the unfavourable working conditions and their negative impact on the quality and potential of students enrolling in teacher education courses. However, some favourable factors may moderate this impact to some extent.

In this section, 'conditions of employment' applies to contractual arrangements such as salary, hours of work, holidays etc., while 'working conditions' refers to the aspects of the classroom and school contexts in which teachers work, such as class size, classroom state of repair, availability of teaching materials and equipment, etc. 'Status' is understood broadly as referring to a person's or a profession's standing in society.

The country reports for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

point to the low status and low pay for teachers in their countries and raised concerns with regard to the impact on the attractiveness of the teaching profession to quality high-school graduates, which, in turn, could have consequences for the overall quality of education. At the same time the Kosovo and Serbia country reports reported some increase of graduate interest in pre-service teacher education programmes that might be related to increased teachers' salaries, although there is no conclusive evidence for this.

In Kosovo the government proposed several positive concrete measures that may have been instrumental in four candidates competing for each place at the Faculty of Education in the 2009/10 academic year. Teaching salaries in Kosovo have been increased to make them similar to those for professionals in health, public administration and the culture sector requiring an equivalent qualification. A government initiative, also making concrete promises to raise salaries further, is currently pending to move teachers from the public administration sector to the already recognised cadre of professional staff (such as, for instance, the police) while preserving their civil service status. This has increased interest in the Faculty of Education and in teaching programmes in other faculties (Kosovo country report, p. 42). Similarly, an increase in the economic status of the teaching profession has been noted in Serbia compared to the 1990s when salaries were very low; they are now above average in relation to public sector salaries. A teacher living in an area of low living costs has a slightly higher than average standard of living, but a lower standard of living in areas of higher living costs (Serbia country report, p. 40).

However, the broader conditions of employment seem to affect the attractiveness of teaching as a profession more than pay: 'Working at a school is seen as job opportunity which offers a basic sense of social security, low workloads and long breaks, but no economic or career progression' (Kovacs-Cerović, 2006, cited in Serbia country report, p. 40). It is relevant to note that a number of reports highlighted challenging working conditions for teachers, such as large numbers of students per class and scarce resources (see issue 14 in Section 5.2).

Both conditions of employment and working conditions may play an important part in entry to the teaching profession. In unstable labour markets, security of tenure may compensate for the lower pay whereas class size, lack of auxiliary staff and teaching aids and poor quality school buildings may discourage high-school graduates from applying for teacher education programmes.

An ILO/UNESCO recommendation[9] places the status of teachers in the overall framework of education aims and objectives:

> The status of teachers should be commensurate with the needs of education as assessed in the light of education aims and objectives; it should be recognised that the proper status of teachers and due public regard for the profession of teaching are of major importance for the full realisation of these aims and objectives (ILO/UNESCO, 1966, Article 5).

Furthermore, the same recommendation suggests that 'working conditions for teachers should be such as to best promote effective learning and enable teachers to concentrate on their professional tasks' (ILO/UNESCO, 1966, Article 8).

More recently, an OECD report titled Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers (OECD, 2005) suggested that policy responses towards ensuring the attractiveness of teaching as a profession need to tackle its multifaceted character, taking into account that working conditions and the status of the teaching profession in society are interlinked. The OECD report suggests that policy initiatives which aim at making teaching an attractive career choice need to improve the image and the status of teaching, improve the competitiveness of salaries and employment conditions and capitalise on an oversupply of teachers.

The debate and policies to enhance conditions of employment and working conditions for teachers and, through these, the status of teaching in society, reflect the set of aims and objectives which support the implementation of social inclusion in education systems. However, many teachers from the seven Western Balkan countries expressed feelings of resentment (see the issues discussed in Section 5.2) about being criticised or being told to respond to policies by changing their practices without being provided with any support system to address these changes and, moreover, with no incentive of value to teachers. Demotivation is growing, visible and audible to all who meet teachers in the seven Western Balkan countries:

> If no improvement in teacher job satisfaction and social status is offered, it is unreasonable to expect teachers to change their working habits and make national education more inclusive. Adding more demands whilst providing no significant additional support will only lead to frustration and resistance (Kosovo country report, p. 38).

Such sentiments are echoed passionately elsewhere (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 35; Albania country report, p. 47; Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 43) and have implications for retaining teachers and for the need to provide relevant professional development opportunities (as will be discussed under issue 26 in Section 6.3) and develop better links between professional development and salary levels and teacher promotion (see issue 27 in Section 6.3). Yet some country teams report that governments have put in place incentives that take into account working conditions and conditions of employment to support teachers in implementing social inclusion in their classes (see **BOX 9**).

The respect given to teaching is often related to the perception of teaching as a profession, which is reflected in requirements for entry, licensing and career progression, degree of professional autonomy and teacher education and quality assurance (Wubbels, 1995; OECD, 2005). Wubbels (1995) specifies the following features as characteristic of a profession: a codified body of knowledge which means that professionals rely on a special knowledge base which cannot be applied routinely; entry control (e.g. through setting standards; see issue 20 regarding teaching standards in Section 6.1.2); rendering service and ethical commitment; high status and political power; and autonomy. There is ongoing debate as to whether teaching has all the characteristic features of a profession or whether it is in the process of becoming professionalised.

The standing of the teaching profession in the Western Balkans may also be associated with the process of change in a context of diversity of values (see Section 2.1.1). Raffo et al. (2009) link their research into educational disadvantage studies to concepts of what seemed, in those studies, to comprise a good education, concluding that there are two contrasting concepts of a good education. The first adopts a functionalist perspective, maintaining that while education brings economic development, social cohesion and enhanced life chances for individuals, some individuals do not benefit.

BOX 9 INCENTIVES SUPPORTING TEACHERS IN IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL INCLUSION IN EDUCATION

A framework agreement with the teachers' union in Croatia regulates additional benefits for teachers working under special conditions (such as combined classes, specialised work with students with SEN or work in remote areas, etc.) For instance, a class with students with SEN can have maximum of 20 students (Croatia country report, pp. 37 and 42). Similarly, the Normative Provisions on Pre-University Education in Albania provide for reduced class size and enhanced remuneration for teachers working with SEN students (Albania country report, p. 33).

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9   This ILO/UNESCO recommendation concerning the status of teachers is not subject to national ratification. However, all ILO and UNESCO members are obliged to be familiar with its provisions and have been invited to apply it in their respective countries. The Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of Recommendations Concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART) was established to examine reports on recommendation applications communicated annually to the ILO Governing Body, the International Labour Conference and the UNESCO Executive Board, so that the CEART may take appropriate action and authorise transmission to member states of both organisations. The CEART also examines allegations from national and international teachers' organisations on non-observance of the recommendations in ILO and UNESCO member states. After consideration of the content of the allegation, the CEART issues its findings and recommendations for the resolution of the problem or conflict.

The socially critical perspective is underpinned by the potential of education to bring social benefits but doubts whether education can overcome the barriers to delivering its potential under current societal arrangements. Education, in this perspective, is perceived as systemically reflecting and practising the inequities and injustices of society in its own realm of schools instead of, as it should, challenging existing power structures and enabling democratic development (Raffo et al., 2009, pp. 344-7). Pring (1986, pp. 181-2) argues that 'the educational activities promoted by any society are intimately connected with what that society believes to be a valuable form of life.' It is perhaps not surprising that, given the traumatic history, fragile economies and current transitional status of the Western Balkans, there seems to be some confusion and uncertainty about what those 'valuable forms of life' actually are that should be promoted through the education systems and by its teachers. Teachers may simply be caught up in the current confusion and their status reflects this uncertainty.

In conclusion, poor pay, working conditions and status for teachers are likely to have a negative effect on the attractiveness of the teaching profession to potentially good candidates among secondary school graduates. Working conditions and conditions of employment are also relevant to retaining good teachers in the profession, as poor conditions increase frustration and feelings of resentment to changes in policy aims and objectives relevant to the promotion of inclusive education.

There are obvious implications for policies to support and provide incentives for teachers to engage with changes directed at inclusive education policy and practice and for relevant teacher development (issue 26 in Section 6.3). The challenges are particularly great when the status of teaching is placed in a broader societal context involving great and multiple value-laden changes (issue 16 in Section 5.3).

ISSUE 12 TEACHING WORKFORCES ARE NOT GENERALLY REPRESENTATIVE OF POPULATION DIVERSITY

While the Western Balkan countries all grant the right of education to minorities in their own language, a shortage of teachers – especially of teachers fluent in the Romani and other minority languages – poses a serious obstacle to the quality education of students from these minorities and deprives them of role models. Pre-service teacher education institutes rarely facilitate the enrolment of students from backgrounds associated with educational disadvantage. Student teachers and teachers are not taught how to work with students who are not fluent in the language of instruction or with classroom assistants from minority communities.

Although analysis of the background of the teachers in the region was not a focal point of the country reports, some of the reports draw attention to admission procedures that may hinder or simply not encourage the admission of teachers from non-typical backgrounds. The admission procedures essentially reflect attitudes in society on who may be a teacher. In this issue we focus our attention on the importance and the mechanisms for diversifying the teaching force by ensuring access and retention of student teachers from non-typical backgrounds.

It has been suggested that a linguistically and culturally diverse teaching force would better serve the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms by bringing different knowledge and skills, learning and teaching styles and personal characteristics to the teaching process (Carrasquillo, 1996). We believe the same argument can be made for widening the representation of teachers with disabilities as well as of teachers with different socioeconomic backgrounds in the teaching force. Diversity in a teaching workforce is supported by many arguments, amongst them: (1) teachers act as role models for students from similar backgrounds; (2) teachers are cultural ambassadors and mediators between their particular background and those of their majority students; and (3) fluid communications are enabled with students who ideally require a teacher who can communicate fluently, or at least adequately, in their language.

The views expressed in the Western Balkans, however, appear to adopt a different perspective:

> All in all, there are few mechanisms in place to change views like that expressed by a future teacher in Skopje who stated that there is no point in encouraging people with disabilities and native speakers of ethnic languages to become teachers (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 34).

As discussed earlier (issue 4 in Section 4.1.2), the Western Balkan countries all grant the right to minorities to be educated in their own language. Generally speaking, the provision of education in minority languages can be grouped in two categories. One category is for teaching to be conducted in the minority language (with the official majority language taught as a subject); this occurs where minority populations are numerous or have traditionally been present. The other category is for minority language and culture classes to be added to a programme conducted in the official majority language (see categories in Civic Initiatives/King Baudouin Foundation, 2007). Clearly, ensuring a supply of teachers who can teach in a bilingual education environment is of key importance.

Specifically, in working with students from different linguistic and thus cultural backgrounds, teachers are faced with a number of challenges. Carrasquillo (1996, p. 3) categorises these challenges as follows: (1) how to improve the low academic achievement of linguistically and culturally diverse students; (2) how to integrate diverse language and cultural characteristics and strengths in the teaching/learning process; (3) how to use standardised and authentic assessment information for better teaching and improved learning and attainment; and (4) how to implement reforms in teaching in schools

where education resources are lacking and many students are academically at risk. Diversifying the teaching force to include teachers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds is undoubtedly fundamental.

Carrasquillo (1996) suggests that teachers need to learn how to challenge students with and without proficiency in the language of instruction, especially in reading and writing. In addition, teachers need to be able to integrate each student's special ability, characteristics, language, culture and ability/disability into continuous practice in the classroom and in such a way that these are understood and valued. The necessary teacher competence and relevant change in teacher preparation is not easy to develop and implement because, according to the concept of competence adopted in this study (see Section 2.2.1) and other research, it relies on attitude change, which, in turn, is influenced by the individual experiences, values, beliefs, prejudices, apprehensions and expectations of teachers. Sleeter (2001) suggests that 'of various strategies that are used in teacher education programmes, extensive community-based immersion experiences, coupled with coursework seem to have most promise' in preparing excellent, culturally responsive teachers from all backgrounds, including student teachers from majority backgrounds.

A particular focus of attention in all the country reports is the lack of teachers from minority communities, in particular Roma communities (see issue 4 in Section 4.1.2) and from small minorities (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 36). Yet the need to ensure teachers who may not be from minority communities but are fluent in minority languages has not yet been fully recognised. Teachers in Croatia reported as follows:

> When working with students from different ethnic groups, [teachers] recognise and respect individual and cultural differences among students and encourage intercultural respect between them … teachers recognised that language is the largest barrier to the inclusion of Roma students. While teachers do try to learn basic words in the Romani language that level of knowledge is not sufficient for successful teaching (Croatia country report, p. 39).

Given new policies in the Western Balkans and the growing practice of promoting Roma teaching assistants, we believe there are opportunities for countries to develop access routes to teacher education programmes for Roma communities that could, through recognition of prior learning and prior experience, take into account the experience of Roma teaching assistants.

An example of an attempt to develop competence in teaching in the Romani language in a university in Bulgaria (see **BOX 10**) shows how good practice can collapse if not supported by changed perceptions and bolstered by national and university policies. It also points to the need to address the language competence of all teachers, including the majority community, in ethnically mixed regions.

BOX 10 AN ATTEMPT TO DEVELOP ROMANI LANGUAGE TEACHING AT VELIKO TURNOVO UNIVERSITY IN BULGARIA

Improving the quality of teaching for minority children and their level of educational achievement requires the training of bilingual teachers from minority groups. Early efforts resulted in the first Roma students graduating from studies in a new subject titled Teaching in the Romani Language at Veliko Turnovo University in 2006, but numbers remain rather limited. It is disturbing that student intake in the Primary School Pedagogy and Romani Language department at Veliko Turnovo University was discontinued indefinitely from 2008. According to Roma experts, this was the first step towards closure of this department, despite all the students enrolled to date having qualified. The obstacles placed before the only teacher training department in a Bulgarian university providing Romani language and Roma culture teaching are evidence of insensitivity in the education administration and education establishment, including in higher education, about the importance of providing well-trained bilingual teachers. There is a severe shortage of ethnic Bulgarian teachers who have a command of minority languages and who can work in a bilingual environment. This problem can only be addressed by introducing requirements which require a certain level of bilingualism as an employment condition for all teachers in ethnically mixed regions, including ethnic Bulgarian teachers and especially for primary school classes.

Source: Bozeva, 2007

A question in its own right is whether teacher education institutions and existing pre-service teacher education programmes are capable of taking in students from diverse backgrounds. Research suggests that students from backgrounds where it is uncommon for young people to enrol in higher education but who succeed in enrolling in teacher training programmes are far more likely to leave before graduation than other students (OECD, 2010). How a student of Roma background or a student with a disability might feel in a teaching faculty is illustrated by an example where one Latina in a predominantly white US classroom remained silent in a course on dialogue and collaborative constructivist work: 'Initially, she spoke up in class, but lost her voice after white classmates expressed lack of interest in multicultural and language issues' (Sleeter, 2001, p. 102). It is not hard to imagine that a similar situation might arise with Roma students or students with disabilities in teaching faculty classrooms in the Western Balkans. This, of course, does not imply that Roma students either should not be admitted or should have separate courses; rather they should receive appropriate support in and out of class and that teaching staff should be prepared to manage classes to ensure inclusive approaches adapted to all their students.

Given that teachers and the learning environment affect academic achievement in primary and secondary education, teacher educators and the faculty learning environment play an important role in student teacher completion and success. The OECD defines the learning environment as follows: 'The entire range of (a) written and unwritten principles of education and the details of such principles (education concept, curriculum, guidance structure, etc.); and (b) formal and informal contacts (with fellow students, lecturers, tutors, student counsellors, etc.) related to a programme that students encounter' (OECD, 2010, p. 139). Teacher completion and success depend on all of these aspects of the programme.

Specifically, the OECD (2010, pp. 140-1) suggests that learning networks of students (sometimes with teachers), called learning communities (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Huerta and Bray, 2008), are successful forms of support and shared learning for students coming from backgrounds not previously associated with higher education opportunities. Furthermore, the level of social and academic integration is defined as the extent to which students feel at home in the study programme in regard to the field of study, with the lecturers and students who represent that field playing an important role. As students from such backgrounds often feel and are treated differently by fellow students and teachers, they often feel less at home in programmes, which may lead to higher dropout rates. Finally, the OECD (2010) draws particular attention to findings by Severians et al. (2006), who show that students from ethnic minorities are more dependent on the quality of education, in contrast with majority students, who rely more on acquired social and cultural capital which puts them in a more favourable position from the outset and throughout their studies. Working with teacher educators and teacher faculty leadership is essential in shifting the perceptions and reality as to who becomes a teacher. Creating a learning environment that ensures student teacher completion and success requires a shift in the approach to teaching and learning in teacher faculties themselves. Supportive academic and social integration structures and mechanisms and interactive teaching methodologies (see also issue 23 in Section 6.1.4) are underdeveloped in the faculties in the Western Balkans; their development would be beneficial to all future student teachers, irrespective of background.

In conclusion, it is pivotal that Western Balkan teacher education faculties and teacher educators recognise the importance of developing access routes for students from backgrounds associated with educational disadvantage and for the governments to support such strategies. Moreover, ensuring a welcoming and open study environment is crucial to successful study completion for students from such backgrounds. Creating an open and supportive environment for students from backgrounds associated with educational disadvantage may be a particular challenge in traditionally exclusive universities in the region. Furthermore, working with traditional prospective teachers to enable them become more inclusive, both as fellow students and as eventual teachers, is as essential as changing perceptions and practices regarding who becomes a teacher.

5.2 EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL INCLUSION: TEACHERS COPING WITH CHANGE

The definition of inclusive education used in this study (see Section 2.2.1) is as follows:

> Inclusive education is broadly understood to be the process by means of which schools attempt to respond to all pupils as individuals by reconsidering and restructuring curriculum organisation and provision and by allocating resources to enhance equality of opportunity. This process enables schools to increase their capacity to accept all pupils from the local community who wish to attend and, in so doing, reduces all forms of exclusion and degradation of students on the basis of disability, ethnicity or anything that could render the school life of some children unnecessarily difficult (Sebba and Sachdev, 1997; Booth and Ainscow, 1998; Florian and Rouse, 2009).

The three issues (13, 14 and 15) to be discussed in this section of the report go to the heart of the matter, putting teachers and their competences, or lack of them, in the spotlight. Teachers' own views of their competences and the views of others are set out in issue 13. Their reported professional behaviours and attitudes and how these may result in students' experiencing educational and social inclusion or exclusion are discussed in issue 14, while issue 15 examines teachers' apparent motivation regarding inclusive education.

This section of the report relates, therefore, to classroom competence in the Western Balkan countries: we thus visit schools and classrooms, not in reality, but through the views of researchers and education professionals, including teachers, student teachers and teacher educators, parents of regular students and parents of potentially disadvantaged student. The issues to be discussed basically pose the following questions:

- Do teachers and others *think* teachers can deliver inclusive education?
- Do teachers *actually* deliver inclusive education?
- Are teachers *willing* to make the changes required to work inclusively with all their students?

Florian (2008), in a research-related discussion about special and mainstream provision for students who are 'different', emphasises the importance of teachers:

> It suggests that the starting point [for inclusive education] is in practice: the things that teachers can *do* that give meaning to the concept of inclusion, regardless of, or perhaps despite, the often restrictive structures of schooling (p. 207).

Since much of the exemplification from the country reports and the discussion that follows is somewhat critical of (some) teachers, it is vitally important at the

outset to point out that there *are* highly motivated, skilful, dynamic, dedicated and flexible teachers absolutely committed to their students' educational progress and social inclusion in, and enjoyment of, education in all seven of the Western Balkan countries in this study (Došen, 2008; Stojić et al., 2009; UNICEF, 2004).

Two profiles of primary schools in Albania and Serbia would suggest that schools and teachers can indeed widen their diversity and retain pupils better and that teachers are willing to learn new skills, accept new challenges and improve how they work on existing challenges; respect and

work with all their students and their students' families, regardless of background or abilities; and be agents for change, collaborate with others and act as a vital force within their communities (see **BOX 11**). Their stories suggest that positive leadership and committed staff (see Chapter 8), whole-school staff development (see issue 17c in Section 6.1.1) and collaborative working with other schools (see Section 6.3) also have a significant impact on positive outcomes. The changes that these school principals and teachers undertook were not small or cosmetic – they were substantial and required what can only be described as professional courage.

BOX 11 TWO SCHOOLS WORKING TOWARDS INCLUSION

	Profile 1. Albania	Profile 2. Serbia
School, area of country, size	Prrenjas Primary School, in a largely rural and mountainous area of the district of Librazhd, Elbasan region of Albania. 800 pupils in two shifts.	Neighbouring Bora Stankovic School in Jelašnica and Pera Mackatovic School in Belo Polje (Surdulica) in southern Serbia. Mixed Roma/Serb (86/216 and 65/160) pupils, respectively. Impoverished communities.
Aims of school	To identify and include all children within the school's registration area, especially children with SEN but also any other 'invisible' children; to improve attendance of rural students; and to prepare staff to be more inclusive by undertaking intensive training.	To develop pro-school motivation and attendance in the most disadvantaged pupils and families, to improve home-school relations and collaboration especially with most disadvantaged pupils and families; to reduce repeat years and dropout rates, especially among Roma girls in the higher school grades; to increase numbers progressing to secondary schools; to use the Roma assistant optimally.
Work done to support aims	Search of area by local partner NGO and school staff to identify children, develop relationships with families and encourage school registration and attendance if possible. All staff, including the principal, undertake training.	Whole-school staff development in: improving home-school relations and listening skills; using interactive and child-centred pedagogies; visits to inclusive schools in northern Serbia, regular social and working groups with parents, home visits by staff.
Reported outcomes	9 children with SEN were located: 3 were included in mainstream classes, 4 with severe SEN were placed in a special group with part-time inclusion, 2 with complex disabilities and fragile health received home-based education from the school's teachers. Attendance of rural pupils, school-home relations and attainment levels all improved. Other schools requested project participation.	Staff found that listening to parents improved relationships with parents; more parents attended meetings; new pedagogies worked and stimulated inter-teacher professional debate; pupil attendance improved; agreement reached with Roma families for staff to supervise school breaks if older Roma girls continued in education (girls now attend grade 8); teachers and Roma assistants now work as partners.
Collaboration with other agencies	Local MEDPAK NGO and Save the Children Norway, UNICEF and local education authority	Irish Aid, Save the Children UK, Serbian Ministry of Education, local Roma association, Serbian Red Cross. Local authority was not involved.
Key factors in success	Active leadership, committed staff, collaborative partners, community support and engagement in project.	Motivated school management and teachers; no community conflict; good teamwork/motivation, including with partner school.

Source: Albania: Closs et al., 2003; Serbia: Došen, 2008

Other countries also gave examples of inclusive child-friendly schools or schools finding ways to address specific challenges, such as the small rural school in Banja, Kosovo (see **BOX 12**).

ISSUE 13 VIEWS OF TEACHER PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES ARE MIXED AND SOMETIMES CONFLICTING

The views of teachers, other professionals and parents expressed in the country reports transmit a pervasive sense that inclusive education is not yet totally real to teachers in the seven Western Balkan countries, in that the concept and the necessary fundamental competences are not well understood or accepted and practised by all teachers, despite the assertions of some to the contrary.

The authors of this report suggest that this issue goes some way to answering the question as to whether teachers and others *think* teachers can deliver inclusive education. One country report reminds us that teachers cannot all be seen as a homogenous product of a single teacher preparation system when the system itself has changed – as it has or will do shortly in many of the other seven countries: 'The remarks made by teachers fall into two broad sets of categories: those provided by teachers trained before the late 1990s and those from teachers who graduated in the last decade' (Albania country report,

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BOX 12 A SOCIALLY AND EDUCATIONALLY INCLUSIVE SCHOOL IN KOSOVO

Preparation for being inclusive. The school principal in Banja village in the rural municipality of Malisheva participated in [inclusive child-friendly] training and then became involved in cooperation with Handikos, an NGO catering for children with SEN.

What the school staff did. They organised open days to raise awareness in the community of the special learning needs of some children. The principal developed a questionnaire for parents to be used in the individual learning needs portfolio drawn up for every student.

Outcomes. This approach resulted in many cases of students joining or returning to school and also led to an improved inclusive atmosphere and culture within the organisation.

Exceptional student also included. Our interviewer witnessed an amazing case where a student unable to use his arms and hands because of a severe physical impairment was helped to use his toes for writing by his teacher. The teacher has also managed to create a friendly and inclusive atmosphere among the other students in the class.

Source: Kosovo country report, p. 46

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p. 40). To take the example of Albania, this means that the many teachers who completed pre-service education prior to the late 1990s (say 1996) and who are less likely to have competences for inclusion could still be active until 2036, 26 years from now. This has enormous implications for teacher in-service development (see Section 6.3). However, any assumption that more recently qualified teachers will be more inclusive as a result of later and supposedly improved teacher education has to be tempered by the finding of the Tuning project (Pantić, 2008), namely, that the number of years in work since training had no direct relation to teachers' perception of their competence; in other words, new teachers who had graduated from post-Bologna Process courses did not express proportionally more confidence than colleagues who had trained prior to the changes. This finding tends to corroborate Zgaga's (2003a) view that the changes in study programmes were relatively superficial.

Competence is described in this study as an integrated set of knowledge, skills and dispositions, sometimes also referred to as attitudes (see Section 2.2.1). We will begin by looking at what teachers themselves, other professionals and parents in the seven countries say about teacher competence. We will then seek to understand the reasons for the various problems identified and discuss ways forward, bringing research and literature to bear on both, and will finally identify the implications for teacher pre-service and in-service development.

What is being said about teachers' grasp of competences for inclusion?

Here we look at what teachers themselves, other professionals and parents in the seven Western Balkan countries say about teacher competence – both the aspects that discussants raised themselves and those from the list of 24 competences thought to be significant for educational and social inclusion by the core research team. Three broad headings (sub-divided into eight basic competences each) were identified, as well as six advanced competences (see table below).

Teachers gave their views mainly in focus-group discussions held during the field research and in responses to an online questionnaire. Parents, NGO and community representatives gave their views primarily in focus-group discussions or interviews. The views given are summarised below.

Some comments depict the very disjointed, incoherent and incomplete scenario that is the reality of most teachers' approaches to inclusive education in the Western Balkans (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, pp. 37 and 55). Some comments indicated a significant degree of sensitisation to or awareness of some of the basic competences for inclusive education, but the long list of desired training included: coping with difficult behaviour, working with talented students, individualised teaching and assessment (testing) procedures, improved interpersonal skills for communicating with students and parents.

List of competences for inclusion

	Basic competences	Advanced competences
Personalised approach to learning	Improves competences of all students	Innovates teaching to help all children learn
	Tailors teaching strategies to each child's needs	
	Uses various forms of assessment to help children learn and improve instruction	Designs and implements individual learning plans
	Works effectively with support staff	
	Adapts curricula to particular pupils	Pro-actively addresses inequities in materials, policies, etc.
	Guides and supports all learners	
	Attends to students' cognitive development and to their social-emotional and moral growth	
	Connects with students and their families at an interpersonal level	
Understanding and respect for diversity (gender, socioeconomic groups, ability/ disability, culture, language, religion, learning styles)	Recognises and respects cultural and individual differences	Uses students' backgrounds as scaffolding for teaching and learning
	Understands different values students and their families hold	
	Is aware of their own preconceptions and value stances	
	Recognises how her assumptions influence her teaching and relationships with different pupils	Learns languages
	Recognises that knowledge is value-laden, constructed by the learner and reciprocal	
	Is able to recognise pupils' special needs and provide for them or seek help	
	Is able to recognise gifted pupils' needs and provide appropriately for these	
	Encourages intercultural respect and understanding among pupils	
Commitment to values of social inclusion	Maintains high expectations regardless of students' background	Conducts research to advance understanding of education's contribution to social inclusion
	Treats all children with respect, affirms their worth and dignity	
	Believes in the educability of every child	
	Helps all children develop into fully participating members of society	
	Understands the factors that create cohesion and exclusion in society	
	Understands the social and cultural dimensions of education	
	Understands the contribution of education to developing cohesive societies	
	Is familiar with conventions of the right of child and anti-discrimination	

Source: Authors, based on Pantić, 2008; and European Commission, 2005 and 2008b

This list suggests that teachers did not believe that they were adequately prepared to undertake the actual tasks, a view echoed by parents and community members (Albania country report, p. 42; Kosovo country report, p. 35; Montenegro country report, p. 42), and sometimes expressed very clearly by teachers: 'I do not feel competent and able to work with students with SEN or with those with special demands' (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 33).

In some countries researchers noted a disparity between what teachers in general reported as competences that they both grasped and put into practice and researchers' assessments of what the teachers had said and how they described their classroom practices, which revealed inadequate understanding and implementation.

Some specific zero scores were noted in relation to individual competences simply not being mentioned or (also worryingly) being mentioned but not thought significant by respondents. These included competences and support mechanisms to overcome language barriers in working with RAE students and the ability to work effectively with support staff, use different forms of assessment and work satisfactorily with Roma and SEN assistants (Montenegro country report, p. 45; Serbia country report, p. 37; Croatia country report, p. 38).

In relation to the more advanced competences, no country report mentioned teacher awareness, far less practice, of the competences that draw on out-of-the-classroom knowledge and understanding, four in total, namely, pro-actively addressing inequities in materials, policies etc.; using student backgrounds as scaffolding for teaching and learning; learning languages (other than first tentative steps in Romani, as mentioned in the Croatia country report, p. 39); and conducting research to advance understanding of education's contribution to social inclusion.

A further problem seemed to be that many teachers' awareness was limited to what they, apparently, perceived to be 'their real business' – teaching pupils, or perhaps simply 'teaching the class' in the most basic sense. Beyond that, there seemed to be collective tunnel vision that prevented many teachers from looking into the diverse worlds of their students and recognising the constraints under which many students struggled to come to school and to learn. There was equally little sign of teachers acknowledging the potential richness of the different experiences, abilities and interests that potentially marginalised students could bring to the classroom.

Teachers' inadequate or non-existent grasp of social inclusion and exclusion concepts and their links to education was a matter raised by several countries (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, pp. 32-3). The discussion of teacher competence for inclusion in Montenegro ends with a powerful indictment of teachers' understanding of social inclusion:

> Teachers did not reveal a familiarity with children's rights and anti-discrimination conventions. In our view,

a lack of focus on certain competences, such as maintaining high expectations regardless of student backgrounds, believing in the educability of every child and understanding the social and cultural dimensions of education, indicates a low level of in-depth understanding of social inclusion (Montenegro country report, p. 42).

To this absence of engagement with the competences related to social inclusion might then be added an apparent insensitivity to the needs, rights and feelings of students – as evidenced in issues 14 and 15 below, which describe classroom practices and teachers' attitudes and motivation towards diversity and inclusion – to arrive at the conclusion that teachers are unaware of the implications of teaching as a moral activity (Carr, 2000, p. 183 and following). Surely they could not be conscious of the moral dimensions of their work when they were exclusive in both thought and deed in their own classrooms to students at risk of being marginalised in society and in education? It seems, however, that the role as a model in terms of values and behaviour *is* one that teachers value highly (see issue 16 in Section 5.3). This contradiction is very worrying and will be raised again at the end of this section, as it clearly has implications for teacher preparation.

To sum up, teachers' awareness of competences for inclusive education vary greatly, but there seem to be a preponderance of teachers who, despite awareness of at least some competences, either doubted their capacities to implement them or were absolutely sure that they could not do so. Some also had mistaken views of their own competence in the opinion of researchers who evaluated their self-reported practice. Some individual competences, especially advanced ones, went unclaimed, while there was a lack of teacher engagement with the competences that would have led to greater teacher attention to issues of social inclusion in their teaching and in the management of their classes.

Australian research into dispositions towards diversity in student teachers (Mills and Ballantyne, 2010) posits that there is a hierarchy of three dispositions to be acquired sequentially in order to be fully prepared for implementing education that values diversity and promotes the learning of diverse learners: teachers first had to acquire self-awareness/reflectiveness, then openness (receptiveness to the ideas and arguments of others) and, finally, commitment to social justice. This hypothesis has not yet been conclusively proven but, if it is true for student teachers, then it is possible that it might also be true for teachers, except that this process would be mediated by teachers' experiences in practice. What we can say with some certainty is that the teachers who responded to the country researchers in focus-group discussions or through the online survey had evidently not reached the final stage of the hierarchy of dispositions – commitment to social justice – and that many were not secure in the earlier dispositions either.

In conclusion, inclusive education is legally not a matter of choice or personal preference for teachers, yet some teachers still view it as such – and even whole schools

and the secondary school sector, both academic and vocational. Inclusive education requires real and substantial change from teachers. The implications for teacher development that arise from discussions of this issue at both pre-service and in-service levels are enormous and complex. Some recommendations made in Chapter 7 in relation to both pre-service and in-service development go beyond simply yet more traditional training, which most teachers will already have received in a somewhat piecemeal fashion. Many of the suggestions involve practice in various forms. Perhaps the clearest message is that current teacher preparation is not coherent with national policies on inclusive education and often does not equip teachers with sufficient confidence and motivation to implement even the limited inclusive approaches of which they are aware. It also seems that many teachers lack empathic imagination and moral awareness. Without empathy and recognition of the moral dimensions of teaching, effective inclusive education is simply not possible.

ISSUE 14 **TEACHING AND CLASSROOM PRACTICES ARE RARELY OBSERVED BUT ARE REPORTED TO BE DIDACTIC AND INFLEXIBLE**

A clear picture of teaching and classroom practices is difficult to obtain but from the evidence of parents, teacher educators and teachers themselves, there seem to be a number of barriers to more inclusive practices, such as rigid curricula and assessment, teacher dependence on the higher authority of others and the perceived competing interests of special segregated schools and classes.

Were the teachers who doubted their capacities to convert even limited awareness of inclusive competences into truly inclusive teaching and class management practices (issue 13) justified in their self-doubt? We look now at teaching and classroom practices as described in the country reports. Due to time and funding constraints, no classroom observations were carried out for the specific purposes of this report; however, our own experiences and those of the country researchers in their frequent visits to classrooms throw some light on teaching and classroom practices in the seven Western Balkan countries.

Several of the country reports indicate that teaching and classroom management in the Western Balkan countries are unobserved and largely unmonitored, including by school principals and senior line managers (Kosovo country report, pp. 37 and 51). Even in Croatia, where an inspectorate is well established, the monitoring of teaching standards appears to be more of a document-screening exercise than anything more wide-ranging and direct (Croatia country report, p. 43). Although some teachers may welcome this lack of interference, supervision or criticism, less competent and inexperienced teachers may be left feeling isolated and unsupported. The difficulties of working collaboratively

with classroom assistants (Serbia country report, p. 37; Croatia country report, p. 38) may indicate that, having grown accustomed to being alone with their class, even an extra pair of helping hands may seem intrusive.

What is certain, however, is that a vital starter element in the continuing professional development of teachers, namely, an alternative view of their practice, is missing; furthermore, this problem is exacerbated for teachers in vocational secondary education (see issue 3 in Section 4.1.1 and issue 24 in Section 6.2). A further outcome of this lack of observed teaching is that, for the purposes of this study, we largely have to rely on teachers, students (indirectly through the voices of their parents) and previous classroom observation by the authors and country researchers for accounts of what really goes on in classrooms.

It is possible to build up a picture of what classrooms are like by referring to examples from the country reports. The result is, of course, a regional composite and, to a large extent, a stereotype; nonetheless, it can be used to illustrate and discuss some of the problems facing the development of inclusive education in the Western Balkan countries, especially those related to teacher competences for working in inclusive schools. The picture looks rather like this:

- **The classroom and its personnel.** The classroom is probably very full, either because there are large numbers of students or because rooms are small (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 34). Congestion is sometimes eased as a consequence of truancy or dropouts (Albania Country Report, pp. 36-7). In some countries, there may be a teaching assistant, who, nevertheless, may not always work well with the teacher (Croatia country report, p. 38). The room is probably arranged in conventional rows, with seating sometimes reflecting teacher views of student behaviour patterns rather than ensuring effective learning (Albania country report, p. 48).
- **Class management and ethos.** It is very likely that the teacher faces the class from in front of a blackboard and does most of the talking (Serbia country report, p. 38; Croatia country report, p. 42). The classroom ethos is likely to be warmer and more student-centred in the initial stage of primary education but later becomes more focused on simply getting through the curriculum (Montenegro country report, p. 50). According to a parent participating in a focus group: 'Everything was OK during lower primary education, but in upper primary education they are only looking for knowledge, there is no developmental part' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 49).
- **Curriculum.** It is likely to be rigidly and uniformly applied (Serbia country report, p. 38; former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, pp. 37-9). There is little differentiation to cater for the varied needs of groups or individuals (Albania country report, p. 35). According to a parent in Serbia: 'Many things are done according to a pattern, student individuality is not taken into consideration, the same things are done with everyone, no attention is paid to students with difficulties, the material is taught quickly because

there is no time, teachers are incapable of getting involved and stimulating the students' interest in learning' (Serbia country report, p. 41).

- **Student assessment.** This is likely to take the form of oral questioning and oral or written responses, despite the assessment method often being an area of choice for teachers. Some limited variation is permitted, especially if a student has an individual education plan (Montenegro country report, p. 44). According to one researcher: 'Most of the teachers stated that they possess the competence […] to use various forms of assessment to help students learn and to improve instruction, but their explanations of how they implement this shows they simply lower assessment criteria rather than adapt their approach' (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 38).

- **Resources.** Even when additional or alternative materials and books are available, it is more likely that these will be deployed in the interests of the programme rather than to suit groups or individuals for whom the initial choice was too hard or too easy (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 37). There are unlikely to be IT resources in the classroom (Kosovo country report, p. 36).

- **Time commitment.** Some schools just do not seem to make the necessary time to develop inclusiveness in the school as a whole or in classrooms, forgetting that inclusiveness is a key marker of quality education. Some school principals and staff are more focused on what they perceive to be the primary functions of the school, such as instruction quality and school attendance, leading them to overlook the fundamental nature of inclusive approaches and practices (Kosovo country report, p. 51).

This composite but realistic picture illustrates what is plainly not an inclusive environment where teachers use inclusive approaches. It demonstrates just some of the problems in classrooms and teaching in the Western Balkan countries. It also clearly shows that teachers, in general, have not yet achieved the competence necessary to work effectively in inclusive schools in contexts of diversity.

Why have teachers not grasped and implemented inclusion competences and what are the ways ahead?

It is very easy, and indeed correct, to identify, as the main cause of the problem, insufficient and inadequate teacher preparation for inclusive education both at the pre-service and in-service levels. The fact that most countries have not had a coherent set of teacher standards that fully address inclusion (see issue 20 in Section 6.1.2) and none have had a framework of competences for inclusion until recently does not exempt teacher education providers from their responsibilities (see issues 21-28 in Chapter 6). The country reports reflected many such 'blaming' views about teacher education (Kosovo country report, p. 37; Albania country report, p. 42; Serbia country report, p. 37; Croatia country report, p. 37).

Teachers who thought that they had acquired competences for inclusion blamed insufficient human and material (including technology) resources and support as the main impediment to their implementing inclusive approaches (Kosovo country report, pp. 35 and 37). While such arguments are frequently put forward internationally (it would be naïve to suggest that inclusive schools that really embrace the full diversity of their local students could do so on a resource-free basis), hard financial accounting on the costs of developing inclusion tend to demonstrate that resources are not the defining factor in schools becoming, or not becoming, more inclusive: schools on very similar budgets can be more or less inclusive. In Western Balkan schools visited by the authors of this report, other factors such as whole school commitment to, and realistic planning for, inclusive education have featured more strongly than extra funds. The UN Enable website states as follows:

> Inclusion is often (mis)conceived as prohibitively expensive, impractical, unsustainable or a strictly disability-specific issue. However, not all positive measures are costly. Several countries have already developed cost-effective programmes to promote inclusiveness with limited resources. States should use available resources, focus on achieving clear goals, and ensure the sustainability of education funding in the short, medium and long term. Cutting funding to an inclusive education system has dramatic adverse effects not only for individuals, but also for the policy of inclusion, in general[10].

However, funding challenges arise for countries aiming at both education for all and inclusive education in the following circumstances: (1) they have substantial numbers of missing/non-registered students; (2) their child population is rising or at least stable; (3) they do not have an existing special education segregated sector which can be reduced to transfer funding to inclusive education; and (4) their economy is weak. Countries in this position will find it very difficult to fund inclusive education and will have to seek external funding, at least during the transition from exclusion or segregation to inclusion. We, however, believe that there are many other factors slowing the development of inclusive education, not least attitudes and emotions (addressed in issue 16 in Section 5.3).

The educational thinker, Jerome Bruner (1996) wrote about the dangers of 'folk pedagogies' among teachers which made it hard for them to let go of dearly held but fallacious beliefs about teaching and students and which, therefore, made them very resistant to new learning. One widely believed (if not always practised) fallacy in the Western Balkans is that students achieve more when grouped at the same ability level. The OECD (2007) recommends limiting early tracking and streaming in education and postponing academic selection. The fact that greater inclusion *is* compatible with good learning and attainments is supported by quality research (Harlen and Malcolm, 1997; Florian et al., 2006). As a concrete example, the increasingly inclusive Prrenjas School in Albania (profiled in **BOX 11** in Section 5.2) won the regional prize for improvement in mathematics attainment

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10   See www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=240

in the year following its greatest progress in inclusion. It may be that some forms of exclusive practices among teachers in the Western Balkan countries are simply long-established and widely accepted folk pedagogies. Change is hard, especially if the changes expected of teachers impact on long-held beliefs, but not changing these pedagogies will be even harder on some of their most vulnerable students.

We believe that there are other substantial and very enduring barriers to teachers grasping and implementing competences for educational and social inclusion, many of which can be impacted on by teacher action and development. These barriers (described below by reference to the country reports), are rigid school curricula, the practice of controlling student progress upwards through schools by tests which, if failed, result in year repetition, reiterative summative assessment systems, heavy teacher dependence on higher authorities and the competing interests of special segregated education provision.

Rigid curricula

The curriculum is one of the main sources of problems for students with diverse learning profiles and for those who teach them. It has two extreme forms. One is the totally rigid curriculum that dooms many students to unavoidable failure and condemns teachers to a relentless march towards getting through their programmes, almost regardless of the students left by the wayside. The other is the totally flexible or almost invisible curriculum that meets student needs, interests, abilities, etc. (at least in theory) but which exhausts teachers as they perform acrobatic efforts to ensure that no-one is left out, no student fails, no student is bored and that all students learn what they need to develop their full potential. Rose (1998) poses a key question: 'The curriculum – a vehicle for inclusion or a lever for exclusion?'

The term 'variation' is often used where some change to a national curriculum is made on a local or school basis, while 'individualisation' is, as it sounds, very specific to particular students. 'Differentiation' covers the full range of possible changes to a curriculum (reducing it, extending it, altering content, pace or style of teaching/presentation), leaving flexibility in some proportion of the curriculum or even making new curricula where some students require this. The possibilities are too numerous to list (Bearne, 1996, McNamara and Moreton, 1998). Where the curriculum is not flexible or governments do not permit differentiation, the onus falls on students to try harder, pay more attention, undertake more homework, be tutored, participate in before-school or after-hours specialised support sessions – as arranged for some of Croatia's mainstreamed students with disabilities (Croatia country report, p. 61). Alternatively, or additionally, the pressure may fall – rightly – on teachers to teach better and to use differentiation optimally and within reason so as to optimise their students' learning.

Croatia has a centralised curriculum for its regular students, but also has 'special curricula for students with developmental difficulties, for example, pre-school for

children with autism, children with intellectual difficulties, children with cerebral palsy and others' (Croatia country report, p. 61). This is still a potentially rigid system, as it suggests that students with particular developmental difficulties might all have the same learning needs as others with the same difficulty, which is not so. The requirement for differentiation remains even in special curricula. The education sector that may have the greatest curricular freedom to develop tailored or targeted courses for a range of students in the Western Balkans (Preston and Green, 2008) is the vocational secondary school sector, in that, at least in principle, students are allocated on the basis of interest and aptitudes rather than other factors such as ethnicity, etc.

The Western Balkan countries are at various stages of decentralisation of their curricula (see issue 7 in Section 4.2). However, it is important to recognise that users of decentralised curricula still face the same dilemmas regarding how to deliver programmes that ensure optimal learning and which are also socially inclusive.

What seems increasingly obvious is that a rigid curriculum leads to stress for students struggling to pass and to exclusion for students who fail or who give up trying. A more flexible approach to curricula and a call to teachers to differentiate their approaches, in the righteous cause of student educational inclusion, very often leads to a rush to action by some teachers (inclusion pioneers), a resentful retreat into inaction and opposition by others and the onset of anxiety paralysis in yet others who, while they acknowledge the need for greater inclusion and diversity, feel overwhelmed by the demands placed on them and also concerned about the divergence and possible lack of equity in the different programme experiences of students with different abilities or from different backgrounds (Norwich, 2008). These effects of the call for inclusion are all observable in teachers in the Western Balkans.

Turning to proposed changes in the curriculum, 'in practice, teachers have little training in ways of adjusting the curriculum at school level, developing their own topics and implementing new methods of teaching' (Croatia country report, p. 49). When curricular differentiation to enable educational and social inclusion *is* legally possible, then surely teacher educators have a role to play in helping student teachers and teachers not only to become aware of the range of possible methods but also in ensuring sufficient practical experience so that they can feel confident in using these methods? Teachers should be able to make pragmatic choices, based on the students in their classes and their current contexts rather than on dogma or fixed formulas. They should be able to draw on a broad repertoire of ways to teach and manage their classes; in other words, they should be able to call on their own 'practical wisdom in ensuring equity when responding to diversity' (Florian, 2008).

The country reports frequently referred to 'individualisation' and to individual education plans or programmes and the bureaucratisation of the processes of working with students individually or of being told

exactly how to work with students. It has to be asked whether – given the prominence it appears to have in the minds of teachers – the need for individualisation has become inflated, over-emotional and somehow raised beyond teachers' views of their own competence. Little wonder that some anxious teachers doubt their ability to work with such apparently challenging students. According to one teacher: 'We are working with so many students, every one of whom needs a different approach, something I couldn't achieve' (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 33). Are we, in fact, in the grip of another folk pedagogy? Research suggests that grouping students may be effective and have positive social as well as educational effects, provided the grouping is not simply organised in terms of ability (Wannarka and Ruhl, 2008; Green, 1999; Marvin, 1998; Bennett and Dunne, 1992; Simpson and Ure, 1994) and bearing in mind that teachers may have to limit differentiation to a combination of three or four groups with a very small number of fully individualised students in a classroom if they are to survive logistically.

Mittler (2000, p. 133) suggests that including diverse students is 'nothing like as difficult as it may seem because most teachers already have much of the knowledge and skills they need to teach inclusively. What they lack is confidence in their own competence'. Mittler does not deny the need for occasional expert help nor does he deny the need for specialist knowledge and communication techniques in vital areas. What he does deny is that this specialism is *constantly* needed to support a teacher or student. It could be suggested that Mittler was arguing from a UK-based perspective, where some curricular and pedagogical differentiation is, to a large extent, probably taken for granted, and that his sanguine optimism about the capability of teachers might be less justified in countries where differentiation approaches are less developed, as in the Western Balkans.

Yet examples of inclusion with some curricular differentiation planned and implemented by teachers do already exist in the Western Balkans. Some of these teachers have had professional development support from NGO courses, pro-inclusion special educators, books and the internet, not to mention from that under-used and invaluable source of information, parents. All have applied energy, goodwill and creativity and many have received collaborative support from colleagues and from students. Some teachers who began by resisting and retreating or who were frozen by anxiety about the prospect of inclusion managed, in time, to change their views and develop their practices in the best interests of their students.

Testing and year repetition

The fifth of the OECD's ten steps to equity in education (OECD, 2007) recommends that national education systems 'identify and provide systematic help to those who fall behind at school and reduce year repetition.' Although some reduction has begun in most of the seven Western Balkan countries, it has not yet been carried through to its logical conclusion, which would be to

abandon repetition other than in exceptional individual cases where professionals and families, including the student concerned, take any such decision together.

It is very hard to construe repeat years as a positive response to students' inability to keep up with peers and pass tests. It is rather a way for governments and schools to deny responsibility for providing appropriately supportive teachers, differentiated learning and adjusted curricula and programmes within year groups, while projecting the blame for this systemic failure on those least responsible, the students themselves, who may already be vulnerable in other ways:

> Many Roma students who repeat the first few grades also drop out of school … Only 30% of Roma students who enrol in the first grade actually finish primary school (data from 2002/03) … At the national level the [grade] repeat rate is 1% while the same rate for Roma students in the first three grades of primary school is 11% (data from 2005) (Serbia country report, p. 38)

Although year repetition is not banned as such, it is less common than before. However, barriers to progression from class to class and from level to level in the company of age peers do still exist in some education systems (see Croatia country report, p. 61):

> Students with special needs are not exempted from the final exam in primary school and there are no possibilities for direct transition to secondary schools (Montenegro country report, p. 44).

In terms of social cohesion and inclusion, there are also very substantial implications for both students who repeat and for their peers who progress normally (addressed in issue 15 in Section 5.2).

The phasing out of year repetition does not, however, necessarily imply an improvement in inclusive teaching approaches, although the continuing presence of students who do not learn at teachers' desired rates *should* act as a prompt. But does it? One of the authors of this regional report described teacher feedback regarding an NGO's inclusive education programme (Closs, 2009a):

> I have to confess that if I had a pupil in my class – before I did this training – who was really slow, I would just ignore them. I told myself that they were beyond help and that I was too busy. But actually I just didn't like working with slow pupils. Now I accept and help them. It's only fair (grade 5 mathematics teacher).

> I wouldn't choose to work with slow children but I do it now. Sometimes it's surprising. You find that they are just slow and not really stupid (grade 5 Serbian language teacher).

Reiterative summative assessment

In most of the seven Western Balkan countries, the norm for assessing students is by summative testing – often oral but sometimes written – of the usually factual

learning that teachers hope students will have acquired in the period since the previous test. In Croatia, and indeed in most of the other countries, 'in contrast with the highly centralised school curriculum, the assessment and monitoring of students is left to the teachers' (Croatia country report, pp. 39 and 42). This makes many teachers' choice of oral testing more disappointing, in that this area of teacher freedom is not used more creatively. The scope of such testing/checking is limited, as time is very much a constraining factor. This kind of assessment informs teachers which students have good mid-length memories and, possibly, which parents have gone over the material to be tested with their youngsters the night before. It offers no possibility of assessing real understanding, partial learning, insights, interest, reasons for possibly wrong answers or ways of arriving at the right answer, which could be by rote memorisation, cheating, collaboration, creative thinking, etc. – all matters into which teachers should have insights.

Harlen and Deakin Crick (2002) found that summative assessment and frequent testing reduce students' motivation for learning. It offers no insights into the full range and depth of current knowledge and understanding, nor does it offer any indications of what the student may be ready to learn next, with support. Vygotsky's work on the 'zone of proximal development' and on the 'scaffolding' of learning (Vygotsky, 1978; Daniels, 2001) through the mediation of learning by a more experienced other (Feuerstein, 1980), whether a parent, a teacher or a fellow student, still has much to offer today's teachers. Teachers are no longer mere technicians who deliver the curriculum to a mythical average student, but potentially humane and informed enablers of each and every student's learning and development. The quality of this interaction is important at every stage but is absolutely vital to students who, for whatever reason, may find learning more difficult.

This realisation opened the way to later developments in formative assessment or assessment for learning (Black et al., 2003; Broadfoot, 1998), whereby teachers engage far more in discussion with their students about the work process, look at what they are doing and give them feedback, reinforcing what is done well, offering explanations which will improve their work and agreeing targets together. This interactive formative assessment helps the teacher and student together to understand and to better shape their shared work of teaching and learning and also leads to better motivation for both partners (Dweck, 1986; Galloway et al., 1998).

Teacher dependence on higher authorities

Plainly, a questionable commitment by some teachers to teaching as a profession (see issue 11 in Section 5.1), a selection procedure for student teachers that sometimes amounts simply to being accepted on application, a lack of training (and especially well-supported practice-related teacher development), negative attitudes to inclusion and prejudices about the diverse identities of included students (see issue 15 in Section 5.2) can all play a significant role in teachers not making progress towards inclusion (Mittler, 2000, pp. 134-5).

However, we wish to put forward a tentative hypothesis that some teachers in the seven Western Balkan countries lack the confidence that would allow them to be more autonomously effective in their work with diverse learners. This lack of confidence causes teachers to seek expertise or support from others, usually superior to them in terms of authority or perceived expertise, or to have this imposed upon them – all suggesting greater constraint, not empowerment (Montenegro country report, p. 51; Serbia country report, p. 37):

> Schools must have an official statement from the Commission for the Orientation of Children with Special Needs. This official document not only commits the school, but also gives the school detailed instructions on how to work with and adjust the school to the SEN student (Montenegro country report, p. 45).

It can be argued that, since teachers cannot know or understand enough to meet the educational needs of every student in a class, part of their professionalism is in knowing when and whom to ask help. However, the help sought and given should strengthen teacher skills and increase their confidence so that they can actually teach the student directly, initially with support but then independently. In other words, expert support should be about scaffolding teacher learning on a reducing basis and developing increasingly skilful teacher autonomy, rather than about supporting student learning on a long-term continuing basis, which may then lead to long-term teacher dependency.

In suggesting that teachers should be encouraged to become more – but not completely – autonomous, we are conscious that the number of students with SEN included in mainstream schools in the Western Balkans (other than in Croatia) is still relatively small: 'There was not much evidence of integration of children with special needs in the focus group countries' (UNICEF, 2007). The majority of such students are either not in school at all or placed in special schools or special classes attached to mainstream schools (UNICEF, 2007; Čolin and Markovic, 2004; Closs et al., 2003). Furthermore, from our own experience in schools and in the opinion of various NGO inclusive/quality education officers, students with SEN in mainstream education generally have mainly mild SEN; there is a much smaller proportion of students with moderate SEN and extremely few with severe SEN in mainstream education. These already enrolled students could be included by teachers further extending and differentiating quality teaching and learning approaches (Hopkins, 1997; Corbett, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 1997). If such approaches are not within a teacher's repertoire, then, rather than looking at a problem in the development of teachers for inclusive schools in contexts of social and cultural diversity, we are, in fact, looking at a problem in the development of *all* teachers.

The importance of teachers acquiring confidence and using it to support their own creativity in finding inclusive responses for their students is highlighted as follows:

> It is particularly interesting to note the opinion of some teachers and in-service teacher trainers that teacher

confidence in their own competences is most important for inclusion and enables them to find a way that each child can be taught (Serbia country report, p. 36).

Competing interests of special segregated education provision

As can be observed from the country reports (in their fourth chapters and their second appendices), all seven countries have some level of special segregated education provision for students with SEN, all have some separate or part-separate provision for students from ethnic/linguistic minorities and some have separate schools for youngsters living without families. Non-school residential institutions for youngsters with physical or cognitive disabilities (of which there are still too many in terms of social inclusion) sometimes – but not always – have staff designated to provide developmental programmes, although it is relatively rare for them to be teachers (UNICEF, 2007; YCRC, 2001; Sumero, a website in support of people with disabilities (www.sumero.ba)). There are also special schools with residential facilities.

Taking Bosnia and Herzegovina as an example, for students with SEN there are six and three special schools (nine in total) and eight and six special classes attached to mainstream primary schools (14 in total) in the Federation and in Republika Srpska, respectively. However, the number of pupils in the nine special schools has actually fallen by 50% in the last 20 years. Much of this fall occurred during the chaos of the years of conflict, due to students dropping out of their special school or moving out of their normal home or due to closure of the special school for safety reasons and enrolment of students in the nearest open mainstream school (Closs, 2003). When the conflict ceased, many of those former special-school pupils were observed to have coped adequately in mainstream schools and so a number of national and international NGOs assisted in promoting more inclusion through interim special classes from which students were able to move across to mainstream classrooms in planned and supported phased programmes (information provided post-report by a retired special education teacher educator). Such mainstream absorption suggests that more is possible.

The staff of segregated schools and classes, however, understandably have a vested interest in their continuance and should not be blamed for defending their jobs in times of high unemployment, even if it does nothing to forward educational and social inclusion. Many of these staff also passionately believe that not only are they the best people to work with students with SEN or with ethno-linguistic groups, but that they should be their only educators.

A number of confusions arise from such a complex range of special segregated provision. Firstly, there is an assumption by others, including mainstream school teachers, of special expertise that others believe comes from not just their experience but also from their specialist studies:

It is not right that someone 'gives you' a child with special needs, and you have to work with them; if it were so simple, studies in the Faculty of Defectology would not last four years…(Serbia country report, p. 39).

Because of this assumed expertise and also because of other assumptions that become entrenched during teacher education (Albania country report, p. 40), many mainstream teachers genuinely believe that they themselves cannot undertake this inclusive work and that special provision is the best option for students with SEN because of expert staffing, small class sizes and a high level of individualisation. Sometimes they think it is best for Roma students too.

The hopes of segregated provision staff to maintain the status quo and the above-described beliefs of some mainstream teachers work against inclusion and may even reduce mainstream teachers' motivation for doing their best for students who do not conform to the norm. As for teachers who work in special provision for students with SEN, whether subject teachers or educator-rehabilitators (previously defectologists), the question of expertise is an open one because of unspecified competences and missing elements in initial teacher development which leaves these individuals unqualified to work as mainstream teachers in their own country and in Europe and unqualified to work as therapists in clinical settings in Europe. The lack of an adequate quality assurance system that observes and monitors practice is just as great a concern, if not more so, in segregated establishments.

Recent efforts to support inclusion have involved changing the role of special schools or of some of their staff. '[There] are . . . six special needs schools which have been transformed into resource centres for special needs education since 2006' (Kosovo country report, p. 32). Programmes based on the use of special school staff as mobile team members who work with mainstream teachers, parents and students in enabling quality inclusion have been piloted in Montenegro and Serbia and a few special schools have opened their doors to allow two-way traffic and know-how sharing with neighbouring mainstream school staff and students (Serbia country report, p. 55). The success level of such pilot studies is questionable, however (Closs, 2009a; 2009b). In relation to linguistic minority students, the fact that 'the area of bilingual education is poorly developed and is primarily linked to language studies [and is] thus lacking [in] the necessary educational emphasis' (Croatia country report, p. 50) highlights a neglected means for increasing inclusion across language divides, while simultaneously providing students with one of the most valuable passports for life, namely, bi- or multilingualism.

In conclusion, issue 14 has highlighted the enormity of the task facing teachers, teacher educators and policy makers in trying to make teaching and classrooms more inclusive and will involve a great deal of creativity in terms of how to achieve inclusion. The thinking process should, however, go beyond these three groups, however, to include media and IT personnel and logistic experts.

Developing the empathy, creativity and autonomy of teachers, meanwhile, may be the key to some progress. A major task in teacher education must surely be to train personnel in competences that will enable staff and students in inclusive schools to value, understand and communicate with others across the various gaps. A major challenge now and in the longer term for the seven Western Balkan countries regarding inclusive schools (NUT, 2003) is to train/recruit the following: teachers skilled in approaches to bilingualism (Cummins, 1991); staff trained as cultural mediators (Eick and Valli, 2010); teachers from minority communities (Cunningham and Hargreaves, 2007); teachers with disabilities (Equality North East, 2008); teachers with a deeply embedded moral vision of their role and profession (Carr, 2000); teachers who can work with each other and with classroom assistants (Giangreco and Doyle, 2007; Todd, 2007; Lacey, 2001); and teachers capable of enabling all students to understand morally difficult issues in their recent histories and current lives (Claire and Holden, 2007). Possibly the greatest challenge facing Western Balkan education systems as a whole and schools in particular, however, is that of ensuring quality classroom practices throughout the entire education system and ensuring that quality subsumes inclusive competence. Assisting teachers to become mutual observers and critical friends in relation to each other's practice (Tilstone, 1998) would be a step in the right direction.

ISSUE 15 TEACHER CAPACITIES AND WILLINGNESS TO FOSTER SOCIAL COHESION AND INCLUSION IN THEIR CLASSES ARE IN DOUBT

Many countries reported responses from teachers that indicate a lack of awareness and commitment to working inclusively with educationally disadvantaged students and a few even showed outright hostility to including students with non-standard profiles. Some teachers' motivation for change in this respect and in general is in doubt.

In the section below, the focus is on student experiences of social exclusion from equitable participation in classrooms, both by peers and, shamefully, sometimes also by their teachers. We look at what research and literature have to say about the impact of this exclusion and about the range of ways that have been tried and tested in the struggle towards inclusion at this level. Following that, the focus moves on teacher motivation – or lack of it – to work towards greater social cohesion and inclusion in their classrooms (again as evidenced in the country reports) and on research and literature that offer hope that intentionally or unintentionally excluding teachers may change.

Student experiences of social exclusion in classrooms and possible inclusive ways ahead

Students who struggle to learn – whether due to cognitive disabilities, lack of early pro-education experience at home, lack of early education or simply being apparently slower and less communicative – were frequently reported as being socially excluded within their classes and being rejected by peers and/or teachers. Two country report examples illustrate the issue: a student with brain damage seated in a back-row desk alongside other poor performers was bullied as well as not learning effectively (Albania country report, p. 48); and students who failed tests were subsequently 'the objects of ridicule and scorn for other students and often suffer[ed] disciplinary action from both teachers and parents' (Albania country report, p. 40). Support for students who do not conform to the prevalent norms of their regular peers is sometimes provided in ways that make the student the problem, rather than the teacher's lack of suitable skills. Students sent out of class for the school psychologist or pedagogue 'to conduct an assessment, try to correct the problem' may also experience peer stigmatisation and feel that, far from being helped, they have been punished (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 40). There is little doubt that teachers can address the peer stigmatisation that is on the edge of bullying if they choose to, yet in these cases, at least, it seems they did not and, indeed, may have contributed to its initiation.

There are other forms of possibly less visible discrimination that are also socially exclusive, such as having low expectations of students based on prejudiced stereotypes. While this discrimination is less visible to others, it is still felt and responded to by the students at whom it is directed. Teacher prejudices towards Roma, for instance, are a 'barrier to quality education' as 'the tendency of teachers to have lower expectations for Roma students […] effectively leads to lower schooling outcomes' (Serbia country report, p. 38); similar comments are made in other country reports (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, p. 39; Albania, p. 19). Roma students experiencing social exclusion within their schools are likely to show poor attendance and high dropout rates; furthermore, parents are aware of their youngsters' negative experiences (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 43), although most teachers were resistant to the finding that this was so (Albania country report, p. 19).

Struggling learners who fail their end-of-year tests may still face the ignomy of repeating the year. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students, including Roma, and cognitively impaired learners are particularly likely to have this dreaded experience. Repeat years are surely the death knell to the social inclusion of all students who endure them. They are the older, larger and often still unsuccessful learners among their new smaller, younger and more successful classmates, sometimes suffering the same humiliation and loss of friendships several times. It is important to remember that, while education is primarily about learning for teachers, principals, education system officials and ministers of education, for very many students, including successful and able students, learning is of secondary importance to the friendships and peer groups formed in school. Most school friendships are formed within year/class groups and students with friends are, rather obviously, more socially included but also more cooperative, altruistic and self-confident (Campbell and

Muncer, 1998). Friendships in socioculturally diverse contexts, particularly those involving students from school and/or class minorities, may be harder to establish, especially across divides, and more difficult to sustain (Deegan, 1996; Troyna and Hatcher, 1992). As discussed in regard to issue 14 above given that many students who experience year repetitions are from minority groups, failure is toxically combined in humiliation, loss of hard-won friendships and the prospect of being at a disadvantage in making new friends. Unsurprisingly, many such pupils drop out of school.

'Ethnic frictions still reflect on children in previously warring populations' (Croatia country report, p. 36). The return of minority families to their pre-conflict home areas in all the Western Balkan countries exposes individual students to expressions of the inherited, and understandable, anger and bitterness of the parents of the majority group peers – an inheritance for which their generation should not be held responsible. Even when students do not overtly stigmatise minority or disadvantaged peers, there were comments in various country reports that showed that majority-minority friendships were rare and, when they existed, were fraught with tension (Montenegro, p. 57; Croatia, p. 40).

So far, the picture is one in which some students, perceived as different or possibly inferior, are sometimes socially excluded – actively by peers and more passively by teachers. But passive exclusion – i.e. excluding students by not overtly including, respecting, valuing and working with them – effectively is a form of condoning more active forms of exclusion by peers. Ignorant prejudice can lead to overt teacher rejection of even some students' presence in classrooms, as the following student teacher illustrates: 'Students with more complex development disabilities cannot be helped much and, to a large degree, they hamper other students, the work of teachers and the progress of the whole group' (Serbia country report, p. 49).

One of this report's authors, while evaluating inclusive education projects in southern Serbia, was saddened to hear, from a committed, skilled and successful village teacher, that many teachers only work in village schools when that is their sole employment option, because they believe that their pupils will be '*seljaci*'; this word was expressed in such a way as to leave no doubt whatsoever that what was meant was 'peasants' or 'yokels', rather than the more emotionally neutral and non-pejorative 'village students'.

In the discussion of issue 13 above, one of the key findings was that there was a lack of real understanding and engagement with the competences related to social inclusion. In our view, it seems that teachers who, knowingly or unknowingly, behave exclusively and in discriminatory ways must either be unaware that they are modelling intolerance and injustice for their pupils or believe that their views are justified. Neither is acceptable.

There were also, however, positive examples of socially inclusive schools and teachers. UNICEF's promotion of Child-Friendly Schools across the region, with national,

local and school collaboration, was described as especially successful in terms of social inclusion, as illustrated in the movement's list of Child-Friendly School characteristics (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 43; Kosovo country report, p. 48). It is perhaps worth noting that all Child-Friendly School staff undertake intensive generic anti-discrimination development courses as a foundation for their work.

Turning now to research and literature, there is much that is relevant to the findings of the country reports that may help throw some light on both the need for teachers to change to become more proactive in ensuring social cohesion and inclusion in their classes and on the way ahead for teacher education for inclusive schools in areas of diversity.

Two key points from quality research are particularly relevant to the Western Balkans. Billington (2000, p. 29) asserts that, knowingly or unknowingly, schools and teachers who exclude or oppress pupils who depart from the norm may be part of the Foucauldian tradition that perceives schools as perpetuating the prevailing norms of society rather than trying to change or improve them. Hymel et al. (1990) suggest that children may also have attitudes towards, and expectations of, other children that predate actual acquaintance with them, i.e. their responses - positive or negative - may be based on societal and/or familial stereotypes and prejudices. This last point is perhaps particularly apposite to the Western Balkan countries in relation to the RAE communities and to students from the other side of recent conflicts.

Other key points from quality research are as follows:

■ Teachers' negative attitudes to students limit these students' performance (Rosenthal, 1987; Essen and Wedge, 1982; Hart et al., 2007).
■ Young people's happiness and resilience throughout life depend not only on having a reliable and secure family or carer base where they feel safe and respected, but also on having assured their place in the local community and, as part of that, their school (Clarke and Clarke, 2003; Daniel and Wassell, 2002; Slee and Rigby, 1999; Campbell and Muncer, 1998; Asher, 1990).
■ Isolation or, even worse, neglect, bullying and experiences of racism from teachers and/or peers result in very real suffering for the students concerned and their families. Students may drop out or behave badly and experience mental health problems which may continue into adult life (Smith et al., 2004; Troyna and Hatcher, 1992; Closs et al., 2001).

As for those students who are internally excluded, i.e. who are not welcomed or valued by peers or teachers, yet continue to attend school and do not vote with their feet as dropouts or truants, how is their learning affected? In general, excluded and unhappy students have poorer educational attainment and later life outcomes in employment, social relationships and behaviour (Clarke and Clarke, 2003; Campbell and Muncer, 1998). It seems that not only should greater social inclusion be sought for currently socially excluded students but also for their and

society's future wellbeing. It might be added that their peers would also benefit from this inclusion so that they too might learn to accept and appreciate diversity before they enter the increasingly diverse adult world implied by EU membership.

Can schools and teachers make a difference? Again, there is much research and literature that suggests that indeed they can:

- Thomas and Loxley (2001, p. 112) (writers rather than researchers) highlight inclusive education's 'potential to be both a model and an agent for positive changes in society.'
- Frederickson (2010) warns that research findings are more equivocal about the benefits to some minority students, indicating that inclusive schools must develop means to ensure that inclusion genuinely means inclusion for *all* students in a school, and also explores how teachers, parents and students can work together to help students with special needs and their more typically developing peers relate in helpful and mutually beneficial ways.
- Morgan and Morris (1999) state that the positive quality of student-teacher relations enables more effective learning and that this is related to teachers' enthusiasm for their work with students in their classes (see also Day, 2004) and with their capacity to learn about the backgrounds and needs of their students.
- Klein (1999) records the success of many schools and teachers in engaging positively with students who had previously been disaffected, many of them from ethnic minorities.
- Epstein and Sealey (1990) emphasise the societal importance of addressing racism even in monocultural schools.
- Todd (2007) challenges schools to use the agency of students more in finding solutions to social exclusion.
- McCluskey et al. (2008) and Hendry (2009) provide evidence that whole-school training in the use of restorative justice can be used to reduce student bullying and conflicts and may also produce more harmonious staff relationships.
- Dion et al. (2007) and Topping (1995) explore the ways in which students can help each other learn through peer collaboration programmes.

Many of the programmes and research described above have been located in Anglo-American contexts. Although we acknowledge the warnings of Booth and Ainscow (1998, pp. 4-5) and more recently, Rose and Garner (2010, p. 23) about assumptions of shared understanding, across countries or cultures, that does not necessarily exist, we believe that the studies mentioned above are relevant to the Western Balkans. Indeed one of the authors of this report evaluated inclusive education programmes in one of the seven countries (Došen, 2008) that featured restorative justice, peer learning and support for friendships across divides. The Child-Friendly Schools promoted and funded by UNICEF in the region also have many of the goals and characteristics of such developments.

There is, therefore, no shortage of ways forward to more socially inclusive classrooms. But – and it is a large but – do teachers, in general, in the seven Western Balkan countries actually want to be more socially inclusive themselves and do they want to facilitate social inclusion, organise it, work for it, on behalf of their students? From an outsider's perspective, especially after so much recent conflict and tragedy, the answer should be a resounding 'yes'. Yet, the perspective from inside the countries may be less clear and less compelling.

Teacher motivation for greater social cohesion and inclusion and enabling teachers to be more willingly proactive

Many of the comments in the country reports suggest that the causes for poor teacher motivation regarding inclusion lie in the absence or paucity of external tangible rewards, particularly financial payments and professional recognition for the additional effort required (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 54). Sometimes allied with this expectation or hope of financial reward for change towards inclusion is resentment at imposed change:

> Many [teachers] do their jobs almost mechanically. Those teachers feel that promoting inclusion is an additional obligation and do not do it voluntarily, especially because they are not paid additionally for their efforts (researchers' observations from their own practice) (Montenegro country report, p. 46).

Some teacher comments go so far as to suggest that inclusion should be a voluntary act rather than a legal obligation. 'Inclusion must be based on the voluntary principle, it is not right that someone 'gives you' a child with special needs, and you have to work with them' (Serbia country report, p. 39). Resentment at being asked to change is another continuing theme. Many teachers are unemployed and those who have jobs fear losing them – although this does not seem to inspire greater motivation. Fear may even be a factor in how some teachers view the possibility of greater educational inclusion of students from ethnolinguistically communities divided as a result of the recent conflicts. Greater inclusion could result in mergers of smaller schools or separate classes and the loss of jobs in currently segregated establishments (Croatia country report, pp. 36-7)

We are certainly not suggesting that the rights and interests of teachers should be ignored (far from it), but there are concerns that changes that might be within a teacher's scope under current conditions of service and that would, above all, be in the interests of their students, may be impeded by habits of resentment and resistance, however understandable. A more philosophical stance is adopted by the Serbian researchers, acknowledging the huge steps that Serbia's recent Law on the Fundamentals of Education (2009) intends teachers and schools to take towards educational inclusion:

> In our opinion, some of the views expressed are based on fear and worry about change in general and feelings of insecurity about certain new working duties

that seem too distant or unknown (Serbia country report, p. 39).

Day (2004, p, 105) affirms that 'over recent years governments have realised that successful change requires the active cooperation of teachers'. So, how can this willingness to be involved in enacted changes towards inclusion in the Western Balkans be ensured? We do not share the views, expressed in two of the country reports, that school principals do not have the powers or mechanisms to recognise or reward greater commitment in teachers, 'even symbolically' (Serbia, p. 39), or that there are few mechanisms to change negative views (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, p. 34). Leaving aside tangible rewards, the interest, expressed appreciation and enthusiastic leadership of principals and their active engagement with the work of teachers does indeed have an impact on schools' capacity for change (Riley and Louis, 2000; Kosovo country report, pp. 37, 45-7 and 51).

Experiential teacher development may be effective in bringing teachers face-to-face with the reality of social exclusion, possibly through first-hand accounts from parents of young people who are excluded or from young people themselves. For some teachers there may be a Damascene encounter or moment of realisation, when they recognise that their relatively small efforts and actions may change a student's whole life or when a parent explains just how painful exclusion is and how much it means to a family that their child is included.

From the experiences of the students recounted in the country reports above and from the research, it would seem that teachers find it hard to behave inclusively and equitably towards students who, in some way, challenge their perception of themselves as people and especially as teachers and that this frequently leads them to act exclusively. Brown and McIntyre (2003) identified how teachers generally evaluated their own effectiveness according to two main parameters: how well their students progressed and how well their students behaved. Slower learning students, for whatever reason, and students whose behaviour challenges the desired norms, threaten a teacher's professional self-image unless the teacher can 'make' the slow learner progress and the badly behaved student comply. If the teacher cannot effect this change, then students perceived as the cause of this diminished professionalism are judged by teachers to be 'bad' and are not welcomed. There is no reason to believe that this rather crude form of teacher self-evaluation has vanished; indeed, the evidence of its negative projection onto non-standard students is clear in the Western Balkans today.

Issues that cause teachers to behave exclusively – outside of learning and behaviour difficulties that offend their professional identity – may be more about teachers' individual personal identities and about prejudices, fears and dislikes they project as negative stereotypes onto others. It comes as little surprise that the Czechs, stereotypically clever, clean, tidy and organised, may find it hard to accept their Roma community; who have stereotypically, according to Czechs, the opposite

characteristics. Addressing such resistance and negativity in teachers starts with a capacity for reflection and self-critique, anti-discrimination development and experiential learning.

Hargreaves and Fullan (1998, p. 1) describe how teachers' optimism and professional self-belief may be eroded by multiple imposed expectations of change, as currently experienced in the Western Balkan countries, not just by teachers in their classrooms but throughout wider society. These authors suggest that, in order to become proactive in change, teachers need opportunities to re-appraise their own beliefs and values and to orientate themselves towards change alongside colleagues undergoing similar processes (see issue 16 in Section 5.3). In some Western Balkan countries, just such an opportunity may be presented by a development dreaded by some teachers – school self-evaluation systems that require schools, after training, to reflect on their own performance in various aspects of school life (see issue 19b in Section 6.1.2). The most apposite area of self-evaluation to the particular issue under discussion here is ethos, which examines relationships in schools, between teachers and students, with families and the community, and the social and emotional climate in a school (see issue 20 in Section 6.1.2 for further discussion of quality assurance for schools and teachers).

The Index for Inclusion (Booth and Ainscow (2002); see also issue 19b in Section 6.1.2) is a useful school self-evaluation tool that could encourage whole schools and groups of teachers working together to develop more inclusive approaches (see also Stojić et al., 2009). Hanko (2002) asserts that collaborative working by teachers, even on tasks that would not initially be of their choosing, pays dividends in bonding teachers through shared professional development and successful projects.

For some teachers, one way forward is for them to understand the process of change itself and the inter-dependent factors that make it work and that allow them to recognise and address their individual and collective resistance to the changes they are expected to undertake (Fullan, 2007).

In conclusion, it has to be hoped that teachers will grasp the opportunity to move ahead and to feel, think and act more inclusively for the sake of current and future generations of students. The implications for teacher education are enormous and the task facing many teachers in the seven Western Balkan countries is challenging, yet existing inclusion practices in some schools and classrooms in these countries show that it is achievable.

The key implication for this section is that, without teachers' willingness and ability to work inclusively, hopefully and warmly with all their students without exception, social cohesion and inclusion in society cannot develop and flourish. Enabling teachers to develop social inclusion competences and a sound grasp of anti-discriminatory practices is fundamental. The biggest challenge is developing teacher motivation. There should be a particular concern that teachers' perceptions of themselves as members of a profession with a moral

dimension translates into equitable and respectful relations with all students. Teacher development, which has a vital role to play in the complex mechanism or system of change, implies multiple tasks, not just to ensure that student teachers and teachers acquire social inclusion competences, but also to ensure that teacher education itself is fully embedded at all levels within this system and that it inspires teachers to be lifelong learners for whom change is no longer a threat.

5.3 TEACHER REFLECTION, VALUES AND EXPERIENCES OF DIVERSITY

ISSUE 16 THERE IS A DEARTH OF STRUCTURED OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPING COMPETENCES FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The country reports rarely reported structured opportunities for teachers engaging with families, reflecting and entering into dialogue, challenging their own beliefs and appreciating and developing their ability to respond sensitively to the diversity of values held by families, all of which are critical for the development of inclusive education competences.

There is substantial research suggesting that teachers learn in general, but in particular with regard to diversity, through experience and reflection, although such learning is not always necessarily intended by teacher education designers (Frost, 2010; Huizen et al., 2005; Kidd et al., 2008; Kolb, 1984; Liston and Zeichner, 1990; Schön, 1983). Liston and Zeichner (1990) claimed that a reflective orientation to teaching should stress 'the giving of good reasons for educational actions' and should 'take into account the aims, values and purposes of distinct educational traditions, indicate some awareness of alternative social and cultural frameworks, and show an understanding of schools as education institutions' (p. 1). These authors also propose action research as one way of facilitating the elaboration of these rationales in practice.

Teachers' experience of diversity and competence for critical reflection were only rarely raised as important to inclusive education by the participants in the country studies. For instance, the participants in Serbia were reported not to have formulated 'any statements suggesting that they recognise that a teacher's own assumptions influence his/her teaching or that knowledge is value-laden'; the report offered, as an explanation for this gap, the lack of appropriate teacher education for reflexive practices in the wider context of education that 'is characterised by a strong objectivist normative approach with limited space and time for critical reflection and discussion' (Serbia country report, p. 37). In researcher discussions with teachers about competences for inclusion in Montenegro, 'teachers did not speak about understanding the different values that students and their families may hold' and noted was a lack of 'self-reflection in terms of recognising how their assumptions influence their teaching and relationships with different pupils' (Montenegro country report, p. 42).

Nevertheless, some participants in the countries did express an awareness of the importance of experience and reflection, e.g. teachers in Bosnia and Herzegovina pointed to the importance of a confrontation with personal preconceptions and stereotypes, 'a meta-supervision of teachers' own personal behaviour and functioning and reflectivity' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 38). However, the actual opportunities for teachers to gain experiences and engage in reflection seem scarce in the region (Kosovo country report, p. 43; Montenegro country report, pp. 46-7).

When a lack of opportunity or some few instances of such opportunities are mentioned in the country reports, they are usually linked to experiences with students with SEN and Roma students: 'Student teacher views related to students with SEN show the lack of real-life contact with students with different disabilities' (Montenegro country report, p. 52). Teachers in Bosnia and Herzegovina were cited as suggesting that inclusion is taught 'primarily through practical work, exchange of good practice in inclusive classrooms' and that teacher educators must 'motivate and stimulate teachers to write about their positive experience in work with students with special needs, and publish it in order to make it available for students' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 48).

The reports from Croatia and Serbia provided some examples of teacher development opportunities that offered student teachers relevant experiences through engagement in volunteering. Some student teachers who participated in a focus group in Croatia had an opportunity to work with students with SEN through voluntary organisations active in helping students with their homework and providing other forms of help for children and young people; this experience was greatly valued by these prospective teachers (Croatia country report, p. 45). Similar experiences with Roma students were shared with the Serbian researchers (see **BOX 13**).

Both the Croatia and Serbia country researchers pointed out that the described student experiences of educational inclusion were unfortunately not part of the curricular strategy or inclusive culture of the respective teacher education institutions, but rather initiatives supported by a particular teacher educator. This has resulted in these initiatives being discontinued, as a student teacher from Belgrade confirmed:

The programme lasted while we were studying; it was implemented at three primary schools that were willing to receive us. The Faculty was neither wise enough nor willing to recognise the qualities and possibilities of such a learning method in our studies and the programme was closed when we all graduated and left the Faculty (Serbia country report, p. 48).

BOX 13 A STUDENT TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE OF DIVERSITY

The Serbia country report cites a teacher who related her experience as a student teacher at the Teacher Education Faculty of the University of Belgrade.

During the second year of our studies, we listened to some guest teachers talk about how they taught Roma students. Subsequently, we met Roma children of various ages who did not go to school but who cleaned car windshields at traffic lights. We offered them our support to teach them to read and write. By socialising with those children, we experimentally found ways to solve the problems involved in teaching them. Subsequently, we studied the literature, wrote seminar papers and learned what the activities, approach and relationship with these children are called in theory (Serbia country report, p. 48).

The report also offered the following comment on the quoted experience: 'This learning process, spontaneously initiated by student teachers themselves, contributed to their experience of diversity. Real experience of diversity, interactions with diverse families, discussion and dialogue are some of the elements that contribute to developing culturally sensitive dispositions' (Kidd et al., 2008, pp. 316-29). These students later founded the Open Classroom – A Society for Voluntary Support to Children in Learning, in which, through peer learning, they transferred their knowledge to new students who joined the voluntary activity programme working with special needs students at several primary schools in Belgrade (2005-07).' (Serbia country report, p. 48)

The country reports have occasionally related the discussion of teacher preparation for inclusive education to the question of the values promoted by society in general and the role of teachers in promoting those values. For instance, some improvements in 'recognising and respecting cultural and individual differences' and 'understanding the different values held by students and their families' were identified in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, suggesting that these improvements were an outcome of an increased emphasis on multiculturalism in society as a whole; however, also noted was the largely parallel coexistence between the various ethnic communities (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 40).

This kind of discrepancy between proclaimed values and a failure to recognise and translate their implications for individual behaviour has particular implications for teacher development and points to a need to explore the relationship between the practical or technical and the ethical or moral in the nature of teachers' professional knowledge and conduct (Arthur et al., 2005; Carr, 1993; de Ruyter and Kole, 2010). Carr

(1993), for instance, argues that teachers are bound to encounter problems that are not susceptible to resolution in value-neutral, technical terms, but which will involve profound reflection on the diverse and sometimes competing conceptions of what is worthwhile in education.

A belief that seems to be widespread in the region is that teachers act as moral models and have an important role to play in the betterment of their students beyond delivering the curriculum, as can be illustrated by quotes from the country reports: e.g. respondents in Montenegro thought it important to 'encourage an interest in students as people with all their problems and dilemmas and not just show an interest in their education' and 'create an understanding of their own behaviour by teachers and of its influence on the behaviour of children' (Montenegro country report, p. 51); the school principals thought that these understandings 'depended significantly on the ethos of the school, the exchange of experiences [and the] use of more modern teaching methods' rather than on pre-service education. According to them, more practice, seminars and experience exchanges are needed to help teachers develop this aspect of their competence (Montenegro country report, pp. 49-50). We argue that opportunities for teacher development through practice, reflection and collaboration need to be coherently built throughout teacher preparation and working careers (see issues 17-23 in Section 6.1).

The discrepancy between teachers' beliefs about values and their competences (see issue 13 in Section 5.2) corroborates the findings of the project titled Tuning Teacher Education Curriculum in the Western Balkans regarding the high valuation by teachers of their role as moral models in imparting values (Pantić, 2008). The same study established – as illustrated in the country reports – that teacher preparation programmes rarely focus on the issue of values and their implications for teaching and education. Similar observations are made in relation to research into courses relevant for developing social inclusion by Spajić-Vrkaš (2002) or courses on civic education taught at the University of Zagreb, where pre-service teachers have an opportunity to attend courses dealing with human rights and intercultural education (Croatia country report, p. 44).

It is striking – and not only in the region (Combs et al., 1974; Day, 2002; Fives and Buehl, 2008; de Ruyter and Kole, 2010; Korthagen, 2004; Verloop et al., 2001) – that this widespread view that educators' decisions are value-laden and linked to their own beliefs about wider social purposes, human development and wellbeing, is little reflected in teacher education where evidential knowledge useful for practice is seen to be derived from scientific disciplines (Carr, 1999). This view seems to be deeply rooted in the teacher preparation traditions in the region, as will be discussed later (see issue 25 in Section 6.2).

Internationally there is increased research interest in the relationship between teachers' professional

decisions and personal beliefs, with studies of teachers' moral dilemmas viewed through different ethical perspectives (Husu and Tirri, 2003) and of teachers' religious orientation as an important aspect of their identity and values as reflected in their professional roles in public classrooms (White, 2009). These argue for a deep, well-developed study of the moral aspects of teaching in relation to practice that would help student teachers develop 'a clear and systematic understanding of what is moral about teaching' (Sanger, 2008, p. 170). This kind of drawing together of philosophical and empirical inquiry to gain a better understanding of teachers' moral reasoning and decision making seems to be a missing but much needed element of teacher development in the region.

A focus on the moral nature of teachers' work is a challenge for teacher education that is not peculiar to the Western Balkan region. It has long been taken for granted that an element of a teacher's authority is to influence learners positively by imparting values and acting as a role model. For fear of a return to the authoritarianism of the past, liberal-progressive theories have rendered this common perception suspect. The role of a teacher as a positive model has been diminished in the name of individual liberty of thought and action, unimpeded by potentially coercive influences. Increasingly diverse classrooms set particularly difficult challenges for teachers who find themselves in the paradoxical position of initiating the young into certain forms of thinking and behaviour, yet having to do so without undue promotion of any particular mode of 'good' thinking and behaviour, because different students and their parents very probably hold different views about what may be 'good' for them.

Authors de Ruyter and Kole (2010) suggest that teacher education should encourage intra-professional dialogue and debate to help teachers articulate their ideals and make them explicit rather than vague and abstract. Indeed, most teachers would probably easily agree on some general, open-ended ideals, such as wanting their students to achieve and be valued and happy in their classroom. However, when the implications of valuing achievement and valuing students are considered in more detail, using concrete cases of professional practice, the discussions get more heated and agreements are less easily struck. For instance, de Ruyter and Kole (2010) discuss the case of a village primary school principal who, by pursuing his ideal of ensuring that the brightest students got into the best secondary schools, turned school life into a living hell for less able students.

One of the authors of this report, who conducted similar case-based discussions of paternalist and liberal views as the basis for moral authority with teachers in three schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, witnessed a great deal of enthusiasm among teachers for discussions of issues such as authority and power,

openness to parents' requests, religion in public schools and allegiance to educational principles. It is beyond the scope of this report to discuss in detail the teachers' views expressed in these discussions – which ranged from strong views in support of the majority in a given society as the chief custodians of moral order and rectitude, to more liberal-democratic live-and-let-live perspectives with regard to cultural and ethnic diversity. It is interesting, nonetheless, to mention – probably influenced by official and professional thinking of the past – that a significant body of opinion with regard to the legitimacy of parental requests favoured teachers (as professionals) as the best judges of a child's best interests, with parental requests only to be taken into account when considered legitimate[11]. It is also interesting to note the conceptual pitfalls identified when teachers' views on different dilemmas were compared; for instance, there was general agreement with the promotion of critical rationality and independence of thought, yet hardly any dissent from the view that teachers should exemplify good conduct in schools, despite doubts about whether there was much consensus about what this might mean.

Questions about openness to the range of values held by families naturally become particularly difficult in contexts of multifaceted social, cultural, religious and political diversity – as described in the contextual background of this study (see Section 2.1.1). The principal of a school in Pula (Croatia) we visited during the Pula/Brijuni regional meeting informed us that the school's strategy of offering multicultural language and religious classes was difficult to pursue because parents themselves sought segregation by registering at different addresses or forming groups to establish their own school (ETF, 2009a, p. 4). The challenge of starting a dialogue about values, rights and responsibilities is even greater – and potentially troubling – in post-conflict societies, but most authors agree that it is also necessary to be able to face the legacy of conflict by addressing prejudice and stereotyping. For instance, McGlynn (2010) stresses the importance of reflectivity for fighting bias and inequality in post-conflict environments and suggests that liberal-critical approaches based on recognition of diversity, while focusing on shared individual humanity and ideals of equity and social justice, hold promise for developing autonomous individuals and promoting hybridity as a positive identity. Other authors advocate other approaches, but most agree about the importance of building teachers' capacity to reflect and question values underlying issues of knowledge, identity and culture.

What seems relevant in light of the discussion of opportunities for inter-collegiate reflection in the region is that teachers tend to react positively to such opportunities and seem willing to engage in digging deeper into their professional beliefs when the opportunity arises. The researcher who conducted the

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11 Fieldnotes from school visits by Nataša Pantić in March 2009.

field visits in the region received feedback from one of the participating schools that the teachers continued to organise similar discussions themselves.

In conclusion, the implications equally concern policy makers, teacher development providers and school principals, all of whom need to recognise the importance of opportunities for reflection and discussion as an inherent aspect of being a good professional. For both pre-service and in-service teacher development, this implies that time and opportunities for reflection in group dialogue or action research need to be built into programmes and provided in working hours. Reflection tools developed by the Association for Teacher Education in Europe are available[12] that could be useful for teachers, teacher educators and school principals willing to organise discussions in their schools. The tools have been translated into Croatian, from among the languages spoken in the Western Balkan region.

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12 See www.teacherqualitytoolbox.eu

6. INCLUSIVE TEACHER EDUCATION: POLICIES AND PRACTICES

In this chapter we turn to issues 17 to 28, related more directly to teacher preparation and development policies and practices and at the heart of some of the key questions we set out to explore. What is the current situation regarding teacher preparation for inclusive education? How can teacher preparation for inclusive education be improved? Before discussing some issues specific to pre-service teacher education (Section 6.2) and to continuing professional development (Section 6.3), we first consider some overarching issues (Section 6.1).

6.1 OVERARCHING ISSUES

Here we consider a number of issues critical for linking teacher development with changing school practices and relevant teacher competences for inclusive education in contexts of social and cultural diversity. There seems to exist in the region a challenging mismatch between the kind of teacher preparation and development than can be conducive to inclusive education practices, as suggested in research and literature, and the kind of education and development opportunities that teachers in the region receive. We consider how this situation could be changed by building holistic approaches to teacher preparation and development and by developing coherent quality assurance and enhancement frameworks that link theory and practice and develop the competence of teacher educators.

6.1.1 Holistic approaches to teacher preparation and development

Below we discuss two issues together since they are closely linked. First we look at how the education and development of teachers and other players and institutions come together, or not, for the common aim of building more inclusive schools (issue 17). Then we discuss how fragmentation of the education and development of teachers and other education professionals seems to have affected, and continues to affect, perceptions of actors about what competences and preparation for inclusive education involve or should involve (issue 18). These two issues permeate the discussion of all the issues discussed in this regional report and in the seven country reports. We conclude the section by considering some starting moves towards building more holistic approaches to teacher preparation in the Western Balkan region.

| ISSUE 17 | UNCONNECTED PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS FOR ALL SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTS A CHALLENGE TO SYSTEMIC CHANGE |

The fact that teacher, school management and specialist staff training systems in many countries are fragmented between and within institutions makes systemic change very challenging. Links between teacher development and the development of other education professionals are minimal, as are the links between teacher pre-service education and in-service development.

A keynote presentation (Jónasson, 2009) at the Turin regional meeting of December 2009 flagged up a problem of fragmentation in teacher education and development, in terms of pre-service and in-service education, subjects and competences for individual teachers rather than for groups of teachers and other education professionals. Fragmentation of teacher education along all these lines has been reported in the Western Balkan region and, under this issue, we illustrate four types of fragmentation of teacher education identified using data from the country reports and then discuss the implications for teacher development for inclusive education.

Fragmentation in the education of teachers for different levels

One of the most frequently cited forms of fragmentation in teacher education systems is that between teachers operating at different education levels, who are educated at different types of institutions in the region. In Albania, for instance, teachers are prepared at five different types of higher education institution: universities, academies, professional colleges, advanced schools and inter-university centres. Pre-school educators and lower primary teachers (grades 1-5) are educated in what is known as the 'lower-grade cycle' department, whereas upper primary teachers (grades 6-9) and secondary teachers (grades 10-12 under the recently changed system) are trained in universities. University faculties and teacher training departments are responsible for developing and organising syllabi for the inter-university centres. Their main activity is the theoretical and practical preparation of students to equip them with professional teaching skills. Research is a secondary activity; it usually receives little financial support and is not systematically implemented (Albania country report, pp. 37-8).

The situation is similar in other countries in the region. Teacher education faculties prepare primary teachers (and sometimes subject teachers for upper primary schools), while secondary school subject teachers are prepared at non-teacher faculties in the relevant subject discipline, as are most subject teachers for upper primary schools. There is some variation and further fragmentation between and within the relevant faculties and departments, as will be discussed under issue 24 (in Section 6.2). Some attempts to overcome this type of fragmentation in the preparation of teachers for different levels is evident in the establishment of inter-university centres in Albania (described above) and the Faculty of Education in Kosovo (see **BOX 14**).

Fragmentation between pre-service and in-service teacher education

Further fragmentation in teacher development occurs between pre-service and in-service teacher development. The need for in-service development that complements

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BOX 14 KOSOVO FACULTY OF EDUCATION – AN ATTEMPT TO OVERCOME FRAGMENTATION IN THE EDUCATION OF TEACHERS FOR DIFFERENT EDUCATION LEVELS

Kosovo's Ministry of Education (with support from the Canadian-funded Kosovo Education Development Plan, Finnish Support for the Development of Education in Kosovo, Save the Children Denmark and other organisations) established the Faculty of Education at the University of Prishtina in 2002. This new faculty offers a bachelor of education degree in pre-school and primary education (class teachers) and lower secondary education (subject teachers). According to a senior official at this faculty, 'all departments offer extremely up-to-date mandatory and optional courses on inclusive approaches, new teaching strategies and methodologies, children's rights, the psychology of learning and teaching, learning difficulties and the school and community'. The graduates initially encountered some difficulties in finding employment, but the school principals we interviewed stated shortly after that 'the best candidates in terms of inclusion come from teacher training faculties, and in particular from the Faculty of Education, whereas the least informed on inclusive approaches are graduates from professional streams [e.g. technical faculties, economy, and agriculture].' Some critical voices were also heard, claiming that graduates from the Faculty of Education are good professionals but fall short in academic knowledge. According to the country researchers, this may prove true, especially in fields like foreign languages and the natural sciences where there is a shortage of fulltime teaching staff.

Source: Kosovo country report, pp. 39-40

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initial teacher education is recognised, especially for teachers whose pre-service preparation is perceived to be inadequate, such as that for vocational teachers (see issue 24 in Section 6.2). For instance, deans, university professors and school principals in Kosovo are in 'unanimous agreement that there must be a one-year pre-service practical teaching programme for graduates of non-teaching departments, coupled with in-service professional development, as an effort to improve the quality of teaching in both vocational and general schools' (Kosovo country report, p. 44). Similar suggestions have been voiced in other countries (see Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 47). Local government education representatives in Croatia suggest that there is a need for more extensive cooperation between universities and local governments, that both pre-service and in-service teacher education should be linked to local community needs and that:

> … university texts and lectures should reflect the inclusive practices in local schools. The pre-service teacher education curriculum should use local resources and address local concerns in order to ensure local relevance and community involvement and thereby consolidate education decentralisation (Croatia country report, pp. 45-6).

However, little evidence of efforts to build coherent links between these two stages of teacher preparation has been reported in the region. Some initiatives to bridge the two stages of teacher development have been launched, under projects such as the Canadian-funded Kosovo Education Development Plan at the Faculty of Education in Kosovo, as a way of ensuring that all teachers have a relevant degree (see **BOX 37**).

Fragmented, insufficient or non-existent education for teachers, school principals and whole schools

Jónasson (2009) rightly remarked that inclusive education requires the professional development of teachers, school principals and schools as institutions. It requires teachers and other school staff to genuinely, and not passively, participate in school development. The education of teachers, principals and other school staff need not only to take into account the development of the professional skills of these groups of professionals, but also to ensure the development of an inclusive culture within schools as a whole and not just as collectives of individual teachers. This could be ensured, for instance, by providing workplace-embedded in-service education for schools to encourage collaborative efforts at creating a learning culture (Joyce et al., 1999) and by providing coherent support rather than one-off workshops (see issue 26 in Section 6.3). Teacher education seems to primarily target teachers in the Western Balkans, while training for principals is rare, and a peculiar type of fragmentation is present between the education of teachers and other school staff (see point d) below).

School management seems to be generally neglected as a profession. An OECD study (2003) observed that there is almost no systematic training for school principals in the Western Balkan region and that management and

leadership skills need to be enhanced to support more decentralised, more responsive and more accountable schools. The importance of leadership and the need to educate school principals for inclusive philosophies and approaches has been repeatedly emphasised both in the country reports and in the Pula/Brijuni and Turin regional meetings. Yet the need for the realignment of roles at the school and other levels seems to be only rarely recognised by teacher preparation and development providers.

Some instances of such recognition have been reported for in-service development projects. For instance, an in-service training exercise under an education modernisation project in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia involved '15 staff members from the Bureau for the Development of Education who attended training to provide support for teachers across the country' (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 41; see also **BOX 35** in Section 6.3). An example of a project involving teachers and school principals is given in **BOX 15**.

The Kosovo research team reported positive outcomes for school principal participation in education programmes focusing on inclusive approaches:

> School principals who were trained in these approaches were more active in training their staff, organising follow-up activities in their schools and organising in-house peer learning. In the interviews they also proved more demanding regarding training portfolios and approaches to inclusion when hiring new teachers (Kosovo country report, pp. 45-6).

It seems unfortunate that better advantage is not taken of such potential for preparing school principals for inclusive schools. There are a number of possibilities for supporting schools principals in building more inclusive schools and creating supportive environments for teachers to apply relevant competences, acquired, e.g. through online communities and networking or transfers of good practice by placing teachers in different environments. **BOX 16** describes a Swiss example of supporting school change

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BOX 15 JOINT IN-SERVICE EDUCATION FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

School managers picked out good and helpful practices for the development of competences for inclusion in ongoing projects such as Child-Friendly Schools (with its special focus on the inclusion process), projects dedicated to the inclusion of Roma students in education, and the Step by Step project by the NGO of the same name. They put equal stress on the importance of professional teacher groups and the sharing of experiences within these groups.

Source: former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 42

BOX 16 TEACHER EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEACHER EDUCATION CENTRAL SWITZERLAND

A presentation by Professor Priska Sieber (2009) to one of the working groups in Brijuni (Croatia) included an example of an in-service teacher education programme at the University of Teacher Education Central Switzerland, titled the Master of Advanced Studies in Inclusive Education. This programme targets experienced teachers to be trained as specialists for school development towards inclusive education. It covers 1,800 hours and represents 60 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits. The programme objectives include acquisition of competences to promote inclusive cultures, structures and practices. The contents of the programme include: diversity education, teaching and learning (43%); school development, project management, organisational development and coaching (8%); second-language acquisition and intercultural education (13%); reflections on implementation (13%); a master's thesis on an inclusive project (17%); and optional modules on gifted education, special education, second-language acquisition and intercultural education (6%). In order to ensure that the subsequent development processes in schools are supported by the school principals, the school principals have to agree to the participation of the teachers in the training programme and must also take several courses themselves to learn how to support the process towards establishing inclusive schools.

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by a teacher education institution presented at the Pula/Brijuni regional meeting in September 2009 (Sieber, 2009).

Fragmented education of school specialist staff

It has already been mentioned that schools in the region can avail of a range of specialist staff such as pedagogues, psychologists and speech therapists (see issue 8 in Section 4.3.1). Such professionals are usually educated at a pedagogy, psychology or defectology faculty or department. Defectology has been taught at what were formerly Faculties of Defectology, recently renamed as the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences (Zagreb, Croatia), the Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation (Belgrade, Serbia) and the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation (Tuzla, Bosnia). For instance, the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences at the University of Zagreb offers four-year courses in seven departments (covering visual impairment, hearing impairment, etc.) that lead to a graduate degree (Croatia country report, p. 41) and also offers in-service teacher education in the form of seminars and workshops for working with students with SEN. Cooperation between other pre-service teacher

education institutions and the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences of Zagreb is reported to be weak and inadequate. In the view of the Croatian researchers, this fragmentation in the education of teachers and support staff is a possible barrier to the better development of inclusive education. The courses taught at the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences most frequently include topics covering the inclusion of children/people with disabilities in society. Practical experiences linked to the classes are conducted in pre-school institutions and schools. Most schools in Croatia employ expert team members who completed their studies at the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences. The 'programmes of study at this institution have changed greatly during the past five to ten years and … are offering specialisation in inclusive education and rehabilitation' with the focus 'mainly on special education issues relating to disabilities and difficulties' (Croatia country report, p. 46). The study did not include an analysis of programmes for specialist staff so they cannot be commented on here, although such a study does seem to be needed for any future consideration of educating all school staff for inclusive education. Nevertheless, the Croatian researchers' view is that this kind of separate specialist education of specialist staff for students with SEN seems to have influenced perceptions of the competences and responsibilities for dealing with non-standard student profiles, not to mention the mentioned widespread understanding of inclusive education as focusing primarily on students with SEN.

ISSUE 18   THE LIMITED CONCEPT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION RESULTS IN DEFICIT REMEDIATION RATHER THAN HOLISTIC AND CONSTRUCTIVE EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES

Many of the moves to develop inclusion under the prevailing narrow concept of inclusive education have resulted in measures and training that are specific rather than generic and, debatably, more focused on what is 'wrong' with the groups to be included and how this may be remediated, rather than on reducing and eliminating systemic and institutional obstacles to inclusion through whole school approaches, anti-discrimination policies and practices and peer-support strategies.

Perceptions of teacher competence for inclusive education by teachers themselves and other participants in the country studies seem to imply that the education of students with additional support needs requires specialist knowledge and skills in dealing with particular learning difficulties and is, therefore, the responsibility of a specialist who has such knowledge and skills (see issue 14 in Section 5.2). For instance, the widespread understanding of inclusive education somehow seems to imply that inclusive education calls for a separate and different approach that is not integral to their programmes: 'Teachers seem to understand teacher training for inclusive education as an add-on element for

existing study programmes'; however, 'some teachers are already aware that inclusive education is also about the way we teach all subjects' (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 37).

Some critical voices regarding specialist education for inclusion are reported in the country reports, such as the comments of this student teacher:

> Teachers don't know how to work with children who are not mainstream because at the faculty they are taught that children are a single category. They are taught that there are no differences. The result of such teacher education is that they fail to differentiate between the concepts of being equal and being the same and they therefore disregard the idea that 'we are not the same, but we should be equal.' Therefore, it's not unusual that teachers are afraid of diversity (Serbia country report, p. 50).

The assumption that different types of education are needed to teach different types of students also seems to be deeply rooted among policy makers in some countries. For instance, in Montenegro 'an inclusive education subject is taught during the third year in the department for the teacher training' and the fact that there is no separate Faculty for Special Education Needs in the country is seen to be creating 'obstacles in terms of providing early rehabilitation for some children with SEN and for additional professional support of various kinds throughout education, e.g. direct support for students, support for mainstream teachers, advice for parents, etc.' (Montenegro country report, p. 49). The underlying assumption seems to be that the need for specialist knowledge and skills for inclusive education can be more adequately met by providing lengthy specialist education for specialist staff rather than by integrating the necessary competences into teacher education programmes. An example of a programme developed in Bosnia and Herzegovina in an attempt to overcome this kind of fragmented education of teachers and specialist staff is presented in **BOX 31** (Section 6.2). The problem with this assumption is that it limits the perception of which teachers are qualified to teach. The belief that they are not qualified to teach students who might be experiencing difficulties in learning leads to a tendency for teachers to place responsibility on other professionals; they thus fail to view themselves as valid actors in the process of identifying the difficulties experienced by students and in the development of support strategies (as discussed under issue 14 in Section 5.2).

How can the challenge of building more holistic approaches to teacher education be faced?

We refer to Jónasson's (2009) suggestion that inclusive education requires the professional development of teachers, school principals and schools.

It seems that the focus thus far has predominantly been put on the education of teachers, although pre-service teacher education is often characterised as inadequate (as will be discussed in Section 6.2) and in-service teacher education is sometimes reported to be also insufficient.

For instance, several participants in focus groups with teachers in Kosovo mentioned the unequal distribution of training opportunities: 'Training is very important, but there are often 10 to 15 teachers in a school who go to all the training events, while the others are not even aware that these are going on' (Kosovo country report, p. 49). The quality and availability of in-service teacher education will be discussed under issues 26, 27 and 28 (Section 6.3).

With regard to holistic teacher education we can assert that starting with the education of teachers seems reasonable and can also be justified as a worthwhile investment from the research evidence, which recognises teachers as the most important in-school factor influencing the quality of educational output (Hattie, 2003). However, it may not be sufficient for promoting inclusive school practices.

The importance of the school environment and support for inclusive and innovative teacher practices is, perhaps, best illustrated in the case of novice teachers. School characteristics such as collegiality, mentoring of novice teachers and the school's vision of cultural diversity have been identified among factors contributing to more positive job experiences for beginning teachers in a multi-ethnic school (Piot et al., 2010). Lack of collegiality and inadequate feedback or recognition has been reported as reasons for leaving the teaching profession (European Commission, 2010).

Novice teachers may or may not be regarded as a source of new and refreshing ideas in a school. An innovation-minded teacher educator from Serbia described what happens to her student teachers when they started working:

> When they go to the school they do not go to a context that enables them to implement what they learned here in the best way. They go back to an inert environment, where after two years they … adapt. Only the strongest ones have courage to stand up to their beliefs, the others conform … and all the effort here was in vain (interview conducted at the Faculty of Sciences and Mathematics, University of Belgrade, January 2009).

In other places as well it has been suggested that novice teachers tend to integrate quickly into an existing culture and adapt themselves to the norms of their schools (European Commission, 2010). The induction stage is an important stage in a teacher's professional life as this is a transitional period when teachers are ready to learn and modify practices before obtaining a full licence. All the countries in the region have an induction period, slightly variable in duration and ranging from a minimum of six months to the more common full year of probation before teachers are fully registered as professionals (see, e.g. Montenegro country report, p. 49).

The European Commission report (2010) suggests that induction programmes can contribute to the development of a learning culture in schools that support the learning of all teachers in the schools, and not just those beginning their careers, by providing personal and professional support from mentors and peers who can help teachers cope with practical problems and develop a sense of belonging to the school community. Schools can model teacher behaviour into conformity and inertia – or can encourage teachers to be creative and resourceful on their own initiative in their responses to diversity. But, schools themselves need to learn and, as Jónasson (2009) rightly remarks, schools can be slow learners.

Changing school cultures and sub-cultures along the lines of professions or school subjects (teachers of the same subject can be more alike than teachers of the same school) is historically and contextually embedded and change is likely to take time. There are, nevertheless a number of policies and practices that could be helpful in building a more collaborative culture within schools: creating opportunities for exchanges of practical knowledge among teachers and between teachers and other school staff; allowing time for reading, experimenting and reflecting; establishing mentoring and peer-learning systems for teachers from one or more schools; ensuring access to external expertise; engagement in action research and collaborative projects; and involvement in school development planning and self-evaluation, e.g. using tools such as the Index for Inclusion (Booth and Ainscow (2002); see also issue 19 in Section 6.1.2) and other self-evaluation tools (see MacBeath et al., 2000).

David Frost (2009; 2010) points to the potential in teachers influencing each other and the importance of peer support, e.g. through discussions with colleagues or observation of classes, collaborative lesson planning and building networks and learning communities. Such collaboration can be initiated through in-service teacher development projects. Some examples of opportunities for collaboration created through in-service education have been reported in the region, such as the Teacher Learning Community Network in Croatia (see **BOX 17**)

BOX 17 THE CROATIAN TEACHER LEARNING COMMUNITY NETWORK

The Croatia country report (p. 47) describes in-service teacher education that takes place in teachers' activity groups, where teachers have the opportunity to exchange experiences and examples of good practice in their work. The National Centre for External Evaluation of Education is in charge of a project on peer learning that is being piloted among teachers in several schools in Croatia. In addition, teachers are involved in a number of learning communities that support professional growth by providing opportunities for teachers to think, talk, read and write about their daily work, grouped in an online Teacher Learning Community Network.

Source: http://mzu.sbnet.hr/index.php

Unfortunately, opportunities for collaborative professional development have been rarely reported. Most in-service teacher education seems to involve one-off seminars or a series of training sessions for which individual teachers apply, usually on their own initiative. Although such training has largely been seen to have contributed to developing inclusive education competences for considerable numbers of teachers in some countries, many participants have recognised that there is a need to capture and build on such individual expertise in more systematic approaches to teacher professional development. For instance, in-service programmes offered by national and international NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina include 'some very helpful projects in inclusive and multicultural education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Respondents recognised their high quality implementation'. And a policy maker from the same country reported that 'a teacher support network is slowly being formed in accordance with the bottom-up principle, and there is a proposal to redefine the role of the pedagogical institutes by opening special departments for ongoing teacher education' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 53). Newly adopted legislation in Serbia recognises the value of collaborative planning at the local level by instructing 'school boards in every educational institution to draw up a plan for the professional development of teachers' and providing for 'the possibility of the local community establishing a centre for the professional development of teachers' (Serbia country report, p. 51).

In conclusion, teacher education and professional development need to be regarded as a lifelong continuum involving different stages that need to be coherently linked. Creating a collaborative school culture provides a favourable learning environment for all school staff and the school as a whole. This can be of particular importance for novice teachers in their first years of dealing with the full reality of teaching in a school. There is much need for more cooperation between teacher development providers and schools so as to overcome the heritage of fragmented teacher education and to build communities of practice (discussed further under issue 22 in Section 6.1.3, and issues 26, 27 and 28 in Section 6.3). Self-evaluation and quality assurance procedures, discussed in the next section, can be instrumental in building holistic and more inclusive approaches to teacher development.

6.1.2 Quality inclusive teacher preparation and development

Across the countries concerned, quality assurance systems are being established for the various parts of the systems related to teacher development. Pre-service teacher education programmes are covered by quality assurance procedures for higher education institutions and their study programmes. Some countries have developed quality assurance procedures for in-service teacher education programmes, although these are less developed (see issue 21 in Section 6.1.2). Other quality assurance procedures are also relevant for teacher development understood as a lifelong, interactive process,

such as external and internal school evaluation procedures and systems of teacher promotion.

If inclusive education is to become integral to quality standards in education and teaching and in teacher development, it is essential for the requirements relevant to inclusive practice to be coherently and consistently built into quality assurance systems at all levels: individual teacher evaluation, school evaluation and evaluation of teacher development programmes and of the institutions that provide them.

Here we consider three interrelated issues identified in the region in relation to the quality assurance of teacher development and its effectiveness in ensuring the quality of teacher development for inclusive education. Under issue 19 we explore the links between the different mentioned quality assurance procedures and their relevance for inclusive education. Under issue 20 we consider the role of teaching standards in ensuring a systematic implementation of inclusive practices. Finally, under issue 21 we consider how teacher education development providers and programmes are quality assured and the implications for inclusive education.

> **ISSUE 19 QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS IN EDUCATION ARE NOT EFFECTIVE AND LACK FORMATIVE LINKS IN GENERAL AND IN RELATION TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

The links between internal and external school evaluation and the evaluation of teachers are unclear or non-existent in many Western Balkan countries, nor are the connections between school and teacher evaluation and teacher standards and development clear. This situation precludes a coherent system-wide promotion and implementation of inclusive education practices.

Under this issue we consider a) the links between school and teacher quality assurance procedures and b) the links between school evaluation and inclusive education and their relevance for teacher competence and development.

Links between school quality assurance procedures relevant for teacher development

In the absence of commonly accepted teacher standards in most Western Balkan countries (see issue 20 in Section 6.1.2), criteria for teacher and institution quality seem to be developed independently from other quality assurance components relevant to teacher development. For instance, the criteria for accrediting pre-service teacher education programmes do not seem to take into account changes at the lower levels of education that have implications for teacher preparation and development. Even when teacher education is guided by a set of prescribed standards, as in Kosovo, these do not seem to link to teacher assessment and evaluation systems or to career progression (see Kosovo country

report, p. 37). Similarly, when teachers are legally obliged to complete a certain number of hours of accredited in-service teacher training (see, e.g. Serbia country report, p. 51), there is no link to an evaluation of the impact of such training on the development of teacher competence or on changes in teacher practice.

The importance of school-level quality assurance procedures for inclusive education and teacher development does not seem to be sufficiently recognised in the Western Balkan countries. Some countries, however, have started to develop external and internal school evaluation systems; e.g. Montenegro and Serbia are developing school self-evaluation systems linked to external school inspections through the use of a shared handbook. In Serbia, a self-evaluation handbook has been developed, in cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the British Council, and piloted in 100 primary and secondary schools (Ministry of Education of Serbia, 2006; Serbia country report, p. 41). Both the Serbian and the Montenegrin (Ministry of Education and Science of Montenegro, 2007) versions are based on a Scottish handbook titled How Good Is Our School? (HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007). **BOX 18** shows extracts from How Good Is Our School? as an illustration of what school self-evaluation and inspection are about.

BOX 18 EXTRACTS FROM HOW GOOD IS OUR SCHOOL?

1. At the heart of self-evaluation are three questions:

■ How are we doing?

■ How do we know?

■ What are we going to do now?

Inspection is when this process is carried out by independent external assessors.

2. The quality of what is observed within different indicators of schools' performance may be placed by assessors at six levels, from unsatisfactory to excellent.

LEVEL 6	excellent	outstanding or sector leading
LEVEL 5	very good	major strengths
LEVEL 4	good	important strengths with areas for improvement
LEVEL 3	adequate	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
LEVEL 2	weak	important weaknesses
LEVEL 1	unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

3. Sources of evidence for self- and external school evaluation (the list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive)

QUANTITATIVE DATA

■ examination results

■ 5-14 levels of attainment

■ value-added measures of performance

■ pupils' progress from prior levels of attainment

■ pupils' progress in meeting targets

■ overall progress towards set targets

■ data collected nationally or locally

■ analysis of other key performance data, such as finance, pupil attendance, pupil exclusion rates, progression rates and leavers' destinations

PEOPLE'S VIEWS

■ individual interviews with members of staff

■ individual interviews with parents

■ group discussions

■ discussions with members of the pupil forum

■ focus groups

■ working parties

■ questionnaires and surveys to gauge satisfaction and to elicit suggestions for improving effectiveness

■ written responses and detailed comments team meetings at all levels

DIRECT OBSERVATIONS OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

■ shadow individual pupils

■ follow a class

■ observe lessons

■ video record your own teaching

■ exchange classes

■ observe each other in pairs

■ work alongside other teachers

DIRECT OBSERVATIONS OF DOCUMENTS

■ pupils' work

■ reports to parents

■ profiling of pupils' responses to tasks

■ diaries or records of work

■ programmes of study or schemes of work

■ teachers' plans

■ progress reports on the development plan

■ course materials across the ability range

■ policies and guidelines

■ minutes of meetings

Source: Adapted by the authors from HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007

According to the handbook, school development planning should be based on an evaluation of different aspects of school work conducted by teachers, parents, students, school boards (including local community representatives) and local authorities. However, school self-evaluation has been characterised as underdeveloped, without clear effects of its implementation (Serbia country report, p. 39).

The Montenegrin and Serbian researchers describe the intended use of school self-evaluation procedures for selecting in-service teacher development opportunities (Montenegro country report, p. 47), for school development planning and for the development of external school evaluation criteria, which in Serbia is undertaken as part of a different project supported by the Netherlands (Serbia country report, pp. 41-2). It is too early to judge the effectiveness of the links between school self- and external evaluation, as school evaluation implementation is at a very early stage.

Commitment to a shared understanding of the purpose of internal and external evaluation is crucial for institutions and their staff in the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality, quality assurance and enhancement, in schools and in other institutions concerned with teacher development, such as advisory units and pedagogical institutes. Bearing in mind the importance of the school for the delivery of inclusive education (see the conceptualisation of inclusive education in Section 2.2.1) and the importance of in-school collaboration (see issues 17 and 18 in Section 6.1.1), it is essential that teachers are evaluated as team players as well as individuals. Therefore, the development of school self-evaluation practices and teachers' competence and motivation to participate in those practices are all central to the promotion of inclusive education in the Western Balkans.

We now turn to the question of how school quality assurance procedures can contribute to more inclusive school practices and teacher development for inclusive education.

Links between school evaluation and inclusive education

A number of schools and teachers were reported to have been trained for inclusive education using the Index for Inclusion (Booth and Ainscow, 2002), a tool for developing inclusive schools and the capacities of the involved stakeholders, available in Albanian and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian translations. The Index for Inclusion includes practical material that helps schools reduce barriers to learning and participation by students and develop as institutions by encouraging the valuing of all students equally (Sieber, 2009). A proposal for building inclusive practice indicators into school evaluation and inspection procedures has been developed by one of the authors of this report in the course of her engagement as a foreign consultant for Save the Children UK in Montenegro and Serbia, where use of the Index for Inclusion was promoted. Somehow marrying the Index for Inclusion and the above-mentioned self-evaluation documents (see **BOX 19**) was proposed as a way of

ensuring continued use after Save the Children ends its work in Serbia and in Montenegro.

The benefits, for the development of relevant teacher competences, of school quality assurance procedures that integrate Index for Inclusion indicators relevant to inclusive education does not seem to be either sufficiently recognised or consistently supported by existing quality assurance systems in the region. The only country report that explicitly makes reference to the development of teacher competences for inclusive education as part of a quality assurance framework is that for Kosovo, whose Framework of Standards for Professional Practice for Teachers (see issue 20 in Section 6.1.2):

> […] discusses the group of skills relating to class management and states that the teacher should 'be aware of the various roles and models of teachers, know the needs of the specific group of students, reflect critically about his/her attitude and adapt it to the students' needs, understand the psychology of children and offer diverse learning activities to meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs […] the Framework also states that teachers should 'support and act on the basis of principles of tolerance and equality in the class and beyond, ensure equal rights and opportunities in education for all students regardless of gender, ethnicity and religious background, and ensure equal rights to education for children with special learning needs, including those with learning difficulties and talented children' (Kosovo country report, p. 37).

The research team in Kosovo witnessed education institutions' efforts to remind teachers of competences – including competences for inclusion – by putting up posters produced by the Ministry of Education. However, assessing to what extent the standards have helped improve practice has been complicated by the lack of monitoring activity (see issue 14 in Section 5.2). The same competence-based standards for teachers have been reported to be used as the basis for standards for the pre-service teacher education programmes (Kosovo country report, pp. 34 and 37).

In conclusion, setting teacher competences as common benchmarks for teachers, schools, inspectorates and teacher education institutions does seem to have the potential to help to forge an agreement between relevant players about teacher quality criteria, as will be discussed under issue 20. It would also ensure that competences addressing the educational and social inclusion of all children, and especially those at risk of marginalisation, are put forward and strongly defended.

It is not sufficient, of course, to adopt a set of competence-based standards to ensure their implementation in practice. To develop the necessary competences, it is necessary to develop assessment and monitoring procedures, both within teacher development programmes and as part of school-level quality assurance procedures (Kosovo country report, p. 37), and also to develop clear systems of support and relevant career progression for teachers.

BOX 19 BUILDING THE INDEX FOR INCLUSION INTO SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

The following extract illustrates how relevant Index for Inclusion indicators can be used for school self-evaluation relevant to inclusive education (Section 5 of How Good Is Our School? (Delivery of Education) – Themes 5.3: Meeting learning needs and 5.6: Equality and fairness). The corresponding page numbers are provided.

Indicator 5.3 MEETING LEARNER NEEDS

THEMES

■ Tasks, activities and resources

■ Identification of learning needs

■ The roles of teachers and specialist staff

■ Meeting and implementing the requirements of legislation

KEY FEATURES. This indicator relates to the school's arrangements for meeting the needs of all learners, including potentially vulnerable groups, and addressing barriers to learning. This includes identifying the needs of, and providing support and challenge for, groups and individuals who may have additional support needs arising from, for example, the learning environment, family circumstances, disability or health needs or social and emotional factors.

No.	Indicator	Page
A.2.1	There are high expectations for all students	49
A.2.5	Staff seek to remove barriers to learning and participation in all aspects of the school	53
B.1.6	The school arranges teaching groups so that all students are valued	60
B.2.1	All forms of support are coordinated	61
C.1.1	Teaching is planned with the learning of all students in mind	70
C.1.2	Lessons encourage the participation of all students	71
C.1.4	Students are actively involved in their own learning	73
C.1.6	Assessment contributes to the achievements of all students	75
C.2.3	Staff develop resources to support learning and participation	83

Indicator 5.6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

THEMES

■ Approaches to inclusion

■ Promoting equality and fairness

■ Ensuring equality and fairness

KEY FEATURES. This indicator relates to the steps taken by the school to promote and ensure a strong sense of equality and fairness through the curriculum and across all aspects of its work. It focuses on the parts played by staff in the school working with partner agencies to ensure that all learners are included in the life of the school. It ensures that diversity in the school community and beyond is valued.

No.	Indicator	Page
A.1.1	Everyone is made to feel welcome	42
A.1.4	Staff and students treat one another with respect	45
A.1.5	There is partnership between staff and parents/carers	46
A.2.3	Students are equally valued	51
A.2.6	The school strives to minimise all forms of discrimination	54
B.1.3	The schools seeks to admit all students from its locality	57
B.2.2	Staff development activities help staff to respond to student diversity	62
B.2.8	Barriers to attendance are reduced	68
C.2.5	School resources are distributed fairly so that they support inclusion	85

Source: Adapted by the authors from HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007; and Booth and Ainscow, 2002.

There is also a need to build links between different quality assurance systems: those for schools with those for teacher education and those for pre-service teacher education with those for in-service teacher development programmes. Quality assurance in the latter area becomes even more important as in-service teacher development programmes grow in number and diversity.

ISSUE 20 **TEACHERS WOULD WELCOME COMPETENCE-BASED TEACHER STANDARDS BUT HAVE AN OVERLY NARROW CONCEPT OF THE COMPETENCES THAT ENSURE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

Most of the Western Balkan countries lack established initial teacher competence-based standards that relate specifically to inclusive approaches to education or to any other subsequent teacher standards. Feedback from research into the concept and use of competences to establish teacher standards tended to be positive. However, teachers tended to think that more specific and narrow competences were more useful than the broader range of competences that might actually make greater systemic impact in relation to inclusion.

The work of teachers everywhere is increasingly observed critically by the public (Libman and Zuzovsky, 2006). In many countries, reforms directed at the decentralisation of decision making (see issue 7 in Section 4.2) are coupled with those targeting an increase in school and teacher accountability. Questions have been raised about the possible role of governments in quality control, suggesting almost universal practices of setting standards or benchmarks, including determining what characteristics quality teachers should possess (Cowen, 2002; Harris, 1997; Libman and Zuzovsky, 2006; Storey, 2006).

This issue, referring to standards, deals with some of the current central concerns in teacher policies internationally. What should be the nature, form and purpose of teacher standards, as instruments for ensuring teacher accountability, while granting the necessary autonomy to the teaching profession? And who should be in charge of standards setting?

Although clearly set teacher standards do not exist in most Western Balkan countries – and, far less, teacher standards relating to inclusive education – some policy activity targeting increased accountability in education has been reported in the country reports. For instance, in Montenegro some standards for teachers have been developed as part of the criteria for promoting teachers, although they do not specifically refer to competences or inclusive practices (Montenegro country report, p. 47). In Albania there is ongoing development of performance standards for school directors, teachers, trainers and local authority specialists and a code of ethics for teachers is being drafted (Albania country report, p. 39). Croatia has intentions to develop competence-based teacher

standards to guide pre-service teacher education programmes (Croatia country report, p. 43). Serbia's attempt to develop teacher standards has not produced much effect due to a lack of agreement and coordination between the different institutions in charge of the task (Serbia country report, p. 43). Most progress towards coherent teacher standards development seems to have been made in Kosovo:

> The Framework of Standards for Professional Practice for Teachers in Kosovo was developed in 2004 by local and international experts 'to set the criteria for teaching quality assurance in Kosovo.' This regulation classifies the teacher skills and competences for inclusion into sections such as academic, professional, practical, social and planning. The philosophies of inclusion, equality, social context, tolerance and human rights are repeatedly encountered throughout the provisions of this document (Kosovo country report, p. 37).

Feedback from research into the concept and use of competences to establish teacher standards tended to be positive, in that teachers saw this as something they would welcome. This finding seems to corroborate the findings of other studies exploring the topic in the region. Pavel Zgaga (2003b) established that education professionals in the Western Balkans share the view that teaching should be a regulated profession (p. 10). The Tuning Teacher Education Curricula in the Western Balkans project (Pantić, 2008) also found that teachers in the region are largely in favour of setting the competences they need in practice as the basis for teacher education curricula. The same study established that teachers' own perceptions of important teacher competences reflect high values placed on subject knowledge and competences related to pedagogical, developmental and guidance aspects of teaching; perceived as less important were competences related to a broader understanding of the issues involved in the education context and systems. Similarly, the teachers who participated in this ETF-funded study were reported as considering useful competences as being more specific and narrow in their focus than the broader range of competences that might make a greater systemic impact in relation to inclusion (see issue 13 in Section 5.2).

We now turn to the question of who should be in charge of standards setting. It is not uncommon for governments to be substantially involved in control over entry to the teaching profession, whether through licensing procedures or the accreditation of teacher education institutions. In many countries, government-set standards, conceived of as 'what teachers should know and be able to do' (Libman and Zuzovsky, 2006, p. 37) have largely affected state-mandated programmes of teacher preparation, leading them to focus on the competences teachers need in practice. However, the way governments have attempted to regulate the issue of teacher quality has provoked a good deal of controversy (Day, 2002; Elbaz, 1992; Lasky, 2005; Libman and Zuzovsky, 2006; O'Connor, 2008). Campaigns for more governmental control over curricula, assessments and teacher standards have been criticised for bringing in

teaching-to-the-test practices, for jeopardising teachers' professional autonomy and opportunities to exercise discretionary judgement and for endangering the moral and social values essential to teachers' identities (Day, 2002). Some education policy makers have attempted to reconcile the need for quality assurance with the need to allow autonomy to teachers. For instance, teacher standards with the status of guidance in Scotland include significant references to values in teaching, alongside the standards of knowledge and skills (GTC Scotland, 2006). Part of the guidance document for teacher education

referring to professional values and personal commitment is reproduced in **BOX 20**. The Scottish teacher standards have attracted much interest among policy makers in other European countries and among international standard setting bodies.

One of the benefits of lagging behind international trends often cited in the region is the advantage of hindsight, i.e. being able to view the effects of similar interventions in other places. For instance, David Frost (2009) tells us that, in England, government interventions to increase the

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BOX 20 STANDARDS FOR INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION: ELEMENTS RELEVANT TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

This extract lists the competences relevant to inclusive education that all student teachers (pre-school, primary and secondary) must be able to demonstrate in practice at the end their teacher education and before being allowed to qualify and enter into their probationary year of employment. Competence is assessed in theory but also especially in practice while on placement in schools during the teacher education course.

Professional values and personal commitment

Element of the standard	By the end of the programme of initial teacher education, student teachers will:
3.1 Value and demonstrate a commitment to social justice, inclusion and protecting and caring for children.	■ Demonstrate that they respect and value children and young people as unique, whole individuals.
	■ Demonstrate respect for the rights of all children and young people without discrimination as defined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991, the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 and the Additional Support for Learning Act 2005.
	■ Demonstrate commitment to promoting and supporting the Children's Charter and the Framework for Standards for protecting children and young people.
	■ Demonstrate that they value and promote fairness and justice and adopt anti-discriminatory practices in respect of gender, sexual orientation, race, disability, age, religion, culture and socioeconomic background.
	■ Demonstrate a willingness to intervene effectively to promote, support and safeguard the individual development, wellbeing and social competence of the pupils in their class/register groups and to raising these pupils' expectations of themselves and others.
	■ Know how to follow local child protection procedures and demonstrate an understanding of their role in keeping children safe and well and of the importance of sharing concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child.
3.3 Value, respect and show commitment to the communities in which they work.	■ Demonstrate a commitment to promoting and responding to partnerships within the community – with professional colleagues, other professions, parents, other agencies and the learners themselves.
	■ Know about environmental issues and be able to contribute to education for sustainable development.
	■ Know about the factors which contribute to health and wellbeing and be willing to contribute to promoting healthy lifestyles.
	■ Know about the principles of education for citizenship and be willing to encourage pupils to be active, critical and responsible citizens within a local, national, international and global context.
	■ Demonstrate a willingness to work cooperatively with other professionals, recognising their different skills and possible different value bases.

Source: Authors, adapted from General Teaching Council for Scotland, 2006

accountability of schools, although successful to some extent in raising academic attainment, have also raised concerns about the status of teachers as autonomous professionals, as 'some good teachers have become disenchanted by the bureaucracy and feelings of powerlessness' while 'there still remains a hard core of ineffective teachers who seem immune to the wide range of accountability measures and professional development opportunities' (p. 1).

To avoid these pitfalls in external standard setting, it is paramount to empower teachers and the professional groups that represent them to participate in setting requirements for group membership and the standards defined as professional competences (Wubbels, 1995). This argument is supported by a number of studies that conclude that reforms incongruent with teachers' perceptions of their professional identity are likely to fail (Beijaard et al., 2000; Day, 2002; Lasky, 2005; Verloop et al., 2001).

In conclusion, setting standards is a way of ensuring that the agreed quality teaching standard is promoted as a requirement for each and every teaching professional. Including teacher competences for inclusive education in teacher standards would be a significant step towards overcoming attitudes which view competence for inclusive education as a voluntary additional effort of individual teachers rather than as an integral part of quality education to which every teacher should aspire (issue 15 in Section 5.2). It is also a way to ensure coherence in different quality assurance systems (issue 19 in Section 6.1.2). There seems to be wide support in the Western Balkans for the competence-based model of teacher standards. However, it is important that these competences be broadly conceptualised to include generic aspects of teacher competence that are essential to understand inclusive education as promoted in this study. There is also a need to involve all relevant stakeholders in the debate about teacher standards, but primarily teachers themselves.

ISSUE 21 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION SYSTEMS FOR PRE- AND IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES AND PROVIDERS ARE INSUFFICIENTLY DEVELOPED

Quality assurance and accreditation systems for pre-service and in-service providers and programmes are at an early stage of development, as are systems for schools and teachers and teacher competence standards (issues 19 and 20 above). However, together they indicate an overall even if still tentative trend towards developing quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms in all the Western Balkan countries.

Quality assurance mechanisms developed to target different levels of the system (higher education institutions providing teacher education, schools,

teachers, etc.) need to be coherent to enable systematic steering towards strategic aims in the entire education system. Under issue 19 we discussed quality assurance at the school and teacher level. Here we discuss quality assurance and accreditation systems in turn for pre-service and in-service teacher education providers and programmes.

Quality assurance and accreditation for pre-service providers and programmes

Pre-service teacher education programmes in all seven Western Balkan countries are subject to quality assurance and accreditation procedures defined in overarching national higher education legislation. Since the country reports do not describe quality assurance mechanisms and procedures as such, this discussion is based on an additional review of documents primarily, Bologna Process national reports (see Bibliography) and our own knowledge of the subject.

Development of quality assurance mechanisms and accreditation procedures for pre-service teacher education programmes is set within the broader framework of the general development of quality assurance and accreditation in the overall higher education system. The development of quality assurance and accreditation for pre-service teacher education programmes and providers in the Western Balkan countries has largely been initiated as a result of commitments undertaken by the ministers responsible for higher education within the Bologna Process. The European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ENQA, 2005) assume, among other matters, the establishment of external and internal quality assurance systems for all higher education institutions. All the Western Balkan countries have adopted legislation regulating external and internal quality assurance in higher education; therefore, general regulations governing the external and internal evaluation of higher education programmes apply to the evaluation of teacher education programmes.

However, the extent to which general regulation can respond to the specificities of teacher education depends greatly on the particular components of the overarching quality assurance and accreditation system. More specifically, although higher education institutions providing pre-service education programmes may be required to include specific content in their programmes or introduce and conduct practice and induction periods under clear guidance and mentorship, the mechanisms to ensure that these requirements are met might not be in place. In particular, the required practice and induction period, as time spent outside the higher education institution, might easily be left out of the quality assurance procedures. Additionally, the teaching profession itself may be regulated through qualification requirements, prescribed teacher competences, standards (see issue 20 in Section 6.1.2) and licensing procedures. To ensure comprehensive pre-service education programmes that meet professional requirements, quality assurance mechanisms should also take into account whether education programmes meet agreed professional standards. In the context of emerging policies aimed at

creating inclusive education systems, the development of teacher education programmes would need to include competences that empower future teachers to work effectively in contexts of social and cultural diversity. Quality assurance mechanisms, if designed with long-term education policies in mind, can contribute to ensuring that the learning outcomes of teacher education programmes correspond to envisaged teacher competences. Furthermore, the development of internal quality assurance systems can form the basis for creating flexible and adaptive education programmes and curricula, which can effectively respond to education and teacher education policies and cater for the needs of potentially diverse student bodies.

These issues can be addressed through the general regulation of higher education if the general regulation clearly states that additional specific documents – when regulating either programmes or the profession to which a programme leads – must be taken into account when developing external and internal standards, mechanisms and procedures. However, many countries opt to adopt additional, specific regulations for teacher education programmes. As the Information Network on Education in Europe (Eurydice) report on Quality Assurance in Teacher Education in Europe (Eurydice, 2006) found, out of 30 Eurydice countries or regions, 24 had only general regulations in place, while teacher education in six countries was governed by both general and specific regulations. However, most countries in their general regulations also refer to one or more documents or guidelines amongst official documents establishing quality criteria that deal specifically with teacher education. Where specific regulations exist, in most cases they focus on particular stages of initial teacher education, e.g. the professional training phase or a particular part of this phase in the consecutive model or the induction phase (Eurydice, 2006).

An example of specific quality assurance standards for teacher pre-service education providers and programmes in England is given in **BOX 21** below, to illustrate an institutional audit approach to quality assurance that checks whether the relevant systems and structures within a higher education institution support the proclaimed goals of the institution and programme and whether documents and other evidence gathered through institutional visits corroborate this (Parri, 2006).

BOX 21 SPECIFIC QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR TEACHER PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION PROVIDERS AND PROGRAMMES IN ENGLAND

In England, the arrangements for external quality evaluation are set out in the Framework for the Inspection of Initial Teacher Training for the Award of Qualified Teacher Status 2005-11. It takes account of the standards for qualified teacher status and the requirements for initial teacher training which set out what providers must do. The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) is responsible for conducting inspections of all providers of programmes leading to qualified teacher status for maintained schools as well as programmes of further education teacher training validated by higher education institutions. The inspection findings lead to a published, written report for each provider making two main judgements:

■ On the overall effectiveness of the provision in securing high-quality outcomes for trainees

■ On the capacity of leadership and management at all levels to secure further improvement and/or sustain high-quality outcomes.

These judgements are made based on the guiding questions and factors specified in the framework. Here we provide one example of a guiding question and factors which address the capacity of the leadership and management of higher education institutions to reflect changes in education policy effectively in their teacher education programmes, namely, the introduction of social inclusion policy to the education system.

Judgement on the capacity of leadership and management at all levels to secure further improvement and/or sustain high-quality outcomes

Guiding question	Factors to be considered include:
How well does the leadership at all levels anticipate change, and prepare for and respond to national and local initiatives?	■ The extent to which the leadership at all levels deals effectively with change, implements improvement and assesses impact, through: ● the effectiveness of planning in anticipating and addressing changes in policy, and national/local initiatives ● the extent to which workforce, partnership and resource planning and development are effective in preparing to meet the demands created by these changes ● the use of systematic and/or innovative and creative approaches to dealing with change; longstanding and intractable problems; implementing improvement; and assessing impact.

Source: Authors, adapted from Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, 2008

Quality assurance and accreditation for in-service providers and programmes

In-service teacher education (see Section 6.3) may have various aims and address a variety of needs. It can also be conceptualised and organised in different ways and provided by a wide range of bodies. Furthermore, the Eurydice (2006) report notes that several countries in Europe have decentralised in-service programme design, passing the responsibility for them to schools. While a number of countries reported that accreditation procedures for in-service programmes are in place, some reported that the accreditation procedures provide only a relatively superficial mark of approval and that more thorough procedures need to be implemented.

The following picture of regional accreditation of in-service teacher education programmes is drawn from the country reports and supplemented by data from the national websites of the bodies responsible for in-service programme accreditation. In Croatia, upgrading professional knowledge is a requirement for teachers. The Education and Teacher Training Agency accredited by the Agency's Council offers accredited conferences, seminars and workshops, while the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports' directorate for in-service training evaluates and accredits programmes offered by NGOs. In Montenegro and Serbia the Bureau for Education Services and the Centre for Continuous Professional Development, respectively, annually publish catalogues of accredited in-service teacher education programmes. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Bureau for the Development of Education attached to the Ministry of Education and Science offers accredited programmes. Although in-service teacher education is obligatory for teachers and a means of gaining points for their licence continuation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is no common understanding or commonly agreed framework for formal approval of in-service programmes (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 50). However, pedagogical institutes may grant formal permission for participation in NGO programmes. In Albania, in-service programmes are not compulsory, and no procedures or responsible institutions for accrediting in-service programmes are in place. In Kosovo, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has taken the initiative in developing a legal and institutional framework for in-service teacher education, with responsibility mandated to the State Council for Teacher Licensing, established in January 2009 and responsible for the development of the overall teacher licensing procedure. The accreditation of in-service teacher education providers and programmes and the development of a system for recognising teacher qualifications acquired through participation in in-service programmes in the past 10 years (given the fact that many programmes and providers are no longer active or present in Kosovo) are the main challenges it faces. The problem of unproductive participation in in-service teacher education (issue 27 in Section 6.3,) is raised in the light of the demand of teachers that participation should accrue credits (issue 26 in Section 6.3), e.g. that could lead to their professional advancement.

Eurydice (2006) describes a wide range of in-service teacher education provider types in the EU, ranging from government institutions, higher education institutions,

NGOs, etc. However, in the vast majority of countries, all providers, irrespective of identity, are subject to accreditation regulations and/or evaluation. Normally, the scrutiny of a written plan analysis of the provider's self-evaluation report and a site visit are stipulated in regulations as the main procedures. Some countries choose to implement similar or even the same procedures as for pre-service teacher education programmes. In the German-speaking community in Belgium, Sweden and Norway, the regulations referring to the evaluation of pre-service teacher education institutions or programmes also apply to the evaluation of in-service programmes. An example of evaluation and accreditation procedures for in-service programmes and providers in Romania illustrates an approach to quality assurance where, as in the Western Balkan region, there is a variety of providers and quality assurance and accreditation has also been recently introduced (see **BOX 22**).

BOX 22 IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION IN ROMANIA

In Romania a variety of in-service teacher education providers exist - higher education institutions, institutions for pre-service teacher education, public authority in-service teacher education centres, private sector training centres (e.g. language schools), NGOs, private companies. An independent body working on behalf of a public authority is responsible for the accreditation and/or evaluation of all providers. Evaluation and accreditation results are published as a list (catalogue) of accredited teacher in-service training programmes. The external accreditation and/or evaluation procedures include a compulsory site visit, analysis of a written plan and analytical self-evaluation reports; examination of other background documents is also recommended. Internal evaluation is also a compulsory component of the accreditation and evaluation of in-service teacher education institutions or programmes. Different aspects of provision are covered by the accreditation/evaluation procedures, which include (1) the content of the activity; (2) teaching methods; (3) competences of trainers; (4) participants' opinions on the training they receive; and (4) infrastructural assessment. Specifically, the accreditation process takes into account a set of criteria and conditions, such as the legality of institutions and the existence of the necessary training space, the utility of the training programme (i.e. its alignment with the national policies and strategies for education development, in-service teacher education standards, training priorities specified at the national level and its suitability for the target group), the existence of counselling offers and time management (i.e. time allocation, the duration of training sessions and their organisation into full-time or part-time courses, evening classes, distance education, etc.).

Source: Eurydice, 2006

Although quality assurance and accreditation procedures were not examined in detail in this study, ensuring quality in-service teacher education provision is pivotal if in-service training is conceptualised as means for introducing new teaching approaches and implementing education policies in the future. According to Letuka (2000) quality training addresses the needs of trainees, meets the set objectives and results in the development and empowerment of trainees. It is therefore important to point out that accreditation procedures should include quality mechanisms that ensure the implementation of internal (and periodic external) quality assurance mechanisms. In other words, accreditation should ensure that accredited in-service teacher education programmes have internal mechanisms of quality evaluation based on trainee feedback and self-assessment, reported back and taken into account for re-accreditation.

A few reports point out that feedback, whether from students in pre-service programmes or trainees in in-service programmes, is often not taken into account in the development and revision of courses and programmes, even when collected systematically (see issue 27 in Section 6.3). For a quality assurance system to achieve its aims of ongoing quality enhancement, it is crucial to use feedback from students and trainees to revise courses, teaching methodology, literature and materials. The responsibility to act upon feedback – in this case to redesign courses and training approaches in line with the feedback from students and trainees – is a crucial element in quality enhancement. The collection of feedback from students and trainees is not in itself sufficient; it is its subsequent use which enhances the quality of courses and programmes, demonstrating effective quality assurance and showing that providers, teacher educators and trainers are committed both to their own self-development and to the enhancement of the quality of their courses and programmes. This brings us to a crucial point: quality assurance and accreditation procedures may initiate the development of a quality culture, but they cannot ensure the acceptance of quality as a value in itself.

The concept of a quality culture implies that quality is accepted as a value in itself when pre-service and in-service providers (management and teacher educators and trainers) gear their actions and strategies towards enhancing quality – not because they are obliged to but because they see enhancing quality as part of their mission. As Vettori et al. (2007) note:

> In the quality culture perspective, quality is not beheld as a process that can be operated through evaluation and measurement procedures alone, but as values and practices, that are shared by the institutional community and that have to be nurtured on many levels and by various means at the same time (p. 22).

This approach to quality implies involving internal and external stakeholders in the development of internal and external quality assurance and accreditation systems. It also places strong emphasis on the necessity for a commitment to quality and ongoing improvement to be reflected in institutional objectives.

In conclusion, quality assurance is a relatively new concept in the education systems in the Western Balkan region. Pre-service teacher education programmes in all of the countries under study are subject to national quality assurance procedures that apply to all higher education programmes. However, current quality assurance systems are not geared towards ensuring that specific teacher education criteria and expectations are met.

In-service teacher education programmes in the region have been and are still provided by a wide variety of different kinds of providers, ranging from governmental institutions to NGOs. While some countries have mechanisms in place to accredit providers and programmes, others are struggling with implementing a coherent system. A particular challenge, as clearly highlighted by the Kosovo example, is to find ways of acknowledging and recognising training that teachers have undertaken in the past decade, as some programmes and providers may no longer exist.

If designed carefully, quality assurance procedures and standards can address the capacity of teacher development programmes to reflect changing national education policy agendas, in particular, policies addressing the development of inclusive education systems in the region.

6.1.3 Linking theory and practice

> **ISSUE 22 SYSTEMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEACHING PRACTICE ARE LACKING IN TEACHER DEVELOPMENT**

Teaching practice is not a substantial, routinely required, systematically managed and supervised part of teacher education. There is even less opportunity for practice to promote teacher empathy and develop inter-cultural competence in culturally or otherwise mixed areas with diverse pupils.

A lack of practical skills by teachers was widely reported across the region as one of the major difficulties in implementing inclusive education practices. The reason for this situation is often given as a lack of adequate teacher preparation. In Montenegro, 'pre-service teacher education is lacking in practical knowledge in didactics, particularly methods, and in developmental and pedagogical psychology' (Montenegro country report, p. 49). A similar situation is reported in other countries in the region (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 47; Serbia country report, p. 49)

It is notable that criticism regarding the inadequate preparation of teachers for practice mainly, if not only, refers to pre-service teacher education. For instance, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia a widespread assumption among student teachers and teacher educators is that practical competence is something to be acquired on the job rather than in pre-service teacher

education (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 34). Other reports express similar criticism: 'No technique or practical teaching methods are learned in the faculties, especially not in the sense of inclusive education' and 'teachers only learn the basics when they start to work' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 42).

The problems with preparation for practice are perceived to include: lack of 'modules through which teachers could be educated in the knowledge and skills necessary for work with SEN children' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 48.); few opportunities for practice by student teachers (Serbia country report, p. 49; Montenegro country report, pp. 50-1; former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 34); and inadequate balance between time allocated to theoretical and practical education (Kosovo country report, p. 42). Some improvement with regard to practice opportunities in pre-service education curricula for teachers has come with recent curricular reforms (Serbia country report, p. 46; Kosovo country report, p. 42).

The participants in the study offered some suggestions about what could be done to overcome the long established separation of theory and practice in the preparation of future teachers. From the parents' perspective 'the preparation of future teachers cannot be achieved without the direct involvement of parents and suggestions based on their real life experience and knowledge of their children's needs' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 49). A student teacher recommended more classes for the pedagogical and psychological preparation of future teachers and interpretation of the subjects content through real problems: 'The final goals of the teaching and learning process should include comprehension skills and the analysis and resolution of current problems in education practice, whilst seeking answers through the perspective of the profession for which the student is being prepared' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 48).

Some of the most frequently expressed suggestions for improvement in teacher preparation for practice involve views that the current situation, in which subject expertise is seen as the main body of knowledge for teachers, needs to shift towards a situation in which knowledge of 'how to teach' becomes a teacher's primary expertise. It is sometimes suggested (as in the student teacher's comment above) that this could be achieved by increasing the number of classes for pedagogical and psychological preparation. Under issue 25 (Section 6.2) we will discuss certain critical questions involving changes in pre-service teacher education, such as whether the addition of pedagogical and psychological preparation would, in fact, ensure better preparation for practice and the possible outcomes if such preparation was heavily based on the theoretical foundations of the relevant academic discipline.

Here we turn to the question of how teachers could be helped to develop practical competences for inclusive education in both pre-service education and in-service development and through cooperation between teacher education institutions and schools.

The question of an adequate balance between theory and practice is a long-standing one in the debate and literature about an appropriate knowledge base for teachers. Some of the most influential literature in the field suggests that this relationship is complex, much more so than the question raised by the participants in the country studies as to whether teachers should have more practical than theoretical classes. Views regarding the place of theory and practice in teacher development in the region seem to imply an understanding of professional practice as applied formal knowledge; in other words, there is a failure to recognise the formative influence of practice in the use and creation of knowledge. Studies of teachers reveal that their professional activity involves encountering specific situations that do not occur as defined problems (Schön, 1983). Defining the problem is, in fact, one of the most difficult tasks in a profession and, therefore, is not a matter of straightforward application of theoretical knowledge (Verloop et al., 2001). The missing element in teacher development in the region seems to be knowledge of how to identify and deal with problems in a concrete setting – a combination of cognitive and practical knowledge, skills, experiences and strategies and also emotions, values, motivation and attitudes.

Some of these elements constitute the notion of teacher competence as adopted in this study (see Section 2.2.1) and in other relevant studies. For instance, in one study of teacher competences for diversity (Council of Europe, 2009, pp. 4-7), the concept of competence includes 'knowledge and understanding' (e.g. of legal, political and structural contexts of socioeconomic diversity), 'communication and relationships' (e.g. for creating an open-minded and respectful school community) and 'management and teaching' (e.g. for establishing an inclusive non-discriminatory learning environment). Thus, knowledge and understanding are integral to the notion of teacher competence – and this extends beyond teachers being skilled in the use of particular techniques that can be seen in their behaviour. Professionals should be able to form a perspective on their profession and its changing relations with society's demands (see, e.g. Barnett, 1994).

It is important to emphasise here that, in our understanding and in line with other recent conceptualisations of competence, knowledge and understanding include both formal theories and teachers' practical knowledge, as well as the way in which these two components interact with each other and are interpreted and developed with the help of the other (see Verloop et al., 2001). Understood in this way, competence does not imply less, but more, knowledge and a deeper understanding of historical, political and economic matters affecting a particular education system and the implications for practice. The central consideration for teacher development thus becomes one of how to help teachers understand the practical implications of how knowledge is constructed and used in real contexts.

Many authors nowadays contend that teacher education should provide some kind of exchange between theory and professional expertise (e.g. Verloop et al., 2001; Korthagen, 2001). The idea of the teacher as a sole source of knowledge and information is apparently outdated, but

even though subject and pedagogical knowledge about themes and problems continue to represent an important part of a teacher's professional knowledge, it is by no means sufficient for good teaching. This seems to be widely recognised in the region. For instance, during the discussions at the Turin regional meeting, although many comments centred on a general criticism of the lack of practical training for student teachers, comments could also be heard that there is nothing wrong with theory in principle, but rather with the nature of the current theoretical content of teacher education curricula in the region, which was characterised as irrelevant and lacking in modern theories of teaching and learning and student-centred approaches (ETF, 2009b, p. 6).

Some recent theories argue that realistic teacher education starts with student-teacher experiences rather than with the theories to be found in literature (Korthagen, 2001). A school teacher from Bosnia and Herzegovina made a similar suggestion: 'Quality practice should be introduced from the first year of study, as well as sensitivity to inclusion. Theoretical knowledge is fine, but there is not enough practice. They are not aware of what they do not know' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 49). In the same report it is suggested that:

> … teachers at faculties should develop the knowledge and understanding to share with students through a grounded theory approach (i.e. by comparing their theoretically acquired knowledge with actual practice in school). Teachers who are initially prepared in this way are more likely to implement similar strategies in their own classrooms (Tatto, 1999, cited in Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 49).

A more meaningful relationship between theory and practice in teaching should be sought by integrating theoretical and practical knowledge in ways that would enable learning teachers to practice the theory and to theorise the practice. This could, for instance, be sought through systematic incorporation of evidence of teacher behaviour and educational impact on students for formative purposes and revision of teaching approaches based on learning from practice. Another increasingly popular practice in teacher development programmes is engagement in action research. As opposed to the long-established idea that practitioners implement the findings of research done by others, in action research a researcher is at the same time a teacher practitioner and is thus affected by the results. The underlying rationale is precisely the belief that the relationship between theory and practice is reciprocal and that teachers are more likely to change their behaviour if they engage in exploring the problems that concern them.

A recent ILO report (2010) presents the dual issues related to practical experience for vocational teacher education – that of teaching practice and that of working in the vocational domain to be taught, e.g. being a mechanical engineer in a motor parts factory. It suggests that a few countries (Australia, Austria, Germany, the UK) now specify the latter as a prerequisite for entry into vocational teacher education (p. 22), while the European countries that have developed bachelor programmes for

TVET combine vocational subject theory, pedagogical and other theoretical teaching subjects and practical teaching placements (p. 21).

An important question was raised at the Turin regional meeting in December 2009 regarding the levers that should be used to move from knowing what you should do to actually doing it (Burns, 2009). The need to build more coherent links between theory and practice seems even greater in contexts in which students have diverse life experiences, pre-existing knowledge, cultural habits and learning styles. For instance, a study conducted by Dejaeghere and Cao (2009) assessing the effects of teacher development initiatives on teacher intercultural competence offers some clues as to what works to effect a change in teacher perspectives and behaviour in relation to this competence. The study found a significant change in intercultural competence, suggesting that not only can intercultural development positively change orientation from ethnocentric to ethno-relative among teachers who participate in guided professional development, but that it can do so considerably.

We now discuss some factors that are likely to have contributed to such change according to these and other authors. The schools participating in this recent study by Dejaeghere and Cao (2009) received their group profile of intercultural development scores; individual scores were also provided to teachers who wanted to know them. Some variation was reported across participating schools in determining their professional development. The authors suggested that this variation might also be explained by varying teachers' experiences in interactions with students and families from diverse backgrounds. Burns (2009) also emphasised the importance of incentives, innovation and better evaluation, appraisal and feedback. The importance of creating a school environment in which innovation is valued and encouraged rather than regarded as a worthless additional work has been discussed in Section 6.1.1.

A suggestion for developing communities of practice to share experiences among teachers and teacher educators and learn from each other has already been put forward in Section 6.1.1 and will be discussed further in Section 6.3. Also important is to look at professional development as the development of a culture – not only of skills – and ensuring that teachers and other school staff are genuine rather than passive participants in school development. There is a need for schools, thus, to build partnerships with pre-service education providers in higher education institutions, e.g. to invite them to observe classes and work with teachers in order to improve their own programmes and so meet the real needs of changing schools (Frost et al., 2000; Fullan, 1993). In a study of teacher education in the Western Balkans (Zgaga, 2006), only a quarter of the institutions reported that they had cooperated with teachers' professional associations or other stakeholders in the process of restructuring their curricula.

Some ideas for improving the relationship between theory and practice suggested in the country reports include cooperation between teachers and teacher educators;

student teachers providing assistance to teachers in schools and volunteering in activities targeting cooperation with parents; student teachers preparing assessment reports reflecting on practical experiences; more flexible arrangements at teacher education institutions to allow practising teachers to do advanced post-graduate studies while they work, etc.

In conclusion, both theory and practice are important for teacher development. The most effective development of teacher competence seems to involve opportunities for systematic exchange and linking of theoretical and practical knowledge. In the Western Balkan region, schools do not seem to be recognised as important institutions for teacher development; rather, teacher development is seen to be primarily the responsibility of teacher education institutions that prepare teachers to apply the acquired knowledge in practice. This static view of theory and practice has come to be regarded as outdated. More innovative ways of ensuring interaction between theory and practice for teacher development are suggested in the research and literature, such as building communities of practice, action research and formative evaluation of changing practice. Clearly, changing approaches to theory and practice calls for a dramatic change in relations between schools and teacher education institutions; it also requires research to evaluate the implemented changes and inform the direction of future practices.

6.1.4 Challenges facing teacher educators

ISSUE 23 **TEACHER EDUCATORS ARE SEVERELY CHALLENGED AS DEVELOPERS OF TEACHERS FOR SOCIALLY AND CULTURALLY DIVERSE CONTEXTS**

The commitment of some teacher educators to inclusive education, their levels of general competence in relation to inclusive education and genuine and skilled engagement with student teachers and teachers employed in inclusive schools are criticised in the country reports and by delegates in the country workshops at the Pula/Brijuni and Turin regional meetings.

While this issue is located within the overarching issues that straddle pre-service and in-service education, it was interesting to note that the criticism voiced in the various country reports regarding teacher educators was entirely targeted at university-level teacher educators in relation to their pre-service role. The discussion that follows therefore focuses on this aspect of the teacher educator's role. It should be remembered, however, that some aspects might also be applicable to in-service education.

Teacher educator's role, competences and interaction with students

Burns and Shadoian-Gersing (2010, p. 288), in their contribution to an OECD report on educating teachers for diversity (OECD, 2010), list teacher educators as the first

of three topics that they believe should be prioritised for empirical investigation. This is a view that, drawing on the seven Western Balkan country reports, we wish to endorse very strongly. We have only limited evidence on the aspects of teacher educators highlighted in the OECD (2010) report, namely, selection of teacher educators, requirements for prior and/or parallel training for their work as teacher educators and, in particular, their own preparation for their tasks in preparing teachers to work in inclusive schools in contexts of diversity.

We believe that the role of teacher educators is fundamental to the adequate preparation of student teachers for working in primary and all kinds of secondary – including vocational – inclusive schools and that this role should comprise more than teaching – and certainly far more that the traditional teaching approaches of which some responses in the country reports are so critical. Mills and Ballantyne (2010, p. 454) assert that 'it is our responsibility as teacher educators to support the teaching profession to develop deeper, more meaningful ways of engaging with diversity in educational settings.' Citing Ambe (2006, p. 694), they go on to refer to this as being a way of 'contributing to a more humane, equitable, socially just and democratic society.'

Teacher educators, with student teachers and teachers themselves, occupy key positions in the process of producing qualified professional teachers and competent practitioners who, for 25-30 hours per week for eight to twelve years, will be in charge of the education and development of individual students from as young as five. Governments, societies and especially the parents of these students should be confident that those who are, to a large extent, responsible for producing, certifying and developing teachers and helping shape their attitudes and practices, are worthy of their trust. Parents of potentially marginalised students have a particular need to trust teacher educators to do their best to educate and influence student teachers and teachers to optimise their youngsters' education and development, ensure their equitable social inclusion with all other students in their schools and prepare them for further education and eventually employment.

In view of the rather critical tone of many respondents' views of teacher educators in the country reports (discussed below), it is important to emphasise that criticism of teacher educators was not specifically solicited by the country researchers (the focus was on the content and methodology of their courses) but was offered spontaneously, so no generalised conclusions can be drawn from the criticism. As with schools and teachers, there are undoubtedly some excellent practitioners among teacher educators in universities in the region. The critical comments are, however, findings, and as such must be considered as illuminative data (Robson,1993, p. 176) providing images which readers can reflect on but which should also prompt them to consider and investigate further the work and competences of their own country's university-level teacher educators. They should ask themselves if the criticisms reproduced here are also valid at home and, if so, what should be done about it and what further steps

are required in relation to teacher educators as a pathway to improving teacher education for inclusion.

Subsequent to the field research and the ETF's publication of the country reports, we asked the country researchers for some basic information on the educational and professional profiles of teacher educators, their selection and their vocational/professional training, receiving informal responses from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia, which are collated and considered below. The researchers were also asked if they could identify teacher educators whom they considered to be good at their work, current in their knowledge and able to engage with students and teachers in positively developmental ways. They were further asked how these successful teacher educators had developed and maintained this level of professionalism (recognising that they had lived through times of conflict, poverty and enclosure within their country, all of which made for extremely hard times for academia as well as for the general population). All four researchers were able to identify such teacher educators; furthermore, they shared similar characteristics and were similar in the ways they had not only maintained but continued to enhance their professionalism despite the obstacles (see **BOX 23**).

BOX 23 MODEL TEACHER EDUCATOR TRAITS IN THE WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES

Model teacher educators were committed to lifelong learning and self-improvement but they also invested time and energy in progressing collaboratively with others, whether colleagues, students, field practitioners in teaching or other education-related professionals. They took their work seriously but were enthusiastic and obtained pleasure from it. They were open to new ideas and experiences and, although only a few of those identified had originally been practising school teachers themselves, most had deliberately sought to work in schools and/or in education projects with NGOs during their careers as teacher educators. They learned from practice – their own and others' – and from conducting research and did not see themselves only as consumers and transmitters of academic learning. They valued and learned much in terms of knowledge, understanding and new approaches to their profession, including methods of working with students, by developing international links, studying abroad in some cases, developing shared programmes for students or collaborative research, attending international conferences and learning through the internet, journals and books, through personal/professional correspondence with international colleagues and working with international NGOs. Although some of the teacher educators identified were young, others were nearing retirement but remained fully committed and young in spirit.

Source: Country researchers and authors

We salute all the identifed teacher educators and recommend that governments, universities and teacher educators themselves plan how to develop many more like them.

Teacher educator profiles

How do professionals become teacher educators?

- Public advertisement, specifying a master's degree more often than a doctorate, followed by competitive selection, is now common.
- Many current post-holders simply evolve through internal routes, from being good students in their own faculty – whether education/pedagogy or another subject – to becoming teacher assistants to entering the slow but more permanent route through their faculty hierarchy towards holding a professorship.
- Some teacher educators acquire further academic qualifications, again usually within their own university, which could be in any subject discipline, but qualifications in faculties such as education, pedagogy and psychology are more likely to focus on some aspect of education, teaching and learning. It is entirely possible to become a professor who has worked all of his/her adult life within the university in which s/he studied. Several respondents referred to how this led to little or no change in content, teaching method or in any underlying thinking.

What training is available?

- It seems that there is no set form of induction or continuing professional development for the work of teacher educator, nor indeed for faculty level teaching of any kind, in the universities with which the country researchers were familiar, although all researchers were of the opinion that there certainly should be. According to one country researcher: 'They gradually learn just from what is going on around them and reading and continuing their professors' research. They may even inherit some lectures from their former supervisors. It should be different, there should be training.'
- Many European universities now offer teacher educator courses, e.g. the University of Edinburgh, mandatory for all teaching staff in all faculties, including staff already employed when registration became compulsory in 2004 (see **BOX 24**).

Generally, there is no expectation or requirement that teacher educators in the Western Balkan countries should themselves have significant first-hand experience of teaching in schools or indeed be familiar with schools or with children/young people in any capacity – as noted by one pre-service teacher educator: 'Classes at faculties are given by teachers who have no practical experience in classroom teaching' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 42). However, some teacher educators do try to fill what we view as a very significant credibility gap in their teacher educator credentials. Several of the country researcher informants indicated that, where a teacher educator does have credible school experience, this is valued by senior faculty staff and students alike.

BOX 24 UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH POST-GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN UNIVERSITY TEACHING

Aims. The programme has three chief aims:

- To help new academic and support staff to develop the understanding and skills necessary for high quality teaching of their subject in a research-intensive university
- To assist more experienced staff in broadening and enhancing their teaching expertise
- To provide a pathway to professional accreditation by the Higher Education Academy

Structure. The programme is in three main parts:

- A two-day orientation which introduces participants to key aspects of teaching, learning and assessment within the Edinburgh context.
- A core course (20 credits) which considers the various factors that influence one's approach to teaching within a given subject area. It assists participants in systematically reviewing their own professional practices as university teachers, examining how values, assumptions and traditions may influence teaching and designing teaching-learning environments.
- A range of optional courses (10 credits each) which enable programme participants to more systematically explore aspects of university teaching expertise which are most relevant and worthwhile to them personally and professionally.

Where feasible, each of the following courses will be offered at least once per year:

Assessing students	Learning and teaching online
Course organisation and management	The disciplinary dimensions of teaching
Designing courses	Understanding learning and studying
Engaging with student diversity [our emphasis]	Working with post-graduate students
Promoting student autonomy and engagement	

In addition to the above, all staff involved in teaching, tutoring and offering guidance are required to undertake professional development reviews, one part of which requires them to review recent professional development that they have undertaken and to plan for their future development, either individually or through courses delivered by the University's own Department of Teaching and Learning.

Source: Adapted from University of Edinburgh Centre for Teaching, Learning and Assessment, 2010

When practical experience is absent, how schools work, students learn and behave, etc., must all be taught from a purely theoretical stance or through second-hand knowledge. Systems of personnel exchange or secondment – where teacher educators might work in a school for a term or even once a week for a year and where successful school-based teachers might become teaching assistants in faculties for a year or two before returning to their schools – are invaluable in terms of accessing school expertise for students in many European countries, but are little known in the Western Balkans.

It seems that, in general, teacher educators must rely on their own initiative and energy to remain current in their professional subject, teaching knowledge, understanding, competence and new teaching methodologies and developments, such as inclusive education, intercultural education and the use of IT. Their universities appear to do little formally to help them. Professional development reviews of teacher educators – of their competence, interests, training undertaken and needed – by senior staff or peers are not yet in place in the Western Balkan countries, although there are the beginnings of student evaluations of courses and requirements for re-appointment based on student attainment in some

countries – the latter fraught with possible problems. Using the University of Edinburgh again as an example, annual awards are made for outstanding teaching and tutoring by departments and by individual members of teaching and tutoring staff and demonstrators/assistants. Offered by the students' association and judged according to strict criteria, they are certainly not mere popularity contests. A parallel scheme has been developed by the university principal to encourage the development of quality teaching within the university (see **BOX 25**).

Teacher educator management systems at university/faculty level

A number of comments in the country reports suggested that teacher education faculties have allowed some professors to remain static in their work. While the situation has almost certainly become more obvious because of rapid change in higher education in recent years, the issue is a long-standing one and suggests entrenched job-for-life attitudes and behaviours. It might be expected that new courses in inclusive education would appear in many faculties (see issue 25 in Section 6.2). However, the idea that established senior professors might research and run new courses in new

BOX 25 UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH PRINCIPAL'S TEACHING AWARD SCHEME

The aims of the scheme are as follows:

- to encourage reflective practice and innovation in teaching and thereby enhance student learning;

- to offer the financial resources for staff to engage in substantial inquiry into significant pedagogical questions related to their subject area and to share the results also across subject areas and schools;

- to disseminate good and/or innovative practice across the university and beyond;

- to promote and recognise excellence in teaching within departments and faculties;

- to raise the status of teaching in the university as a scholarly activity;

- to enhance the quality of the student learning environment through discipline-based pedagogical inquiry and research capacity building.

Source: Adapted from University of Edinburgh Centre for Teaching, Learning and Assessment, 2010

subject areas seems alien in all but a few cases. As a teacher educator from a Kosovo department of pedagogy explains: 'Faculties plan only as many courses as they have professors and therefore there is no room for new courses and philosophies' (Kosovo country report, p. 36).

The location and level of teacher education has changed. Previously pre-school and lower primary teachers completed two- or three-year programmes in non-university pedagogical institutions, whereas upper primary and secondary teachers were usually university graduates from subject faculties (although there are variations in relation to upper primary and secondary teachers, especially vocational teachers who might have no formal teacher education). As part of the process of upgrading teachers to graduate status, some staff from the 'lower' establishments have also been transferred to university faculties. There was a view that some of these staff have been elevated beyond their level of competence:

> The main problem facing the faculty is the inheritance of teaching staff from the former (non-university) higher pedagogical schools who find it difficult to adapt to the new approaches, circumstances and modes of operation of the new institution. This has proved to be the main obstacle to the implementation of the modern curricula and study programmes of this faculty (Kosovo country report, pp. 39-40).

There are also economic problems in trying to establish new courses or significantly update existing courses (Kosovo country report, p. 40). In order to run new or adapted courses for inclusive education, some additional

resources and new competences will be needed. This suggests that the employment of staff with relevant qualifications and experience obtained elsewhere, for instance, in international NGOs, might provide an answer. An alternative or augmentative approach might be to help existing staff develop not only their own competences for inclusion but also their competences for developing them in their students – a double challenge.

A further issue for faculties undertaking teacher education to work with diversity is that few teacher educators themselves come from minorities or from a socioeconomically disadvantaged background. Few, if any minorities are represented among student teachers (see issue 12 in Section 5.1), far less among professors (Croatia country report, p. 45). The fact that faculty membership is ethnolinguistically 'pure' and largely representative of majority communities (Sleeter, 2001) makes the teaching of inclusive approaches in teacher education harder and less real, making it necessary to prepare students and teachers in alternative ways for living and working in a world that is becoming increasingly and more rapidly diverse every day (Epstein and Sealey, 1990). An area for positive action could be in involving teacher educators – and their student teachers – in working collaboratively with minority communities and organisations to develop more empathic and realistic attitudes.

However, there is also a need to ensure that inclusive education permeates all teacher education courses without exception; hence, funding is required but there is also a need for a willingness to change on the part of all teacher educators. This is problematic when some staff members view inclusive approaches as optional peripheral additions, rather than central basic requirements in their work, as will be discussed later in this issue. Change itself is problematic for staff in universities (Kosovo country report, p. 41) as it is in schools (see issue 16 in Section 5.3). Yet developing and changing their students is a fundamental aim of the work of teacher educators and teachers and, in order to do so, they must be genuinely ready, willing and able to change themselves.

Teacher educator views on inclusive education, inclusive education competence and relations and interactions with their students

How do teacher educators view and talk about inclusive education?

As a student teacher participating in a focus group remarked, 'the key influence on the students is the teacher educator's attitude towards inclusion' (Serbia country report, p. 48). Overall, there seems to be ambivalence in teacher educators that may be born out of confusion about the nature and practice of inclusive education, arising because of a lack of personal experience of it (Albania country report, p. 43; former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 34), although the picture is somewhat clearer and more positive in some of the other countries (Croatia country report, p. 44; Montenegro country report, p. 65). Any ambivalence and confusion about inclusive education

shown by their professors must impact on how student teachers think and behave as they enter the profession and start to practise. It is hard for teacher educators to teach something with conviction unless they have real understanding of, and commitment to, the reason/s it is being taught. Without that underpinning conviction, the message to students is that 'this doesn't matter much'.

Another worrying aspect is the very slow response from teacher educators to change towards inclusive education that has been legislated: '[T]here is still significant inertia in changing attitudes in many of these institutions, in spite of clear Ministry of Education, Science and Technology policies on inclusive approaches repeatedly provided to them' (Kosovo country report, p. 36). Hence, many teacher educators simply do not talk at all about inclusive education, far less discuss it with knowledge and enthusiasm. Later we examine (issue 28 in Section 6.3) the intensive work done by national and international NGOs in continuing professional development in inclusive education. It may be that, very mistakenly, some faculty-based teacher educators have abdicated any responsibility for dealing with inclusive education, knowing that teachers in employment would probably encounter it through in-service programmes run by NGOs.

Quality teaching to improve the education of all school students does not seem to be highly valued or even fully understood by teacher educators in the Western Balkan countries. When, for instance students with SEN are discussed, it is not in an inclusive way: '[T]his is a typical situation: classes focus on disability and are not taught in a way that focuses on differentiated instruction' (Croatia country report, p. 44). This comment is particularly revealing as it seems to indicate that the interest in students who are different seems to lie more in analysing and defining that difference itself, so separating students with disabilities from their regular peers. This means that learning about what can be *shared* among all school students in teaching and learning, and also how this may be accomplished through differentiation (see issue 14 in Section 5.2), is avoided.

An extreme form of negativity towards inclusive education on the part of teacher educators is when they approve the segregation of certain groups of school students with student teachers for whose development they are responsible (Serbia country report, p. 49). A teacher educator indicated that many colleagues are very disengaged from inclusive education, certainly in relation to students with disabilities, noting:

> Students with sensory and intellectual difficulties have their special schools, therefore teachers at the faculty do not care about [inclusion], they are in charge of teaching their students about mainstream [school] students (Serbia country report, p. 49).

Sadly, therefore, it seems that many teacher educators – possibly most in some countries – are contributing little to inclusive education by what they think and say to student teachers; some are even doing inclusive education a serious disservice by remaining confused, ignorant, dismissive or simply silent. When they do talk about inclusive education, it is often in a fragmented way, about students with SEN, or Roma, or linguistic minority students, very rarely about *all* students.

What do teacher educators teach their students about inclusive education?

Let us turn now to how teacher educators' competences in relation to inclusive education are used in their work, in other words, whether what they teach is actually going to contribute significantly to student teachers' own competences for inclusive education. Some of the criticisms suggest generalised incompetence and ignorance rather than more understandable specific deficits. There are repeated references to poor quality, prejudiced and incompetent teachers and teaching at faculties (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 40; Serbia country report, p. 49). Even allowing for the fact that recently qualified teachers will, on struggling with their classes, frequently blame their teacher educators rather than their own lack of experience, the intensity of the criticism is very convincing, especially when some of it comes from fellow teacher educators.

Teacher educators in Croatia are criticised for focusing on impairments when talking about students with disabilities rather than on how to include students with disabilities by various means of differentiating the curriculum and teaching strategies (Croatia country report (p. 44). This is a retreat into easy theory: it is relatively straightforward to talk about disabilities, but far harder to talk about differentiation, because that requires what Florian (2008, p. 534) would describe as an understanding of 'practical wisdom' and its transmission to student teachers.

It is encouraging to note that the criticised Croatian teacher educators are themselves critically self-aware: '[Teacher educators] recognised that they are not adequately preparing pre-service teachers for work in inclusive settings' (Croatia country report, p. 44). It is probable that many more teacher educators are in a similar position and that ways forward need to be found for them. Some might welcome opportunities to become more competent, even if it meant working in a school in an area of social and cultural diversity or with young people with disabilities for some months to raise their awareness of the real issues involved in inclusive education.

Despite knowing some of the model professors from the Western Balkan countries profiled in **BOX 23** (Section 6.1.4) and sharing the informant researchers' very positive views of them, we have only rarely heard inclusive teachers attributing their competences for inclusive education to their faculty-based teacher educators. Most of the inclusive teachers have developed their competences mainly through a mixture of positive in-service/continuous professional development (CPD) programmes (often delivered by NGOs and international organisations), being active in NGO projects, reading widely and accessing the internet and through highly motivated trial-and-error in their own socially and culturally diverse schools.

How do teacher educators teach and engage with student teachers and teachers?

One of the authors of this report (a former teacher educator) is conscious that teacher educators must, to some extent, be models of how to teach for the student teachers in their classes, and that the relationships developed between them and their student teachers may be the kind that the student teachers will go on to develop as teachers with their school students. This is a double layer of responsibility for teacher educators; as both a burden and an incentive, it offers challenges that may not always be met.

Considering again the model teacher educators from the Western Balkan countries, it is obvious that they more than rose to the challenge and could indeed be described as inspirational to the students and teachers with whom they work. The country reports quoted students and teachers who recognised this significant aspect of teacher educators and also of teachers they encountered during practical placements. As one student participating in a focus group said: 'A well prepared teacher who is capable of motivating students to accept new knowledge and to review their attitudes is just as important as the books students learn from' (Serbia country report, p. 48).

It has already been noted above that some teacher educators perform their basic functions consistently, in the same way and with the same materials for very many years without development. Their failure to develop places their student teachers at a professional disadvantage by not giving them access to current thinking and ways of teaching at all levels; it also shows a disregard for these students' and teachers' professional competence and, also, ultimately for the educational and social wellbeing of potentially marginalised school students who will be the innocent victims of poorly prepared teachers. Some comments showed that the least practised aspects of their vocational roles were those that would have required them to relate most closely and honestly with their students, as in Albania:

> Learning opportunities such as participation in group projects, response to teacher requests for critical feedback, feedback on teaching practice performance, collaborative group work, opportunities to challenge assumptions and preconceptions and networking opportunities seem to be extremely rare in all teacher education programmes in Albanian universities (Albania country report, p. 42).

Several country reports cited boring lessons (many teacher educators do little else but lecture) and a lack of discussion, challenges and relevant material for improving their competences for inclusive education (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, pp. 47 and 50; Serbia country report, p. 45). It does not augur well for future teachers' eventual practice if they feel they should, or do, emulate their teacher educators. One has to hope that they rebel by rejecting such a model and adopt the research-proved view that it is the quality of the relationship between teacher and taught – the reciprocity of being involved in the process together, of mutual benefits for both sides of the teaching-learning transaction – that is the most

important factor in successful teaching and learning (Morgan and Morris, 1999) at any level of education. Traditional teaching from in front of the class – lecturing – is the style least likely to produce a mutually beneficial professional learning relationship.

Little was mentioned critically about how teacher educators assess their student teachers' work, possibly because the normal assessment strategy of oral testing or its written equivalent is a well-accepted, although again non-developmental, process. However, we are aware, through our work in the countries concerned, that some teacher educators are now basing at least part of their student assessments on practical placements and field projects, thereby enabling students to make useful links between theory and practice.

Overall, it seems that there is a rigidity and time warp in the manner in which many faculty-based teacher educators work with their pre-service students and with teachers, which will, ultimately reduce the effectiveness and impact of any inclusive educational message that they are able to convey.

Implications for teacher education

Some suggestions for teacher educators that might enable them and their universities/faculties to identify ways ahead to becoming more positively engaged in teacher education for inclusive education in contexts of social and cultural diversity appear in Chapter 7 of this report. This discussion of issue 23 now concludes with the implications for teacher development.

In conclusion, despite the identification of some inspirational model teacher educators, the overall picture of faculty-level teacher educators is one of professionals who have not really picked up the challenge of inclusive education or who do not see themselves in the role of being models for teachers. Some teacher educators see inclusive education either as someone else's job or as an add-on with which they do not need to engage, confining themselves to their own programme of lectures to deliver. Very few seem to see it as the fundamental challenge for education, and therefore for teacher education, in the Western Balkans today.

Given that faculties still have a monopoly of pre-service teacher education, it might seem that concern should be focused at this level, since pre-service teacher education is plainly ill-served in terms of inclusive education. However, with international NGOs gradually leaving the Western Balkans, teacher in-service development in inclusive education may be exposed to risk. The faculties cannot yet fill that teacher development gap. It seems that a modernisation process is overdue which is likely to involve very difficult decisions regarding, for instance, mergers between faculties, extensive up-to-date training, new appointments and possible staff redundancies.

Although the lack of high-quality research into inclusive education in the Western Balkans did not emerge as an overt issue in this project, its absence is nonetheless patent. There is no obvious sign that faculty teacher

educators would be ready to address this matter or that they are preparing pre-service student teachers or teachers to be skilled users of research or researchers – roles that might normally have been expected of them.

In these countries, where children and young people are highly valued, it is unfortunate that teacher educators in the many (too many?) faculties that educate teachers in universities do not promote teaching inclusively as an exciting challenge and as a professionally rewarding career that could make an important contribution to their countries' future.

6.2 PRE-SERVICE TEACHER PREPARATION

Pre-service teacher education is going through some important changes as part of higher education reforms. International and regional experiences with introducing teacher competencies as the basis of teacher education can provide valuable lessons for curriculum designers in the Western Balkans. The efforts to articulate a knowledge base for teaching are ongoing, and teacher competence is not the only vision of how teacher education programmes could be strengthened (Zeichner, 2006). International research has begun to identify the characteristics of effective teacher education programmes, such as clear and consistent visions of teaching and learning to guide the programme, strong integration between instruction on teaching and practice, building professional development partnerships with schools and cooperation with practitioners to constantly revise curricula and instruction (Schulman, 2000; Zeichner, 2006).

Moreover, the professional development of teachers needs to extend out to the community. There is growing empirical evidence that novice teachers can be helped to acquire, through some form of community field experiences, the kind of knowledge, skills and dispositions teachers need to be successful in public schools in contexts of cultural diversity (Zeichner, 2006). In other words, building teacher competences requires investment from society as a whole if it is serious about increasing teacher roles in decentralised systems.

In this section we consider what promise changes in higher education might hold for pre-service education of teachers for inclusive education. It has already been mentioned that vocational subject teacher preparation and development programmes are in the greatest need of improvement. This is the reason why their education is discussed next (issue 24) before we look at the various programmes for the education of teachers at all levels of schooling (issue 25).

Cross-departmental and cross-institutional cooperation and communication is lacking in the higher education institutions and departments that prepare teachers for various levels of schooling and for different types of schools. As a result, some subject teachers, especially in VET, are not prepared as teachers, while teacher education for others is insufficient.

ISSUE 24 VOCATIONAL TEACHERS ARE INADEQUATELY TRAINED GIVEN THE ABSENCE OF AN EFFECTIVE, COHERENT AND COLLABORATIVE PREPARATION SYSTEM

Cross-departmental and cross-institutional cooperation and communication is lacking in the higher education institutions and departments that prepare teachers for various levels of schooling and for different types of schools. As a result, some subject teachers, especially in VET, are not prepared as teachers, while teacher education for others is insufficient.

All seven Western Balkan country reports have described a fragmented system of pre-service teacher education, with class teachers educated in teacher education faculties and subject teachers educated in different faculties in universities. Faculties of social sciences, humanities and natural sciences organise academic studies in different fields, e.g. history, languages, sociology, philosophy, political science, maths, physics, chemistry, biology, etc. The graduates from these programmes become teachers in their respective subjects in upper primary and secondary education. Graduates from programmes offered by technical and engineering faculties (e.g. electrical engineering, architecture and agriculture) often become teachers of vocational subjects in secondary level education programmes.

Different modes of teacher education are provided in different faculties, categorised as follows: faculties may (1) have a formal distinctive teaching profile in their department; (2) offer an optional teacher specialisation as one among several possible specialisations; (3) have an obligatory or optional module or subjects relevant to teacher training; or (4) have no modules or subjects relevant for teacher training. Not all these modes exist in all the countries. It is interesting to note that, according to most of the country reports, natural science faculties (maths, physics, chemistry, biology, etc.) seem to opt for the development of a distinctive teaching profile in their departments, while social science and humanities faculties usually choose options (2) and (3) and sometimes (4).

Technical science and engineering faculties have virtually no modules or subjects relevant to teacher education. A recent ILO report (ILO, 2010) with a global perspective states that 'pre-service training for teachers and trainers in TVET remains the exception rather than the rule in preparing for TVET jobs' (p. 23). However, in some of the Western Balkan countries, before graduates can teach they are obliged to pass an examination in the so-called methodological-didactic group of subjects at another institution that does provide relevant courses. For instance, the data collected in Bosnia and Herzegovina indicate that this exam varies substantially from one institution to another, ranging from a pure formality requiring no real preparation to one example of a compulsory intensive one-year preparatory course (Bosnia and Herzegovina county report, p. 45). Irrespective of the organisational model for future teachers at different faculties,

all the reports noted the lack of comprehensive teacher education for subject teachers, in particular in relation to social inclusion.

One of the institutional reasons for the fragmented pre-service education of teachers in the region (see issue 17a in Section 6.1.1) may be identified as the fragmentation in faculty-based universities; hence, the fragmented teacher education system is, to an extent, a reflection of the organisational model in universities. The mono-disciplinary approaches to research and teaching fragment the faculties and pose obstacles to the development of interdisciplinary research and cooperation, essential in the education of teachers (see Section 6.1). With regard to teaching staff, this leads to obstacles to teachers teaching at different faculties even within the same university, due not only to faculties being separate legal entities but, more importantly, to staff being regarded as unqualified to teach disciplines taught in other faculties. Similarly, students who might wish to take subjects from different programmes at other faculties in their university face difficulties as great, if not greater, as if they wanted to undertake part of their programme in a foreign university.

Delivering quality education to student teachers could, however, be enhanced and ensured through cooperation between teacher education and other faculties educating future subject teachers, as well as through cooperation and the sharing of experiences between different faculties educating subject teachers. Inter-faculty, inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary cooperation, however, is hindered by the faculty-based university model. Even with the integration of a university, the tradition of a mono-disciplinary, faculty-based system might be transferred to departments which then behave as faculties. Nevertheless, Bologna Process reforms, particularly through implementation of the ECTS system, should enable swifter implementation of flexible curricula where students may take some of their studies at other faculties, whether abroad or at home.

Although there has been a lack of collaboration across faculties, this is now beginning to make a belated appearance in the Western Balkans, as the example from Kosovo shows (**BOX 26**), while in other places in Kosovo it is a possibility that has still to bear fruit. If this type of initiative was taken up by departments and groups in university leadership, such cooperation could result in better quality teacher education and improved teaching in Kosovo schools. It would also be one way of offering inclusive education approaches to students at academic faculties.

There are particular opportunities for inter-faculty collaboration and for collaboration between providers of pre-service and in-service teacher education in the currently underdeveloped area of the preparation of vocational teachers. As has already been mentioned (see issue 3 in Section 4.1.1 and issue 17a in Section 6.1.1), some vocational teachers in the Western Balkan countries are not qualified as teachers. Nonetheless, as Preston and Green (2008) point out, VET may be the secondary education sector that could offer the widest range of meaningful post-compulsory education opportunities in the form of tailored and targeted courses (respectively,

> **BOX 26 CROSS-DEPARTMENT COOPERATION IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA**
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> A good example of cross-department cooperation can be found in the Department of Music in the Faculty of Arts of the University of Prishtina. Students are allowed to take three required courses in education in the Faculty of Education. There is also potential for cooperation in organising joint masters' degrees in education between the Department of Pedagogy and the Faculty of Education.
>
> *Source: Kosovo country report, p. 41*

differentiated mainstream courses and courses for specific groups of students) for students who might be marginalised or excluded from other forms of secondary education. Vocational teacher education should be addressed from the outset in relation to competences in inclusive education with a very realistic orientation towards practice.

Vocational teachers are primarily educated or trained for their respective vocations, with virtually no element of pre-service education aimed at the development of competences relevant for future teachers. Some vocational teachers may be craft teachers who are skilled craftspeople without higher education degrees, some enter teaching from their working life long after leaving formal education and some may be alternating between teaching and working in a trade or craft. Diversified teacher profiles in VET pose a particular challenge for developing a uniform basis for teacher education in vocational subjects. Furthermore, understanding of what actually comprises a good vocational teacher will be influential in conceptualising a model that ensures key competences for vocational teachers.

Palmieri (2004) argues that, while notions of the good teacher are common in educational research, they primarily focus on teachers who work in general education. The concept of a good teacher in VET is less clear – both in everyday popular experience and in research. The key question is whether the good vocational teacher's role and values differ from those ascribed to general education teachers. The answer depends largely on whether education at the VET level continues to be a transformative process or whether it serves a need for skills building for the workforce at a more instrumental level. Palmieri (2004) further asserts that technical and humanistic strands do co-exist but have not yet collaborated effectively. The notion of VET as both a transformative process and one that is tightly connected to building competences for the labour market reflects our understanding of the role of vocational teachers: vocational teacher needs to meet both challenges. This implies that competences relevant for teaching are just as relevant as professional (vocational skills/craft) competences for vocational teachers. A study by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop, 2004) notes that teachers in VET require two sets of skills: pedagogical skills, generic to all teachers

irrespective of the discipline in which they work, and vocational skills, which reflect understanding of the tasks students will be asked to perform when they begin work and firm grounding in the theory underlying these skills.

While some of the problems in relation to the pre-service training of vocational teachers may be resolved through cooperation between different faculties (as illustrated in the example of cooperation from the University of Prishtina given in **BOX 26**), it seems that part of the challenge arises from limited understanding and the underdevelopment of lifelong learning policies. Cedefop (2004) argues that, while in the past teachers acquired their pedagogical and vocational skills at the beginning of their career, this is no longer possible. It justifies its argument on the grounds of continual changes in national VET systems – accompanied by the continual development of education theory, which suggests innovative teaching methods, some involving the use of technology – and even more rapid changes in the workplace in terms of technology and working practices. Therefore, a model of preparation and education of vocational teachers that enables the continuing development of both pedagogical and professional skills is crucial to the development of quality teaching in VET.

However, only researchers for Bosnia and Herzegovina explicitly mention a recognised need to develop a teacher training programme targeted at vocational teachers. Professional development and ongoing teacher education is one of the general goals of educational reform. Recommendations for the first steps in this process include the modernisation of university student teacher study programmes and the introduction of special study programmes for teaching vocational subjects. It is anticipated that advanced study programmes will be funded from the public budget, with priority placed on knowledge and skills for working with students with special needs. It is also planned that all teachers in Bosnia and Herzegovina will have undertaken training in differentiation and individualisation in their teaching by 2015 (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 41).

The challenge of creating a comprehensive pre-service teacher education programme targeted at VET subject teachers has still to be met across the region. Although, the other country reports do not mention this issue specifically, the quality of teacher competence in subject teachers, in particular vocational subject teachers, has been raised in most of them. Some countries in the EU have faced similar challenges and have embarked on reform paths that have led to the creation of pre-service education for vocational teachers, as the example in **BOX 27** shows.

There is some recognition of the need to bridge the gap in teaching competence within different teacher education curricula, given its complete absence in relation to some vocational teachers. Serbia, for instance, as a means of

bridging the competence gaps in the curricula of general subject and vocational subject teachers, introduced changes through Article 8 of the Law on Fundamentals of Education (2009): as of the 2012/13 school year, all newly employed teachers must have training in psychological, pedagogical and methodological disciplines from an institute of higher education and must have acquired 30 credits during or after graduation and 6 credits referring to internship work at an institution (Serbia country report, p. 40). The challenge of bridging the gap in the pedagogical skills for vocational teachers is also a familiar one outside the Western Balkan region, as the example in **BOX 28** shows.

BOX 27 REFORMS LEADING TO THE CREATION OF A VOCATIONAL TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME IN SWEDEN

In recent decades, increasingly explicit demands have been made to improve the quality and status of vocational teacher training programmes in Sweden (Swedish Government, 1994, p. 101; and 1997, p. 107). In 2001, extensive reform was carried out that incorporated the VET programme within the same structure as other teacher training (Swedish Government Bill, 1999/2000, p. 135). The training programme for all teachers, no matter what type, consists of a general component, common to all students, and a specialised part related to the subject that the teacher will teach. The reform resulted in the VET programme being extended to 180 ECTS credits; today the requirements are for 90 ECTS credits of general teaching skills and 90 ECTS of training in the vocational subject. To be accepted on the programme, applicants must have relevant vocational training and experience from the vocational field in question. It is also clearly stated that the training programme must prepare students both for future work at upper secondary school and for post-graduate studies (Swedish Government Bill, 1999/2000, p. 135). The general component of the VET programme has not posed any difficulties; however, dealing with the subject element has been problematic because it is unclear what should be counted as relevant vocational experience and what the subject element should comprise. The open higher education law enables higher education institutions to use alternative methods of recruitment and training (Swedish Government Bill, 2001/02, p. 15). Thus, each institution is responsible for finding its own structure and content to fulfil the requirements of the degree ordinance. The institutions have also been able to validate vocational experience and so convert it into ECTS terms. In this way, it has been possible to train vocational teachers in half the stipulated time.

Source: Lemar, 2008

BOX 28 A DUAL APPROACH TO VOCATIONAL TEACHER PREPARATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

In 1997, the teacher training college at Fontys University of Applied Sciences was approached by several institutes for vocational training and adult education with a request to cooperate with them in setting up a teacher education programme. The 13 different institutes and a teacher training college cooperated in developing and implementing the programme and the evaluations. The institutes and the teacher training college are both responsible for the quality and organisation of the dual course.

The programme aims to provide training for different levels of educational/skills developmental personnel for differentiated job profiles at VET institutes, namely, education assistants, trainers, coaches and teachers, who all coach, train or teach students at different levels and in different tasks. For instance, an educational assistant works in an open learning centre, a trainer in practical instruction, a coach in learning at the workplace and a teacher in theoretical instruction. Their theoretical backgrounds and prior employment experience, however, may vary.

The ideology underlying the programme and its content and methodology are innovative. The programme offers a dual route for educational staff with the emphasis on learning in the workplace, i.e. integrating working and learning. It is competence-based instead of curriculum-orientated and it emphasises learning-by-doing. Teachers can develop their competences through two routes: coaching by the coach from the institute for teacher training and coaching by the coach in the workplace at the regional education centre. Sets of competences were developed for educational assistants, trainers, coaches and teachers.

Education assistants	Trainers	Coaches	Teachers
Educational developments	Educational developments and reform 1	Educational developments and reform 2	Developing training and teaching
Coaching and instruction	Instruction and coaching	Coaching and tutoring	Management and leadership
Management of the learning environment	Management of the learning process	Communication and leadership	Supervision in educational environments
General professional competences 1	General professional competences 2	Development of competences	Vocational pedagogy
	Vocational competences	Assessments and work-based coaching	Vocational competences

Source: Cedefop, 2004

In conclusion, in the current fragmented system of teacher preparation, teachers recruited to teach in vocational schools are usually educated at faculties specialising in their basic vocation, often with limited or no teacher training at all. Teacher development for inclusive education in VET is therefore particularly challenging. Cooperation between faculties of education and faculties educating subject teachers (whether in general or vocational subjects) is hindered by mono-disciplinary programmes. The introduction of interdisciplinary courses, modules and programmes, oriented more effectively towards ensuring theoretical and practical approaches to social inclusion in education, is a major challenge. Although some countries have recognised the need to bridge the gap in the generic teacher competences of subject teachers, clear strategies for developing pre-service education programmes targeted at vocational subject teachers have not yet been developed. Strategies to ensure the continuing professional development of vocational teachers, in terms of both teaching and vocational competences, do not exist. Bearing in mind the particular role that the VET system can play in building social cohesion and value formation (as discussed under issue 3 in Section 4.1.1), the development of teacher education programmes for vocational teachers is of particular importance.

ISSUE 25 PRE-SERVICE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT FOCUSES ON SUBJECTS AND CONTENT RATHER THAN ON BUILDING SYSTEMIC HOLISTIC COMPETENCES FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

With most countries lacking given standards in terms of initial teacher competences, pre-service teacher education continues to be focused on disciplinary knowledge rather than on building competences. There is a lack of cross-curricular approaches to equipping teachers with competences for broad inclusive practices. Where inclusion-relevant courses exist they are mostly focused on the education of children with SEN.

This issue covers four related sub-issues identified by analysing the country reports and national documentation in relation to the pre-service preparation of teachers for inclusive education in the Western Balkans. Below we present four sub-issues using illustrations from the country reports, discuss the problem with existing pre-service teacher preparation and suggest what could be done to change the situation with regard to the initial preparation of teachers for inclusive education.

Pre-service teacher education curricula based on academic disciplines rather than on competences for inclusive practice

Perceived as one of the biggest challenges for the preparation of teachers for inclusive education across the Western Balkan region is the organisation of curricula at teacher education and other institutions around academic input based on content related to the relevant scientific disciplines. Student teachers in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, for instance, observed:

> […] that the study curricula are overloaded with subject-related information and that they were given no help to develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for inclusive education […] In fact, the existing teacher training model means many students do not even consider themselves future teachers, as all students (except for class teachers at education faculties) share the same curricula for scientific study of the field (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p 38).

A similar problem was expressed in other reports with some variation between faculties and also in relation to the selection of academic disciplines in the preparation of social and natural science teachers (see, e.g. Kosovo country report, p. 39; Montenegro country report, p. 49).

Only superficial changes implemented by higher education institutions within the Bologna Process

The recent alignment of pre-service teacher education and other programmes as a consequence of the implementation of the Bologna Process seems mainly to have involved changes in programme structures and little change in actual curricular goals, content and students' experiences. Paradoxically, the changes sometimes involve higher levels of education being required for teaching (typically a master's degree), while it is doubtful whether they contribute to the improved quality and greater relevance of pre-service preparation for teaching. In Albania, for instance, 'the university system of teacher education and training is a four-year programme (equivalent to the bachelor level) but is gradually changing to the 3+2 Bologna system' (Albania country report, pp. 37-8). In Croatia, the duration of education for class and subject primary and secondary school teachers has been brought into line with that of other university programmes leading to a master's degree (Croatia country report, p. 41). Similar changes were reported in other countries (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 37; Montenegro country report, p. 49).

However, there is little evidence in the country reports of changes in programme substance. Even when formally reformed to be based on competences, there is some doubt that the new programmes offer more in terms of preparation for inclusive education practices:

> The Bologna guidelines place a very strong stress on competences and learning outcomes, and this is clearly visible in the syllabuses of all teacher-training programmes. Nevertheless, in the authors' view the teacher training programmes do not include competences relating to inclusive education to any great extent (Croatia country report, p. 41).

Outdated and inadequate content and methods to prepare teachers for inclusive education

The country researchers for Serbia provided detailed description of curricula for lower primary and subject teachers in Serbia. For lower primary class teachers (teaching grades 1 to 4):

> The coverage of the different curricular areas is typically distributed as follows: teaching subjects as academic disciplines, 35%-40% of the total; subject didactics for teaching subjects, 35%-40%; education sciences, 10%-15%; general subjects, 5%-10%; and teaching practice, 10%-12%. The course usually starts with general subjects and education sciences, with teaching subjects and subject didactics coming later, while teaching practice is spread throughout the curriculum in smaller amounts in the early years but increasing as the course progresses. The main teaching methods are of the traditional academic type, i.e. teacher-oriented … not only are teaching methods not interactive, but the content of some subjects seems to be out-of-date and not connected with actual changes in real school life (Serbia country report, p. 45).

Upper primary and secondary school subject education is described as follows:

> Subject teachers are educated at faculties for the respective academic discipline. The general orientation of the curricula at these faculties is academic and the teaching method is usually traditional lecturing, often even in education sciences courses. Most of the faculties that qualify subject teachers do not require teaching practice and, even if they do, this does not exceed 2%-3% of the total instruction time. Education sciences, if offered, do not occupy more than 6%-8% of study time and are most often offered in the first and second year of study, well before prospective student teachers can assimilate them into a realistic professional self-image. Subject didactics are usually offered at the end of the study programme and are disconnected from education sciences (Kovács-Cerović, 2006, cited in Serbia country report, p. 45).

Curricular content for teachers seems to be similar across the region. In Montenegro, for instance, 'academic subjects prevail, making up 90% of all courses in most of the faculties' (Montenegro country report, p. 49). In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 'the curricula for subject teachers are mostly the same as the curricula for the various fields of study for non-teachers, although some students may choose to complete the optional teachers' programme of psychology, pedagogy and teaching method' (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 37).

Development psychology and various subject didactics seem to be perceived as most useful for teachers across the region. For instance, child development psychology was identified by study participants in Albania 'as the single most relevant kind of knowledge provided to teachers, increasing their awareness of how children may mature and develop at different rates' (Albania country report, p. 40). Acknowledged as one of the main problems with current teacher education in Serbia is 'the lack of methodological, psychological and pedagogical focus in the faculties where future subject teachers are educated' (Serbia country report, p. 50).

However, the Serbian researchers also provide information suggesting that providing more content in educational and child psychology might not guarantee more adequate preparation for inclusive education:

> The Faculty of Biology in Belgrade includes a course in psychology in the programme for biology and chemistry teachers. This course involves two hours of classes per week and allows no time for practice. The literature supplied is extremely general and outdated, mostly from the 1980s or before (Serbia country report, p. 47).

Similarly, introducing special course units that focus on topics relevant to inclusive education alone does not seem to be sufficient for a meaningful preparation of teachers for inclusive education, as is discussed below.

Relevant courses mainly address students with SEN and absence of cross-curricular approaches to preparing teachers for inclusive education

The reported improvements in pre-service teacher education programmes towards better preparation of teachers for inclusive education mainly include a focus on inclusion-relevant topics within a special course unit. Respondents from Montenegro, for instance, cited the following topics as covered, in general, during teacher pre-service education: intercultural education, child-centred learning, interactive learning and communication with parents and communities. Topics that were reported to be covered less were the role of education in societal reproduction and/or improvement, social inclusion and collaborative learning (Montenegro country report, p. 50). When commenting on the need for further improvement, the same respondents called for more subjects focusing on topics relevant to inclusive education:

> Teacher educators themselves pointed out that the concept of education at the Faculty of Teacher Education should be changed in the direction of applying new educational models and innovations in teaching and should include several subjects dealing with methods of work with SEN students and more practical work during the course of studies to ensure high quality knowledgeable staff who can deal with the challenges of modern education concepts (Montenegro country report, p. 51).

A lack of focus on the relevant topics in the education of both subject and lower primary teachers was also found

in other countries (Serbia country report, p. 47; Kosovo country report, p. 43).

Some cases of post-graduate programmes aiming at a more coherent and broader approach (rather than a one-off focus within a course unit) to the preparation of teachers for inclusive education were described for Bosnia and Herzegovina (see **BOX 29**). However, it is not clear to what extent these programmes were sustained beyond the cooperation projects with universities in Finland and Norway under which they were initiated and run.

Other reports mention postgraduate courses offered in the area of SEN. In Serbia, for instance, the Faculties of Philosophy in Novi Sad and Belgrade offer specialised courses for students of psychology or pedagogy at undergraduate, master and doctorate levels, e.g. a doctoral course offered by the University of Belgrade refers to teaching and learning with children from vulnerable groups (Serbia country report, p. 51).

An example of regional cooperation between universities in developing SEN programmes is given by Bosnia and

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BOX 29 POST-GRADUATE PROGRAMMES FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Courses relevant to inclusive education have been introduced in universities as part of cooperation projects with the Finnish government. A teacher education and professional development project continued in a project called Finnish Cooperation in the Education Sector of Bosnia and Herzegovina included two international postgraduate study programmes, in the area of individualised approaches and inclusion at the Universities of Banja Luka and Džemal Bijedić in Mostar, as part of support to inclusive education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (and including the training of ministry representatives and school directors). The curriculum included modules on communication in education, inclusion, individualised approaches, research methods and research and education practice. Another ongoing inclusion-relevant cooperation project in teacher education is being led by the Universities of Sarajevo and Tuzla and the University of Oslo. The project deals with the development of competence in research and higher education focusing on inclusive education. It offers six-week summer courses in the field of SEN at the University of Oslo. It also includes a classroom research and innovation component that consists of a comparative research study in two primary schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina linked to another classroom research project in a selected school in Oslo. This project has been expanded into a regional cooperation project (see **BOX 30**).

Source: Authors, based on information from Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 46.

Herzegovina. Additional information about this project was obtained from the Bosnia and Herzegovina research team and is presented in **BOX 30**.

The newly introduced courses reported to be useful for inclusion are mainly units dealing with the education of students with SEN. Only rarely do the reports mention courses dealing with, e.g. multilingual education, intercultural education and social justice. These topics also seem to be taught exclusively as specialist subjects and not in cross-curricular approaches; for instance, in Croatia, human rights and citizenship topics have been promoted for a number of years, but the delegates from Croatia who participated in the Turin regional meeting raised important questions such as could fatigue set in and how can the impression of each group of specialists promoting their special topic be avoided. They emphasised the need for commitment by complete institutions.

To sum up, the focus on inclusive education in pre-service teacher education seems to have been introduced to

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BOX 30 REGIONAL COOPERATION PROJECT ON DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS: PRACTICE, RESEARCH AND CAPACITY BUILDING

The project initially involved cooperation between the Teacher Education Faculty of the University of Sarajevo, the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation of the University of Tuzla and the Department of Special Needs Education of the University of Oslo. The project, thus, involved cooperation between faculties educating teachers and SEN educators, with the aim of exchanging information and discussing questions about upgrading practising teachers and speech therapists for the development of inclusive schools. It also involved developing systematic cooperation between higher education and research in standard and SEN education aimed at innovation directed towards the principle of inclusion. The project included fellowships for six-week graduate summer courses in the SEN field at the University of Oslo and led to the qualification of Master of Philosophy in Special Needs Education. Cooperation, still ongoing, subsequently expanded to involve seven universities (Universities of Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tuzla, Zagreb and Oslo). The theme of this project is the development of inclusive schooling through the acquisition of new knowledge and the improvement of competences. It is based on comparative classroom studies and joint research workshops combined with study visits and continuing discussions. The project involves school teachers and student teachers through cooperation between schools and teacher education institutions, summer schools for students and the exchange of students on postgraduate programmes with the University of Oslo.

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teacher education institutions in the region through specific subjects, course units or topics within course units and sometimes through courses and programmes in their own right. However, holistic, cross-curricular designs of teacher preparation for inclusive education have not been reported and seem to represent a real challenge for pre-service teacher education, judging by some of the reported practices and gaps.

Traditional pedagogies perceived as inadequate for teacher preparation and development for inclusive education seem to persist, allowing little room for focus on critical reflection by students, as the country reports illustrate:

> The participants from different groups agreed that traditional pedagogy is still dominating university education and this situation is not conducive to the development of competences for inclusive practices. With the exception of few courses dealing specifically with issues of children's rights, student teachers are still being prepared mainly through traditional approaches. The courses are very intensive and rigid and do not allow the prospective teachers to reach their full potential (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 50).

Similar views were expressed in other country reports (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, pp. 34 and 44; Croatia, p. 44; Albania, p. 40).

It is evident that there is a consensus among participants in the country studies that pre-service education is not adequate and needs to change. While the introduction of some specific focus on inclusive education through various measures has been welcomed in the country reports, the country research teams also recognise that this is not enough for a substantial change in the preparation of future teachers as reflexive practitioners, while the wider context of education in general is dominated by a strong objectivist normative approach with limited space and time for critical reflection and discussion. The present fragmented institutions and departments educating different types of teachers (see issue 17 in Section 6.1.1) do not seem to represent a favourable setting for introducing a comprehensive shift of paradigm in teacher education and the development of cross-curricular and interdisciplinary approaches to preparing teachers for inclusive education. Yet, in the experience of the authors and reviewers of this regional report, there are rather strong convictions within academia in the region that there is nothing wrong with class teachers being prepared at faculties of teacher education and subject teachers being prepared at faculties of mathematics, arts, sports, etc. Let us, therefore, consider now four reasons why and how the fragmentation of pre-service teacher education impedes the development of teacher competences for inclusive education.

Firstly, many of the competences that are found to be critical for inclusive education, such as communication with other stakeholders in education (including families), reflection on values and their impact on diverse learners, remain outside the remit of current pre-service teacher

education, especially in subject teacher programmes that focus predominantly, sometimes exclusively, on matters specific to their subject. Some institutions have been reported as starting to integrate inclusion-relevant components into subject teacher education programmes for upper primary school (see **BOX 31**).

However, the attempts of these and other institutions to introduce inclusive approaches to subject teacher education are still only small steps, as some teacher educators suggested (Montenegro country report, p. 62).

Much more work is ahead for individual institutions and across institutions in the region to promote teacher education as a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, problem-oriented, learning outcomes-based study area. The research and literature on teacher education have shown that knowledge of subject matter and even pedagogical knowledge are but parts of the knowledge base needed by teachers in the schools of today and the future (Schulman, 2000). Teachers also need to be able to work with other stakeholders, including parents and families, and to consider the broader social and moral purposes of education, to work with information and technology, etc. (European Commission, 2005). The research has also identified some characteristics of teacher education programmes that are effective in more comprehensive teacher preparation. They include clear and consistent visions of teaching and learning that guide the programme (Zeichner, 2006) and strong integration between instruction about teaching and practice (see issue 22 in Section 6.1.3). Clearly, creating such a common vision is more difficult, if possible at all, when the preparation of teachers is fragmented across different types of institutions, many of which do not consider teacher education to be their concern (as illustrated in the country reports).

Many countries in Europe have recognised a more appropriate institutional setting for the education of future teachers in a growing number of faculties of education that

promote teacher education as a single inter-disciplinary area of study rather than as a sequence of various other disciplines that are seen to be useful for teachers. An example of this tendency was reported in the transformation of teacher education from being fragmented across different faculties to being the single main concern of the Faculty of Education in Prishtina (see **BOX 14**, p. 74). This example illustrates the issues and challenges involved with a more general question of how to overcome fragmented universities (with independent faculties) and organise integrated universities in the region.

When it comes to overcoming institutional and curricular fragmentation and building interdisciplinary and inclusive approaches in teacher education, organising teams of teachers from various scientific fields who are interested in inclusion could be a first step to developing a culture and practice of inclusion at faculties. Research indicates that interdisciplinary teaming in faculties can lead to improvements in curriculum quality, with faculty members reporting benefits from the integrated curriculum, a greater emphasis on inclusion and diversity and a curriculum that builds expectations for inclusive services (Miller and Stayton, 2006, pp. 56-68).

Secondly, pre-service teacher education should be seen within the context of implementing Bologna Process reforms. In general, these reforms seem to comprise rather a disputable and problematic reality in the Western Balkans. In teacher education, the new second cycle programme is particularly key, as there is a danger that it will become a mere extension of the old curricula. This could raise new problems in regard to developing modules and content in inclusive education, as illustrated by the quote from the Croatia country report cited above (p. 45).

In the context of fragmented teacher education, there is a risk of setting narrow learning outcomes in accordance with institutional vision, or lack of vision, of their role in the preparation of future teachers. The setting of learning outcomes affects, or should affect, the goals and content of study programmes, but also student experiences within the programmes and assessment procedures. It is not uncommon, even in institutions that base their learning outcomes on teacher competences, to continue to assess students only on some elements of teacher competence, most often subject and pedagogical knowledge. During discussions at the Turin regional meeting it was recognised that a coherent development of teacher competence would need assessment procedures that allowed recognition of whether student teachers have developed relevant competences. Formative assessment is a powerful tool, not just for enabling students to adjust their approaches to studying, but also for adjusting programme goals, content and methods to suit the defined learning outcomes.

Thirdly, research has shown that teachers develop competences in different ways and settings. Teacher learning is a process of participation in sociocultural practices, of which formal teacher education is but one example (Huizen et al., 2005; Vygotsky, 1997). Teachers also learn informally and change through contacts and sharing with other people in contexts of diversity. The

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BOX 31 A TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION MOVES TOWARDS CROSS-CURRICULAR APPROACHES IN PREPARING TEACHERS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The Faculty of Education in Jagodina was reported to have begun introducing inclusion-relevant units across its study programmes:

Some content relating to inclusive education and children rights is introduced as part of other subjects in the same faculty: English language (dictionary of inclusion, second year) and English language teaching methods for younger children (fourth year) and family pedagogy (education of children with SEN and children with behavioural disorders) and education methods in mathematics (methods of working with children gifted in mathematics).

Source: Authors, based on information from Serbia country report, p. 47.

research suggests that teacher education needs to provide structured opportunities for such contacts and sharing, e.g. through discussion and interactions with families and through critical reflection on and challenges to traditional conceptions of teacher and learner roles, subject matter and pedagogy (Kidd et al., 2008; OECD, 2010; Tatto,1999). Moreover, the professional development of teachers needs to extend to the community they serve. We discussed earlier the evidence that novice teachers given opportunities for some forms of community field experience develop the kind of knowledge, skills and dispositions they need to be successful in public schools in the contexts of diversity (Zeichner, 2006). Such opportunities have rarely been reported by the participants in the country studies. One example of diversification of student experiences within the program has been mentioned at the Pre-School Teacher Training College in Novi Sad (see **BOX 32**).

Pavel Zgaga, speaking at the Turin regional meeting in December 2009, suggested the following possibilities for providing more opportunities for future teachers to experience diversity in the course of their pre-service education: 'Welcome students with SEN among groups of students; make students and teachers more mobile, let them experience other cultures, school organisations and teaching and learning methods, use the EU Tempus programme [for modernising higher education cooperation in the EU's neighbouring countries] to this end; launch joint research, etc.' (ETF, 2009b).

BOX 32 A QUALITY LEARNING EXPERIENCE INVOLVING LINKS WITH PRACTICE AND SOCIAL IMMERSION

This programme at the Pre-School Teacher Training College in Novi Sad in Serbia is conducted in the Serbian, Hungarian, Ruthenian and Slovakian languages. In a course on the subject of inclusion of children with developmental disabilities, students learn about current initiatives, quality projects and campaigns for raising awareness, as well as about the characteristics of inclusive communities and European and local legislation. The coursework includes a study of the literature and other documents, fieldwork and the writing of seminar papers. It fosters a social inclusion model and criticises the currently predominant medical inclusion model. In another introductory course to multicultural education in the same school, students learn about inclusive education from topical documentaries, guest lecturers, short projects involving fieldwork undertaken in their community to identify the elements for the inclusion of children with development disabilities and practical tasks that give them experience working with Roma students and students with SEN and developmental disabilities. Students are also required to reflect on and make presentations on their experiences.

Source: Authors, based on Serbia country report, pp. 47-8.

Finally, as has been discussed previously (Section 6.1.1), teacher preparation should be regarded as collaborative and continuing development. The fragmented education of teachers, head teachers and specialist staff does not seem to be the most effective way to develop professionals who would later work in teams in schools. Building professional development partnerships between teacher education institutions and schools and working with practitioners to constantly revise curricula and instruction in pre-service preparation both seem essential for overcoming such fragmentation. The fragmentation between pre-service and in-service teacher education should not be an excuse for not providing all teachers with appropriate educational knowledge and skills during their pre-service education. Pre-service and in-service teacher development may have specific targets, but pre-service teacher education institutions should be closely linked to in-service education and training institutions, especially considering that the latter have developed some useful teacher development programmes in recent years as will be discussed below (see also Section 6.3).

In conclusion, we argue that the issues identified in the country reports regarding pre-service teacher education do not help promote teacher education as a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, inclusive, problem-oriented, learning outcomes-based study area. The changes implemented within the Bologna Process seem to hold opportunities for redefining the goals of teacher education to be more relevant for inclusive educational practice. However, they also run the risk of learning outcomes defined within fragmented institutions failing to use such opportunities; indeed, they could even reinforce the fragmented education of education professionals. There is much need to work together in the region – across institutions, in the Western Balkan countries and across the region and Europe to move teacher education up the agenda. The preparation of future teachers cannot be a task for just the faculties of education. There should be cooperation between all key actors: faculties and universities, national agencies for in-service education (or similar institutions), schools, etc.

6.3 IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Before discussing three issues referring to in-service education of teachers (inadequate supply and coordination, demand for but no implementation of in-service teacher education for inclusive education and dependence on NGOs for inclusive education), it is important to share our understanding of both in-service teacher education and continuous professional development (CPD), which are not interchangeable terms although both are important in relation to teacher development in the Western Balkans. By in-service teacher education, we mean particular planned forms of activity, often courses or workshops delivered to teachers by others and designed to enable teachers to more

effectively undertake their work in the classroom with students and in other designated roles. For CPD, we use Day's (1999, p. 4) definition:

> Professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute through these, to the quality of education in the classroom.

Plainly CPD takes teacher development potentially far beyond courses and workshops that, as we will see, are the normal in-service education diet for most teachers in the Western Balkan countries. Hargreaves (1998, p. vii), however, writes of teachers in holistic but also complex terms:

> Teachers teach in the way they do not just because of the skills they have or have not learned. The ways they teach are also rooted in their backgrounds, their biographies, and so in the kinds of teachers they have become. Their careers – their hopes and dreams, their opportunities and aspirations, or the frustrations of these things – are also important for teachers' commitment, enthusiasm and morale.

Day and Sachs (2004, p. 12), citing Hargreaves' perspective on teachers, describe the range of activities that comprise CPD as being about 'the short- and long-term development of the person, the professional, the classroom practitioner and the occupational role he or she occupies.'

In the light of the seven country reports, CPD appears to be underdeveloped in the Western Balkan region. Hargreaves' (1998, p. vii) reference to teachers' hopes, dreams, opportunities, aspirations and especially their possible frustration, resonates with the experiences of many teachers – and others – in the recent histories of the Western Balkan countries and must therefore be taken into account. However, understanding that darker dimension of many teachers' experiences should not inhibit planning for ways in which both broader and improved CPD opportunities related to working inclusively in schools may be identified and offered to teachers.

We will look briefly now at the purpose of CPD in general, the particular reasons for its importance in the Western Balkan countries and why its provision in these contexts may be problematic. We will look at each issue in turn and identify sub-issues, illustrate them from the country reports and discuss them in relation to our own experiences in the region and to international research and literature. Any implications for the provision of CPD for inclusive education will be highlighted at the end of each issue, while suggestions or recommendations will appear in Chapter 7.

The authors suggest that teacher CPD in the Western Balkan countries should enable teachers to do the following:

■ Reflect on their ongoing engagement with students and with their learning and development and on how these may be improved (this might also form part of a professional development review in preparation for undertaking CPD).

■ Attain a range of more advanced competences, including those that relate to inclusive education, and become career-long learners and improving professionals motivated by their students' and schools' needs and by their own professional values, aspirations and commitments.

■ Undertake/address, with their students, national and local developments and initiatives in the curriculum and in systemic reforms that may include legislation and policies, especially in relation to inclusive education.

■ Work towards roles of further professional responsibility, including that of school leadership and other managerial roles, action researcher and/or expert/specialist.

■ Meet their obligations to undertake CPD as a condition for their ongoing employment and/or as prerequisites for enhanced professional and/or financial standing.

■ Contribute substantially to their students' improved willingness to learn, pleasure in learning and learning outcomes.

■ Enhance their own enthusiasm for, and pleasure in, their work with their students.

The list above is not exhaustive but applies to both generic and more specific forms of CPD. CPD should also subsume induction training for recently qualified teachers (OECD, 2005, pp. 117-21). It should now be taken for granted that all CPD and in-service programmes should incorporate inclusive approaches in all topics and developments, i.e. the assumption should be that all teachers must be prepared in all aspects of their work to assume overt and hidden diversity in their classes and be able to work effectively and equitably with all their students.

There is a range of reasons why adequate and effective teacher development for inclusive education in the Western Balkan countries may be thought particularly important but also rather problematic. The seven countries have contexts of multiple and complex change (Section 2.1.2) which education – and therefore CPD – must address if education is to succeed in preparing all students for active participation in the world in the shape it will have taken by the time they become young adults who are expected to earn their living and to contribute to society.

As discussions regarding previous issues have argued, teachers' own responsibilities in schools and their communities are widening; being able to work effectively and inclusively with a very wide range of students, individually and collectively and in appropriate ways, is one of the most important and, until recently, also one of the most neglected responsibilities in the Western Balkan countries. The OECD (2005, pp. 97-9) and the ILO (2010, p. 16) recognise many additional roles for, respectively, teachers in OECD member countries and for vocational teachers globally. This is now also true of the Western Balkan countries. One period of pre-service teacher education study alone, especially with only limited practice, cannot fit even the most talented and industrious

teachers to adapt their work with students, in schools and in communities to meet the challenges that arise from the continuing societal and other changes during their careers (see issue 25 in Section 6.2). Since some teachers in VET may not even have pre-service teacher development (see issue 24 in Section 6.2), CPD is vital for them. However, even for those who do have pre-service training, as the previously mentioned ILO report (2010) bluntly declares: 'Without continual updating of knowledge, skills and competences, vocational teachers and trainers run the risk of rapidly becoming obsolete in their teaching capacity' (p. 25).

The Western Balkan context of many forms of diversity (see Section 2.1.1) impact on all levels and parts of education services and CPD is no exception. However, the countries' financial contexts and struggling economies inevitably mean that any aspect of education deemed by authorities not to be part of the essential core of education services may struggle for an adequate budget in competition with, for instance, establishing education for all or extending eight years of primary school education to nine years. There are indications in some of the country reports that in-service teacher development is not prioritised and may even be neglected financially by central government and within Ministries for Education when it comes to the allocation of both budgets and focused management.

Negative outcomes of insufficient or inadequate CPD provision are particularly problematic when pre-service teacher education does not prepare even recently trained teachers to address certain desirable education objectives, such as being an inclusive teacher, and also gives them little or no practical experience in diverse classrooms or, indeed, in any classrooms. For the VET staff who have had no pre-service development at all, quality in-service teacher education and CPD are vital. When desirable educational objectives are additionally perceived by key policy makers and other influential figures as contentious, imposed by external international agencies and lacking in importance – as was certainly the case of inclusive education until very recently in some of the Western Balkan countries – then adequate funding for them is unlikely. Additionally, school curricula in these countries have traditionally been heavily knowledge-laden and much emphasis in in-service teacher education has been and still is placed on extending subject knowledge and on subject-related curricular matters, although not invariably so. However, the funding bias continues despite the lack of an established relationship between the extent of teachers' subject knowledge and student attainment (OECD, 2005, p. 100).

There are further problematic issues relating to teachers' contractual hours, the way these hours are worked, especially in the many schools that have shift systems, and trying to find a time and place for CPD. This is particularly true for collegial whole-school CPD activities. Teacher contract hours in most countries, including the Western Balkan countries, are longer than their contact hours with students. The additional time, intended for preparation, marking, professional liaison etc., has not traditionally been spent in school by most teachers in the

Western Balkans but at home or elsewhere. This makes whole-school CPD and the building of communities of learning in schools almost impossible and exacerbates the isolated working of teachers that has already been noted in several other sections of this report (see issues 8 and 14 in Sections 4.3.1 and 5.2, respectively).

Thus, even before this regional report examines the specific issues raised in the country reports, it can be anticipated that teacher CPD related to inclusive education is probably at considerable jeopardy in some or possibly all the countries and – if this is so – then education quality and opportunities for more inclusive education in schools are also at risk.

However, let us return now to the three inter-related issues identified at the beginning of this section, namely, inadequate supply and coordination, demand for but little or no implementation of in-service teacher education for inclusive education and dependence on NGOs for teacher education in inclusive education. While there is a significant lack of satisfaction expressed in the resourcing, logistical and systemic aspects of in-service teacher education for inclusion in areas of diversity and in what teachers perceive as the lack of reward for participation (issue 26), there has been a wide range of in-service teacher education provision that can actually be related to some extent to inclusive education; moreover, there has been an enthusiastic uptake and a call for more despite some doubt as to whether the in-service teacher education received has been implemented (issue 27). Much of this teacher in-service education provision for inclusive education has been planned, funded and delivered by national and international NGOs, with some of the latter now pulling out of the Western Balkan countries (issue 28).

ISSUE 26 **CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IS INADEQUATE AND POORLY COORDINATED AND IS NOT LINKED TO CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

Inadequate teacher in-service training budgets constrain opportunities for teachers. In-service teacher education is often compulsory but may not be the kind of development that teachers want, and participation does not generally result in promotion or enhanced salaries, leading some teachers to treat it as a worthless exercise.

After detailed reading and analysis of the relevant parts of the country reports a number of sub-issues under this particular heading were identified. Some extracts from the reports and from relevant literature are used to support discussions about the issues: a) funding and allocation to teachers of CPD opportunities for inclusive education; b) national and local CPD systems for inclusive education (if any) and teacher frustrations; and c) formats of CPD delivery for inclusive education.

Funding and allocation to teachers of CPD opportunities for inclusive education

When (as noted in Section 2.2.1) six of the seven Western Balkan countries are among the ten poorest countries in Europe, it is not surprising that there are concerns about serious constraints on CPD funding. In 2003, when one of the authors of this report worked in Albania as an education consultant, the Albanian Ministry of Education had no budget at all for in-service teacher education; and even now it still struggles to allocate any budget to CPD, given the country's very constrained budget for education as a whole (Albania country report, p. 31; see also issue 6 in Section 4.2).

Financing for in-service programmes in the Western Balkan countries usually comes from central governments or from international sources (via NGOs or donor organisations) or a mixture of both. The balance is heavily weighted to international funders in some countries. Funds from central government may go directly to national in-service teacher education or into joint projects with national and international NGOs and donors (Serbia country report, p. 52); sometimes funds are devolved to local authorities, directly to schools or to schools via local authorities. The channels for schools and individual teachers seeking and receiving funding are not always clear, although there is increasing resort to advertisements in national and teaching newspapers.

The multiple sources of funding for CPD or, more often, in-service teacher education do not result in healthy in-service teacher education budgets, however. Like patchwork bedcovers, multi-source budgets are more suggestive of making do with what small funding is available than of any largesse. It is also likely that the management of provision and its allocation to schools and teachers is not very systematic or equitable but rather dispersed across many organisations at many levels and is hard to grasp and respond to in any organised way from the perspective of teachers and schools (Croatia country report, p. 47).

Another dilemma caused by poor funding experienced in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the difficulty in implementing any reform or development that has implications for how schools work (as is plainly the case with inclusive education) when those intended to implement the reform or development – teachers, school principals and specialist and support staff – are not prepared by appropriate in-service teacher education. Furthermore, opportunities for broader CPD that might incline them towards such a reform or development may be even more restricted (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 40). The Bosnia and Herzegovina researchers also draw attention to other outcomes of insufficient in-service teacher education for national reforms such as inclusive education, e.g. the feeling among teachers that they are less professional and therefore less valued in society. Day and Sachs (2004, p. 43) recognise this potential for a downward spiral in teacher morale and engagement

As we discussed in issues 15 and 23, many professionals find change hard even in the best of circumstances;

however, when they feel that they have not been equipped properly to do the work requested, resistance to change can very easily become active resistance to authority, disaffection with teaching and less regard for the education and wellbeing of students. Kelchtermans (2004, p. 219) refers to how, in the right circumstances, CPD processes resulting from positive interaction between teachers and their working environments bring about a renewal in teachers that has moral, political and emotional dimensions as well as technical ones.

Even in Croatia, with more adequate funding (Croatia country report, p. 46), which is also allocated in layers of devolved responsibilities but systematically so, there are still constraints, albeit lesser ones: 'The school budget is insufficient to fund teachers' attendance at all the in-service courses in which they are interested' (Croatia country report, p. 47). This observation leads us to consider how such in-service teacher education and such CPD opportunities as are available should be allocated – or chosen, in view of the bitter comment that 'teachers rarely have an opportunity to choose' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 51). Contrasting with this comment is a view of in-service teacher education as 'time off'. As one Serbian school psychologist stated:

> In my school, a teacher of mathematics and another teacher attended a seminar on performing corrective gymnastics at school because they were friends and they wanted to go together, to whatever programme (Serbia country report, p. 52).

While we would certainly contend that appropriate in-service for subject teachers may sometimes have a focus other than their teaching subject, the focus should still be apposite and developmental to a teacher's work in general.

There are, of course, some views that teacher choice is the least significant factor in the CPD or in-service teacher education opportunities they should undertake. That viewpoint asserts that what really matters is for teachers to learn certain things or develop in certain ways in the best national, school or student interests. We would suggest that it does not need to be an either/or situation and that useful professional learning may meet all of these purposes; nonetheless, teacher involvement in planning or choice is key to the success of any programme. Cedillo and Fletcher (2010) wrote about a programme in Mexico in which the aims of the programme were to enable teachers to work more inclusively with parents and students from diverse backgrounds. One of their lessons learned was that '[t]he Mexican experience showed that teacher involvement was a key element to the successful adaptation of a coherent set of principles and methods to effectively respond to the needs of teachers, students and parents' (p. 170).

One way forward in ensuring not only a blend of interests in CPD programmes, but also that choices or allocations of programmes or other CPD opportunities have a rational basis, is through the use of professional development reviews. These enable teachers, their schools and local

managers or school principals to negotiate a view, drafted into a plan, of how they may be supported by in-service teacher education or CPD to develop in ways that will help them, not only improve their learning experiences and outcomes for their students, but also to make better contributions to national priorities, to their school and to their own professional competences and satisfaction. Trying to achieve this balance between different priorities and interests is not unique to teachers in the Western Balkan countries; it also features prominently in the OECD countries and is resolved by countries and individual teachers in non-uniform ways (OECD 2005, p. 123). Serbia's Law on the Fundamentals of Education has designated professional development for teachers as a priority for at least a three-year period, with teachers required to undertake CPD and have a professional development plan:

> Teachers can choose any programme from the catalogue in accordance with their interests and professional development plans, while the school director and governing board prioritise requests and secure funding for the school's priority areas (Serbia country report, p. 52).

The discussion thus far has focused on varied aspects of CPD funding but there has been an assumption that there is at least some in-service teacher education or CPD for teachers in the Western Balkan countries. However, it seems that these assumptions are over-optimistic:

> Teacher views of in-service training vary depending on their place of residence. Teachers from smaller towns, cities and suburbs are barely aware that in-service training exists and they are not really aware of what is good or bad about it, or the impacts it may have. They are even less aware of how in-service training is related to inclusive practices. Many of the teachers participating in the field research conducted for this study stated that very little training is available and not all teachers get a chance to participate: 'In our school there are teachers who have never had training of any nature whatsoever'(teacher); 'I have been working for twenty years and I have never been given training' (teacher) (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 41).

Depressingly, the current overall picture of CPD is one of impoverished provision that lacks coherent organisation. This does not mean that there are no good examples of in-service teacher education or CPD opportunities for inclusive education. However, the real victims of laissez-faire or fragmented and under-resourced approaches to CPD for teachers nationally are the students, whose learning inevitably suffers in many areas. The above discussion did not focus uniquely on CPD for inclusive education, because it was important to establish the general picture first before progressing to looking at ways in which the various countries are trying to improve CPD for teachers both in general and with particular reference to inclusive education.

National and local CPD for inclusive education and inherent frustrations for teachers

All past and some current teacher CPD, both generally and in relation to inclusive education, is impoverished and not organised coherently. The lack or total absence of adequately funded, accredited, systematically planned and delivered CPD leading to improved professionals and career advancement is best illustrated by Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Albania country report, p. 38; Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 42).

The lack of a CPD system causes frustration among teachers, with many of the seven countries' reports suggesting that teachers are justified in their feelings of resentment at the lack of incentives (see issue 11 in Section 5.1 and issue 21 in Section 6.1.2). The clearly expressed desire for incentives for undertaking in-service teacher education, with tangible and especially financial incentives and promoted status, is, we suggest, intensified by the failure of the system to provide sufficient and appropriate CPD. This wish for tangible rewards for change takes precedence over what might be described as professional incentives such as teacher satisfaction in their own enhanced competences and in meeting the diverse support needs of their students better. It is worrying that some teachers believe that mere participation in in-service teacher education should be credited to them in tangible ways, without them necessarily demonstrating any proven increase in competence – and specifically, competence related to inclusive education. Such expectations and resentments are particularly worrying as they could widen into resentment and rejection of vulnerable students whose classroom presence implies more work and more varied approaches to teaching.

In order to pre-empt this quite possible crisis of disaffection related to engaging in the additional work associated with national policy changes and especially inclusive education, it has been proposed that teacher development of competences in inclusive education should 'be put on the career promotion agenda more explicitly' (p. 48), while the greatest need for CPD generally and in inclusive education is for secondary and especially vocational teachers (Montenegro country report, p. 58). The Kosovo researchers go further in recommending strongly that the various agencies providing in-service teacher education and CPD of various kinds need to collaborate to improve practice of all kinds in education and also to improve 'material and non-material incentives for appropriating and promulgating inclusive education at all levels' (Kosovo country report, p. 38).

In Croatia and in Serbia, however, it does seem that there are at least the beginnings of more systemic approaches to CPD generally. These are particularly clearly related to inclusive education in Serbia although, because of earlier developments in Croatia in relation to students with SEN, that particular aspect of inclusion is currently more advanced. In both countries there are, or will be, requirements for all teachers to devote a specified number of hours to CPD per annum or a larger number of hours spread over several years. The systems will be

linked both to licensing and promotion. In Serbia, the requirement of 100 hours over five years will be divided into 60 hours of compulsory programmes and 40 hours of optional programmes (see **BOX 33**). This is very much a step in the right direction. In Croatia:

> The law does not specify a compulsory number of hours of professional training for teachers. This should change with the implementation of the Primary and Secondary Education Act … which schedules teacher licensing to start in 2012. The National Centre for External Evaluation of Education will be in charge of this process. Although current standards do not include specific competences relevant for inclusive education, and there are no incentives for teachers to participate in in-service training programmes relevant to social inclusion, it is likely that this will change with the implementation of the licensing procedure (Croatia country report, p. 46).

Such developments, when linked to increased competence for inclusive education, are very clearly needed and very important. It must be hoped that there will be no delays in fully implementing the relevant legislation and policies (see issue 6 in Section 4.2). However, as both governments must be fully aware, all too familiar extended delays between the enactment of legislation and full and real implementation breed cynicism and disaffection that is extremely resistant to progress thereafter. As a Bosnian in-service trainer commented, 'system solutions exist in declarations, but are not being applied in practice' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 42).

Formats of CPD delivery for inclusive education

In all seven countries, it was evident that CPD usually comprised mainly in-service teacher education programmes and workshops of quite a traditional and potentially passive variety that were less likely to bring about substantial changes in teachers' competences for inclusive education than more active and innovative

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BOX 33 DUTIES AND REWARDS: SERBIAN PLANS TO DEVELOP CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION LINKED TO CAREER PROGRESSION

Each teacher is obliged to attend at least 100 hours of professional development programmes over five years of work in order to be entitled to promotion and to apply for a higher rank . . . with the following priorities for the 2010-2013 period: (1) inclusive approaches, aimed at the inclusion of children with developmental disabilities, marginalised groups and Roma children; (2) recognition and prevention of discrimination; (3) protection of children against violence, abuse and neglect; (4) identification of, and support for, talented and gifted students throughout the education system (Priorities 2010-2013, Ministry of Education of Serbia, 2009) (Serbia country report, p. 43).

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approaches. This is not to deny the usefulness of some formal knowledge-based inputs but, as Garet et al. (2001) emphasised, for these inputs to be appreciated and benefits to be optimised, speakers have to offer salient new learning delivered in ways that engage participants with the expert delivering the input; this, they noted, has implications for funding, since expert inputs to small groups that benefit most by interacting discursively tend to be costly. Formal input that falls short of these standards risks alienating participants or enables them to be physically present but mentally absent.

This may particularly be an issue In Albania where 'in spite of the variety of training topics, in-service teacher preparation is mainly provided through formal training workshops' (Albania country report, p. 47). However, attempts are made by teachers and those responsible for their development to vary the in-service teacher education 'diet', albeit mainly by funding choices in reading matter (Albania country report, p. 46). Such steps taken towards enabling developmental learning by teachers are important and, given the differences among teachers as learners (as among students), learning by listening to and reading about new areas of knowledge and the experiences of others may be effective for some.

Traditional in-service teacher education approaches may also be varied in ways that make them more engaging for participants, for instance, by developing their empathy with students by *becoming* students, as described in the Serbia country report (p. 55):

> Active learning [is] a programme created by the Institute for Psychology [on] obtaining practical knowledge and skills for making students active during classes by going through a set of processes and activities [during in-service teacher education] in a similar way that students will do.

A similar approach begins formally but encourages increased engagement by participants through presenting problem-solving case studies in order to develop creative approaches to classes with diverse students (Wade, 2000a; Wade, 2000b; Savery and Duffy, 2001). This kind of approach may involve the speakers introducing case studies that they have created but may then progress to participants developing their own real case studies or drawing on challenges faced in their classes and sharing them with other participants to address the issues together. For optimal benefit to learning, they then try to put their plans into practice and report back to their colleagues. In this way, formal input evolves into both peer learning and experiential learning. (A word of warning, however: while engaging creative approaches to inclusive pedagogy, problem-based learning may also fit a model of education that perceives diverse students as the problem rather than the need for systemic improvements in schools and pedagogical practices.)

One of the most substantial changes in the development of CPD is not just the broader conceptualisation of the ways in which teachers develop, but also the diversity of activities that are now recognised as a means to progressing CPD for teachers (see **BOX 34**).

BOX 34 VARYING FORMS OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bubb and Earley (2007) list no fewer than 61 forms of CPD:

■ 11 approaches to self-study, among them reflecting on past progress, reading, accessing the internet etc.

■ 12 observation opportunities, such as visiting other classes and age groups in one's own school and those of others, shadowing a colleague or a visiting expert, etc.

■ 28 examples of extending professional experience, from serving on a school's curricular development committee for inclusion, networking with colleagues in a nearby school or even with a school in another country, developing IT skills

■ 10 ways of working with students, including working with students in school councils, learning new skills with students (as a co-student).

Source: Bubb and Earley, 2007, p. 55

While the OECD notes that the diversity of CPD activities makes its analysis problematic, its richness does suggest that CPD, at some level and in some way, should be accessible to teachers trying to develop more inclusive ways of working with diverse classes and individuals, once these alternatives to formal courses and workshops are identified and encouraged. The OECD examined the reported incidence of teacher participation in nine broad types of CPD and found the lowest levels of participation in observational visits to other schools and mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching. The significantly most frequently accessed forms of CPD in OECD countries in 2001 were, as it seems also in the Western Balkan countries, in-service teacher education courses or workshops on subject matter, methodology, etc. (OECD, 2005, p. 127).

However, thinking on CPD has moved on since 2001. Bolam and McMahon (2004, p. 40), citing Sparks and Hirsh (1997, p. 12), list some key changes that may have relevance to emerging CPD policies and practices in the Western Balkan countries. These include changes in focus, from the individual teacher to individual teachers and their schools, from fragmented piecemeal approaches to clear, coherent strategic plans, from teacher needs to student needs and from the transmission of knowledge and skills to teachers to the acquisition of knowledge and skills by teachers, through studying the processes of education in their own schools and others and through practitioner research.

Other significant changes in ways of developing CPD have messages for the seven Western Balkan countries: the shift away from off-the-job training to job-embedded learning and away from individual in-service teacher education towards the creation of learning communities in which students, teachers, school principals and specialist and support staff are all both learners and teachers. Learning communities are groups of people who share common aims and perhaps some beliefs and values and who actively engage in learning together and from each other. They may meet face-to-face or communicate by email or teleconference. They are advocated as being motivating and democratic, useful in team-building and a way of reducing professional and social isolation (Stoll and Louis, 2007). These are reasons apposite to teachers in the Western Balkans. Persson (2005, p. 20) refers to such changes underpinning the development of learning teacher networks in Europe. For countries like the Western Balkan countries, with a political and educational tradition of top-down hierarchies and respect for traditional didactic approaches, these developments may seem very challenging initially. Some such problems in developing effective learning communities are discussed in Stoll and Louis (2007).

It is extremely encouraging to find examples in the seven country reports of almost all the developments actually exemplified or referred to. While they are sometimes described as being rare, or as pilot or pioneering programmes or opportunities, among the country reports' researchers and participating teachers there is a very real interest and a sense in which they feel that these are ways in which their countries' teachers and schools could develop and, furthermore, that schools could utilise these approaches to be more inclusive, not least because some of them, such as the learning communities, are actually inclusive themselves. We will now describe some of these progressive and hopeful examples. On an encouraging note, for instance, 'the majority of the interviewees agreed that horizontal or peer learning is the most effective method of learning for the teachers in in-service teacher education programmes' (Serbia country report, p. 54). An example of teacher activity groups in Croatia is described in **BOX 17** above and **BOX 35** below describes the use of teacher mentors with other colleagues and schools in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

BOX 35 USING NEW APPROACHES TO CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In recent years, the Bureau for the Development of Education accredited a set of innovative programmes for in-service training within the framework of the Education Modernisation Project. In 2009, a new professional development programme was implemented to improve mathematics and literacy instruction in the country. The programme was developed as a result of the underperformance of national students in international maths and literacy tests. One positive aspect of the project has been the involvement of 15 staff members from the Bureau for the Development of Education who attended training to provide support for teachers across the country. Mentor-teachers are rolling out a programme to support other teachers during the 2009/10 school year (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 41).

Bosnia and Herzegovina also reported a wide-ranging collaborative selection of CPD activities (see **BOX 36**).

All the modules described were undertaken by teachers participating in the UNICEF Child-Friendly Schools project (Smulders, 2008) in this country (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, pp. 52-3). The Child-Friendly schools project was also implemented in forms relevant to the contexts in other countries (Kosovo country report, p. 48; former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 42) but with worldwide principles and strategies. It was highlighted in all three reports as an outstandingly successful way of making schools more inclusive, developing communities of learning and, indeed, enabling the various school communities to think of themselves and their schools and to behave in altogether more positive and inclusive ways.

We note that the holistic aims and wide scope of child-friendly schools are very much in tune with the definition of inclusive education adopted in this regional report and in the country reports, as noted also by the Kosovo researchers (Kosovo country report, p. 48). We can well understand why: 'In general, school managers are keen on in-service development opportunities in external projects and they willingly volunteer their schools' (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 42). Other forms of internally organised in-service development opportunities mentioned by school

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BOX 36 A MULTIMEDIA IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION PROJECT WITH MULTIPLE USES

Some positive examples of in-service teacher training are organised within the open interactive schools project in Tuzla. The training series uses multimedia modular material structured for individual learning or for learning in small groups. The EducAid project is another example of good practice in in-service education. The training goes beyond typical traditional training, emphasising the presence and participation of a mentor, i.e. a person who facilitates and provides support during learning. This training series takes place in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in cooperation with the pedagogical institutes of Sarajevo, Mostar and Tuzla through the activities of Documentary Centres. According to participants, many of the activities were useful in terms of practical joint activities in inclusive education. By the end of 2007, nine different training programmes were available including: methods focused on students at basic and advanced levels; training for trainers in student-centred methods; developing learning resources; making adaptations in the classroom; methods of developing critical opinion through reading and writing; school improvement methods; evaluation of teacher training programmes; and using qualitative standards in schools (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, pp. 52-3).

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managers included internal workshops, meetings of professional teacher groups teaching related subjects, demonstration classes and the mentoring of new teachers.

In conclusion, the implications for developing more effective, collegial and inclusive CPD in the seven countries are, firstly, to follow moves away from only off-the-job training towards multiple forms of job-embedded learning, and secondly, to move from solely individual teaching staff development towards the creation of learning communities in which students, teachers, school principals and specialist and support staff are all both learners and teachers. It is particularly encouraging to witness positive approaches that have actually been put into practice (as reported in the various country reports) in place of the piecemeal approaches and lack of coherence in CPD that have prevailed to date.

ISSUE 27   MORE COURSES IN INCLUSIVE APPROACHES WOULD BE WELCOMED BY TEACHERS BUT THEIR LEARNING FROM SUCH COURSES IS OFTEN NOT IMPLEMENTED ADEQUATELY

Teachers themselves widely express a wish for more training in inclusive approaches, such as interactive and flexible ways of teaching and learning and working with students of mixed ability and mixed cultural backgrounds. However, it seems that they lack the confidence or professional courage to put inclusive approaches into practice.

This issue explores some further dimensions of CPD for inclusive education. The exploration is curtailed because of lack of data and local research on CPD – yet another outcome of its piecemeal development, multiple delivery agents and the under-developed research skills of teachers. Data are not always even kept systematically by those who deliver CPD, perhaps because some providers are transient, while others are unaware of the value of data in quality assurance, accountability and future planning. We have seen (issue 26) that there has already been some provision of inclusion-related CPD, yet it seems that there is, among some teachers, a continuing wish for more yet not necessarily different inclusion-related in-service provision. We now try to identify the nature of this wish and the range of provision that is requested, by examining inclusive CPD and in-service provision in Kosovo and Montenegro, questioning the apparent dearth of follow-up to CPD, e.g. evaluating the training in-put and engaging in follow-on activities in the Western Balkans. Part b of this issue relates to part c of issue 26, which looked at the range of formats in which CPD is delivered.

Teachers' appetite for inclusion-related CPD and its range

An NGO representative stated, in one of the country reports, that 'analysis of all [training] needs conducted on

a large sample of teachers (2,200) showed the issue of inclusive education and especially work with students with special needs is top of the priority list' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 51). One of the questions posed is to wonder at what stages the responding teachers were in their careers. Were some recently qualified and concerned about the many little known challenges that would be facing them? This is a common response among probationer teachers worldwide, according to Draper et al. (1991), whose research findings show that meeting the SEN of students and managing classroom behaviours are common anxieties that tend to abate as even newly qualified teachers begin to realise that some of the generic skills acquired during pre-service education, such as assessment for learning, pupil and classroom observation, differentiated approaches, working collaboratively with parents and with school and other experts, can in fact meet very many special needs. They also come to realise that, for students with pronounced SEN, or indeed with any other significant 'difference' that seems to require additional thought and support, the way forward will possibly involve some knowledge, skills or information gained through in-service teacher education; however, the greatest progress will come from a closer learning-teaching relationship between the teacher and student and from a willingness to collaborate with and learn from parents, specialist teachers, psychologists and medical advisors.

We have already suggested that Mittler's view (2000, p. 133) – that teaching most students with SEN, or indeed other students with non-standard profiles, is within the grasp of most mainstream teachers – may not apply to the Western Balkan contexts because of teachers' lack of preparedness for differentiated approaches and because of their enduring commitment to whole-class didactic methodology, despite its shortcomings. Thus, an appetite for generic approaches to meeting the needs of any diverse learners would be entirely appropriate to acquiring the kind of competences that facilitate inclusive education (see Section 5.2). Some providers in Bosnia and Herzegovina supply this kind of in-service teacher education targeted at more generically inclusive approaches. Teacher response was very positive:

> [Teachers] gladly attend the programmes we organise dealing with social justice and they also provide great feedback . . . all our programmes contain elements which reflect quality standards [pedagogical standards for teachers] created within the international Step by Step network through social justice education for adults, social justice education for children, bilingual education, inclusive education and the creation of student-centred classrooms' (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 51).

A warm appreciation of CPD for child-friendly schools was also reported from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as it helped teachers develop competences related to inclusive education, gender equity, multiculturalism and formative assessment, all of which are the main objectives of the project's activities (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, pp. 41-2).

However, an appetite for in-service teacher education relating to specific SEN categories and providers' widespread responses in satisfying that appetite, may only confirm teachers' fears that they must have infinite knowledge to meet infinite SEN or, almost as bad, may – after a workshop or short in-service teacher education course – mislead them into thinking that they indeed know enough to meet all those particular types of SEN. Learning about students with very pronounced difficulties is likely to combine input from a wide range of support personnel with courses and extensive reading. In a broad selection of in-service teacher education provision listed for Albania (Albania country report, p. 45), provision was made for both specific and generic kinds of courses, with a heavy predominance, happily, of the latter.

Certain kinds of requests, e.g. for very specific CPD or in-service teacher education provision, may reflect deficits in teachers' earlier pre-service development, fears related to assumptions that only formally taught knowledge provides solutions, or simply point to the frequent isolation of teachers in Western Balkan classrooms (already referred to under issue 14 in Section 5.2). More positively, such requests might also reflect teachers' wishes to progress from wide generic pro-inclusion competences to more specific competences that would build up their specialist skills – for which there is indeed a professional place. However, it has been the experience of one of the authors of this report, in her evaluation of inclusive education projects, that the delivery and/or reception of inclusive education messages about specific groups of students still had medical or deficit overtones and implicit messages of educational integration rather than inclusion.

It is therefore encouraging to hear of the range of in-service teacher education and, to a lesser extent, CPD, focused on generic approaches to inclusion and to quality teaching and learning that are provided and eagerly consumed by teachers in Kosovo:

> The Kosovo Education Centre was involved in training over 15,000 local teachers between 2000 and 2008 in various innovative, interactive and inclusive teaching methodologies, techniques and approaches with reading and writing for critical thinking, Step By Step, social justice and education for children's rights taking a central role both in terms of quantity (programmes of between five and 15 training days) and quality (usually the interest for these courses exceeded the offer) (Kosovo country report, p. 45).

> There is great enthusiasm for professional development amongst teachers […] Even though teachers have to pay €30 per course or over €300 for the three-to-four semester programme (more than their monthly salary), there are hundreds of teachers on the waiting list for the next round of training and dozens ask about the programme every day (Kosovo country report, p. 49).

Even in this context there is still some dissatisfaction in Kosovo with concerns expressed by some teachers about particular groups of teachers dominating the allocation of

CPD opportunities at the expense of others (Kosovo country report, p. 49). These seem minor relative to the dissatisfaction expressed by teachers from some other countries, especially those related to unresolved issues to do with crediting in-service teacher education undertaken towards licensing and/or promotion and enhanced salaries (see issue 11 in Section 5.1 and issue 26 above). Does this very positive attitude of Kosovo teachers reflect better prospects for inclusive education in their country? It appears that there is not necessarily a causative link, since a promising start in accrediting in-service teacher education towards promotion and increased salaries has not yet been substantiated:

> A given number of core and supplementary in-service training programmes must be completed for each level of progression. Higher qualifications and skills received through pre-service programmes are also reflected in the salary levels of individual teachers. The in-service requirements for promotion from one level of full-time license to a higher level (and salary) will be specified in a separate administrative instruction in the near future. Unfortunately, although a good start was made on initial licensing, improved teacher salaries and establishment of the State Council for Teacher Licensing (January 2009), the process rapidly ground to a halt (Kosovo country report, p. 38).

Considerable thought has plainly gone into trying to permeate inclusive approaches throughout most kinds of teacher education provision and some gains in spreading inclusive practices have been made as a result (see **BOX 37**). This would seem to offer some prospects as a model for the development of in-service teacher education for currently unqualified vocational teachers in the Western Balkan countries. The add-on approach to inclusive approaches in post-initial teacher education is seen as less satisfactory and may lead to teachers developing attitudes that suggest educational inclusion is optional rather than required.

Inclusive education should also be a crosscutting aspect of the teaching and learning process and of the school life in general.

> As Kosovo is progressively moving towards global learning and more integrated approaches to teaching and learning, it is increasingly important for the crosscutting thread of inclusion to be reflected in all CPD programmes (Kosovo country report, p. 51).

We turn now to in-service teacher education provision delivery in Montenegro, where the country researchers indicate that much was delivered collaboratively with international agencies, including Save the Children UK: 'By the end of 2007/08 a total of 1,023 teachers had been trained for inclusive education in schools and pre-schools. In 2008 and 2009 the number of trained teachers and professional staff was 596' (Montenegro country report, p. 55). As the evaluator for some of the inclusive education programs run by the Montenegro government in collaboration with Save the Children UK, one of the authors of this regional report is in a position to appreciate the honest reflections of country researchers on the

degree of effectiveness of such in-service education (below). She is also in a position to know that – as some of the Kosovo teachers also complained – it is not uncommon for some teachers to return for in-service teacher education, on specific topics such as children with SEN or managing behaviour in classrooms, not once or even twice but simply whenever the relevant course or module was offered. What is wrong? Why is this needed? Although no conclusion can be drawn with certainty, we believe that some clues may lie in the comments below:

> The research also found that in-service training does not provide enough knowledge and self-confidence to teachers to work optimally with children with SEN and to deal with diversity (Montenegro country report, p. 56).

> Some respondents believe that there has been enough teacher training for this type of work, while teachers themselves do not feel sufficiently self-confident to realise this activity independently (Montenegro country report, p. 57).

In Kosovo also there seemed to be some failure to benefit from in-service teacher education courses:

> There is some resistance in schools to new methods and strategies and when teachers gain skills in training programmes, but they continue with their old practices once back in school, partly as a result of the working conditions (Kosovo country report, p. 45).

BOX 37 PERMEATING INCLUSIVE APPROACHES THROUGHOUT THE TEACHER UPGRADING PROGRAMME

In 2005 and 2006, the Kosovo Education Development Plan supported the establishment of the Kosovo In-Service Teacher Training Programme in the Faculty of Education. The programme was developed and owned jointly by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the University of Prishtina. The main purpose of the programme was to train and re-qualify teachers to meet the criteria set by this ministry. This meant that teachers who had completed two or three years of education to obtain their previous qualification or degree would need to take an extra number of mainly professional courses to obtain a four-year bachelor's degree in education. The programme is fully based on inclusive philosophy and interactive and individualised approaches to learning and also includes concrete courses on issues like inclusive education and child development. The ministry is currently reviewing this programme in order to decide the best way to ensure that all teachers in the education system hold university degrees. A school principal interviewed in Prizren was proud to say that several teachers in his school had recently graduated through this programme and that he was familiar with inclusive education, which formed part of the training programme (Kosovo country report, p. 46).

The apparent dearth of follow-up, related practical activities and evaluation of in-service and CPD activities leads to some doubt as to whether these are benefited from optimlly

Enough is known about cognitive and other theories of learning in students of all ages, including in adult teachers (Kelchtermans, 2004; ILO, 2010, p. 17), to know that theoretical or knowledge inputs on their own are insufficient to ensure even remembering, far less adapting theories to suit different contexts and having the confidence to practice implementing them and the self-critique to improve and change them as need be. New knowledge, observations and experiences have to undergo an interpretative and constructivist process that puts the new alongside the previous mental frames. The subsequent actions of teachers will be influenced, Clarke and Hollingsworth assert (2002), by their thinking. Kelchtermans (2004, p. 221) suggests conceptualising CPD 'as a learning process that needs to include the close intertwining of both teachers' (more effective) actions in their work and the (increased) validity of the beliefs and knowledge underlying them.'

A satisfactory outcome in this process of significant CPD will therefore not only need quality inputs of various kinds but also sufficient time and space for teachers' reflective thinking and also for discussion with critical friends among colleagues and among students (in teachers' own schools but also beyond them) and some mentoring (possibly by more experienced others from schools, faculties or other institutions). Teachers also, above all, need to have the time and confidence, with support if needed, to implement what they have learned and to put it into practice as appropriate to ensure benefits to both themselves and their students. Only then will the exercise have been worthwhile for all concerned in both educational and financial terms. One factor that may impact positively on some teachers' chances of benefiting from CPD is noted as a positively engaged school principal who may undertake the relevant CPD her/himself and encourage teachers (Kosovo country report, pp. 45-6; see also issue 8 in Section 4.3.1).

Too few teachers in any country have rich, frequent or extensive opportunities to go through all of these processes, but teachers in the Western Balkan countries, who use only very limited or none of their non-teaching time in their schools and have a tradition of limited professional discourse, will require strong assistance and encouragement to find new ways of putting CPD into practice with their students – as some of their pioneering colleagues have been described as doing in the country reports (see issue 26c above).

Teachers will also need to consider new ways of recording how they undertake and process CPD. One of the administrative advantages to providers, monitors and users of traditional courses and workshops is how easy they are to list, date, time and sign for crude accountability purposes. But this is to overlook the deeper purpose and the ultimate and most important beneficiaries of teachers' CPD, who are not the teachers themselves but rather school students and their learning.

Quality assurance matters in relation to in-service teacher education, along with other matters, are dealt with in some detail in Section 6.1.2, especially under issue 21. However, true teacher CPD accountability will involve much more than completing the kind of basic evaluation forms supplied to course and workshop participants in the past or the rather more complex but, in our view, still inadequate evaluations undertaken by external evaluators with a grounding in research approaches to evaluation. The inadequacy of project and CPD evaluations often reside in inadequate baseline data and insufficient time to carry through all the processes. However, it is vital to know not only how teachers react and practice in response to their new learning through CPD, but also how their students respond and how their learning outcomes may be affected. Goodall et al. (2005) noted that less than 25% of school-based CPD was evaluated with reference to student attitudes or learning outcomes. This is truly a substantial loss of potentially valuable information for teachers and school managers about how successful or otherwise their CPD had been.

Little was mentioned in the country reports about evaluation of CPD beyond references to teachers' expressions of satisfaction or requests for more. This relates to teachers' and often CPD providers' lack of knowledge and experience of undertaking research-based evaluation. Links with faculty staff, of the kind already initiated in the Universities of Belgrade, Zagreb, Jagodina and Sarajevo with schools and teachers (post-report information provided by university-based colleagues) who do have such experience may be helpful in this respect, but there is also a great need for professional development of teachers in research methodology and action and other forms of research. Some of these topics may be included in initial teacher education but much research into various forms of CPD is required, some of it involving mentored school-based research and research-based evaluations of CPD.

Currently it is not entirely clear why some CPD has not taken practitioners further down the line of inclusion. We hypothesise that not enough CPD is being put into practice and that CPD is not sufficiently embedded in practice and in whole-school approaches that embrace holistic understanding of inclusive education, where diversity is considered an asset and the existing expertise of some good teachers can be built on and used collegially with others (Dadds, 1997). This all may be correct but it cannot be proved without evaluation. Guskey (2000) writes extensively about the challenge of CPD evaluation and appropriate ways of carrying out evaluation that take into account teacher participant responses and learning, support by the organisation, participant use of new knowledge and skills and student learning outcomes.

In conclusion, key points from the discussion under issue 27 that have implications for teacher development are as follows:

■ There is a supply of in-service teacher education that appears to be directed towards helping teachers develop competenaces for inclusive education.

- Teachers say they would like more such in-service teacher education.
- It seems that many teachers do not put what they should have learned into practice.
- There is a dearth of practical follow-up to in-service teacher education, both to ensure its implementation and to evaluate its impact on teacher practices and on student outcomes.
- These are systemic deficits.

Recommendations addressing these points are provided in Chapter 7.

The implications for teacher development are substantial. There is a clear need for teachers and national and local authorities to seek ways to enable teachers to benefit optimally from in-service teacher education and CPD and to ensure that these benefits translate into improved learning experiences and outcomes for their students. In-service teacher education is only a possible early part of the more comprehensive and extended CPD which should be ongoing throughout careers. This issue highlights the need for teachers to become knowledgeable and competent users of research, to learn to undertake practitioner research and collaborative research and to evaluate their in-service teacher education and CPD using research methods.

ISSUE 28 DONOR AND NGO-LED CONTINOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HAVE LEFT SOME COUNTRIES HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON THEM DESPITE SOMETIMES TRANSIENT INVOLVEMENT

The importance in teacher education of national and international NGOs and international and donor-funded initiatives is particularly recognised in inclusive education. The diminishing presence of some donors and international NGOs is a source of concern, unless national agencies are willing and able to take up the challenge.

The very substantial involvement of international donors in CPD for inclusive education, often working through their own or other NGOs, was one of the most prominent features of efforts to engage governments, schools and teachers in the movement towards inclusive education in the last 15 years. Indeed it is widely believed by many international NGO officials and younger education professionals in the Western Balkan countries that inclusive education is an imported phenomenon, enabled or, debatably, imposed by foreigners. This could explain some of the resistance and suspicion evident in some teachers towards inclusive education – although there is certainly also some natural concern about personal implications regarding additional work resulting from change.

There is nothing that can ever be said with certainty to be new or a first in education, but there was certainly prior experience of inclusive schools or, at least, of schools

with diverse students in the Western Balkan countries before so many international NGOs came to the region during and after the periods of conflict in the last 20 years. There were also very many local people, professionals and parents who believed in social inclusion and education for all. The reality, in common with most countries where public access to education had been established for many years, was that there had always been students whose profiles did not conform to the majority of students in local schools: descendants of African slaves traded by pirate ships harboured in Ulcinj on the Montenegrin coast; students with disabilities and determined parents who saw no reason for their children to be excluded from school in any country; RAE students or other linguistic minority students; students who attended Catholic or Orthodox churches, synagogues, mosques or no religious establishments at all; and students of mixed ethnolinguistic parentage who were multilingual and intercultural by birth and upbringing. All these were present side by side in local schools in the Western Balkans before the concepts of inclusive education and integration were developed. This serendipitous mingling led to the development of systematic planning and research-monitored implementation from the early 1980s, in Zagreb and other parts of Croatia, of the integration of students with physical and sensory disabilities (Racki, 1982); facilitation and resourcing of own-language education throughout socialist Yugoslavia was also the norm.

Nonetheless, as we have seen above, it is clear that inclusive education has been heavily promoted and supported by national and international NGOs, primarily through funded in-service courses and workshops (some with linked publication of handbooks, donations of school equipment and other educational resources) and also through the whole-school development of schools with all their staff and students and their parents, modelling good practice under a number of different labels, whether 'inclusive', 'child-friendly' or 'quality' education, to list just some of the most influential. Advocacy for human and child rights, social inclusion and inclusive education through national and local education authorities and media campaigns were also promotional strategies used intensively by NGOs.

One of the interesting findings from the seven countries' research, made explicit in some of the country reports and left implicit in others, is that official in-service teacher education or CPD agencies such as Croatia's Teacher Education and Training Agency and Albania's Institute for Curriculum and Training etc., have very often not engaged much in in-service teacher education aimed at developing competences for inclusive education, although some have been charged with the regulation and programme listing arrangements for donor-funded and NGO programmes (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 52). In all seven countries, national agencies have been very engaged with training in relation to other education reforms, for instance, with the extension of primary education or with changes in subject programmes in primary and secondary academic and vocational schools (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 40).

The national in-service teacher education agencies' relatively low level of engagement with the development of inclusive education reflects perhaps an earlier view that inclusive education was not central to educational processes. However, it also highlights the financial constraints referred to under issue 26 above. It is plain that what has been achieved in inclusive education to date has largely been due to the extremely creative and substantial financial, practical and professional contributions of international donors and national and international NGOs. Partnership arrangements with government agencies have often occurred purely in terms of formal acknowledgement, then with time, some shared planning and, more recently, some shared funding arrangements.

The discussion now turns to the regulation and negative and positive aspects of donor-funded and national and international NGO in-service teacher education and CPD programmes for inclusive education. We will refer to views expressed in the country reports and draw on our own views and experiences. The implications for the future of CPD for inclusive education and social inclusion will then be discussed.

Possibility and means of regulating donor-funded and national and international NGO in-service teacher education and CPD

Quality assurance in relation to in-service teacher education in general is addressed in some detail in issue 21 in Section 6.1.2). What follows here is specific to in-service teacher education provided by donors and national and international NGOs. Silova (2008) discusses the complementary role and strategies of NGOs with governments in whose countries they are located; she describes the most common strategy as being, 'to present a corrective to ongoing reforms that is in line with the mission of the NGO. In practice, this means that NGOs initiate, design, and implement a pilot project on the assumption that the project will then be scaled up by the government or donors' (p. 27). Edwards (1998) from the World Bank, refers to alternative functions of international donors and NGOs, the first of which is 'development as leverage' which is about 'social actors pushing for more radical changes in systems and structures' (p. 56).

In the development of inclusive education, including through in-service teacher education and CPD, we primarily perceive international donors and NGOs as fulfilling this 'leverage' role – that of ensuring that education for all becomes inclusive (quality) education for all – and, in the Western Balkan countries, as seeking to work according to Silova's (2008) concept of complementarity. While plainly such a role may be seen as broadly working with (some) governments, the relationships between governments and NGOs may not always be straightforward or comfortable. There is also likely to be some discomfort between governments and the larger international donors, but the voicing of this discomfort tends to be more muted when such funders are extremely wealthy and influential and the countries

are relatively poor. In the case of international donors and NGOs in the Western Balkan countries, an additional factor, normally of great advantage, is that the great majority of key staff working in inclusive education are local personnel with excellent multilingual skills and very high abilities and qualifications – which is a major resource for inclusive education in itself.

During the last twenty years it would be fair to depict the arrival of international donors and NGOs and the birth of local NGOs in the Western Balkan countries as a deluge. The positive intentions of the great majority is not questioned, although their realism, qualifications for the work and organisational and financial viability are sometimes less certain, especially in the case of smaller organisations. Some level of regulation of their actions eventually became necessary. The excerpt below describes such a demanding situation in education (especially in in-service teacher education) in Kosovo and its resolution:

> In 2001, the Canadian Agency for International Development invested in this important aspect of education and the Department of Education and Science of the time assigned the Canadian project the role of lead agency in the sector. At this time, numerous other organisations, projects and programmes were offering diverse programmes in circumstances where there was a serious lack of any systematic and coordinated approach . . . In 2002, the Kosovo Education Development Plan and Department of Education and Science (later Ministry of Education, Science and Technology) embarked upon a mapping exercise to establish some order in the sub-sector, stating that any programme must be approved by the Department of Education and Science/ Kosovo Education Development Plan before going into schools. This situation did not last long, however, as most of the smaller organisations left Kosovo, and UNICEF, the Kosovo Education Development Plan, Finnish Support for the Development of Education in Kosovo, the Kosovo Education Centre and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology were left as the main providers of in-service teacher training programmes (Kosovo country report, p. 45).

Other countries also wish to regulate their in-service teacher education and CPD provision as a whole, including that of donors and NGOs. In general there is a tacit agreement between governments and the non-governmental sector that this is necessary and right, even though it sometimes produces delays in provision and a certain level of censorship that could be criticised by the sector or defended by governments. The level and thoroughness of the scrutiny varies from ministry to ministry in the various countries and, within Bosnia and Herzegovina, of its multiple ministries. The approach in Serbia was carefully critiqued by the country researchers, who identified that follow-up to courses and scrutiny of applicant suitability for the courses were not part of the ministry's requirements of the NGOs (Serbia country report, p. 52). These resonate with some of the factors pursued in this report in issue 27.

The Croatian Ministry of Education has a specific organisation that addresses the regulation and the part-funding of programmes (Croatia country report, p. 47). Shared funding is also sometimes arranged by other countries' ministries of education for in-service teacher education and projects (Došen, 2008) in prioritised areas of work. This can plainly be a mutually advantageous arrangement as it ensures a role for the ministry in helping guide the project, offers more scope for delivering the project to larger numbers of beneficiaries, focuses government attention on, and if all goes well, approval for, the project and makes it possible for the ministry to take over and mainstream the development nationally. Altogether it may be construed as benevolent regulation. However, the fragmentation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's education system(s) made it even problematic initially for the country researchers to identify the regulatory system for NGO in-service teacher education. It later transpired that Bosnia's pedagogical institutes had the regulatory responsibility which would seem to be appropriate (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 50).

Negative aspects of donor and NGO engagement with in-service teacher education and CPD for inclusive education

We have already been critical of some quality aspects of in-service teacher education and CPD (see discussions under issues 26 and 27 above). Some programmes may also have delivered training on single issue disabilities, students with SEN or Roma students that failed to help participants understand that inclusive education is far wider than those admittedly very important groups of people but is, rather, about equitable education, social cohesiveness and positive appreciation of diversity. This often occurred because NGOs first came to the countries at times of conflict when crisis management responses in relation to acutely disadvantaged groups, e.g. people with disabilities and the Roma population, seemed appropriate. As one example among many, in the case of Save the Children UK, its early work in the Western Balkans focused separately on groups with disabilities and on Roma, only later adopting a broader approach to education through inclusive education. The resulting fragmentation of approaches has taken a long time to be recognised and may take longer to redress.

In our view, greater collaboration among donors and NGOs might have produced better in-service teacher education outcomes but, although some sharing of in-service teacher education projects did occur, there was always the shadow of competition and jealousy between individual organisations that prevented its efficacy. This resulted in overlaps and gaps in in-service teacher education so that, even when the NGO sector dominated the provision of in-service teacher education and CPD for inclusive education, this did not result in coherent and comprehensive national and local provision. Some NGOs were better than others in trying to ensure sustainability. It is doubtful, however, if enough fully trained trainers have been produced, resulting in too great a reliance on cascade training (from official trainers employed by the agencies, to local trainers or teachers, then from them to

the teachers in their schools and from them to parents and students). However, unless impeccably prepared, the cascade 'reduces to a trickle' (Hayes, 2000) and essential aspects of the training process that contribute to its efficacy become lost. The very high quality international donor and NGO local professional staff, already mentioned, were often in sensitive positions in relation to their own countries' ministries of education, advocating early on for developments that were not always initially welcomed. They may also have been seen by locally employed peers as privileged in terms of salaries and opportunities to travel. It has to be hoped that, as international donors and NGOs leave the region, their talents, experience and skills will be recognised and that they will find employment locally.

Almost all the NGO and international donor school-based CPD and in-service teacher programmes were targeted at pre-schools and primary schools, although UNICEF's Child-Friendly Schools programme did extend to secondary schools. In our view, they missed an important opportunity to become active in the secondary sector, both academic and vocational, but particularly the latter. In other countries, e.g. the UK, the further education sector – equivalent to upper vocational schools – pioneered inclusive education ahead of many primary and (lower) secondary schools. Such involvement in CPD and in-service teacher education projects might have been mutually very beneficial. Criticisms of international donors and NGOs were very few in the country reports and related to the funder's choice of approach, coordination of in-service teacher education provision, inconsistency of provision and restriction in numbers of places available for valuable opportunities (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 37; Albania country report, p. 47; former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, p. 41)

Inevitably, in the current worldwide financial crisis, some international donors and NGOs have left and some local NGOs have ceased functioning. The financial crisis has impacted badly and probably long-term on the funds of even the largest international donor organisations and NGOs. Competing humanitarian crises in other parts of the world seem to have acquired relatively more importance, even though there are many areas in the Western Balkans where the departing donors and NGOs could have continued to do very useful work. There is also a theoretical perspective that many donors and NGOs across the world are compromised in terms of their founding ideals and that a better way forward for many of the countries that previously, or still, host NGOs is through civil society organisations (Klees, 2008).

Positive aspects of donor and NGO engagement with in-service teacher education and CPD for inclusive education

There seems little doubt that many educators in schools and other organisations with an interest in equity in education and in social cohesiveness learned much of what they know, and have based much of what they themselves have subsequently done, on what they learned from in-service teacher education delivered by the non-governmental sector, from which they will continue

to develop as professionals (Albania country report, pp. 44-5; Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, pp. 52-3):

> Over the last two decades the national education system has benefited from contributions from a considerable number of domestic and international organisations in the in-service professional development of teachers. These non-governmental and international initiatives have the advantage that they can tailor training on various issues to the needs of a given school or community, helping the teachers improve appropriate competences in their real-life setting (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia country report, pp. 40-1).

A tribute was paid to how donor organisation and NGO officers were willing to work closely and persistently with school staff, usually in connection with an ongoing project, to see teachers through stages of their work when matters were not going well and to share their successful projects at the end. This is something that one of the authors of this regional report witnessed and, in view of the relative isolation of many teachers in their classrooms and of how an engaged school principal can make a very real difference to staff motivation, it is possible that there is an important message about how schools and their teachers should be managed, or better still, manage themselves, to improve internal communication and, perhaps as a result, improve CPD:

> According to teacher educators, school managers and teachers themselves, teachers are not always well motivated and their development lacks continuity. The lack of financial incentives is always cited as an excuse for minimal engagement in the professional development of teachers. Much more is achieved by NGOs that maintain relationships and continuity and are far more efficient at recognising the needs of teachers (Bosnia and Herzegovina country report, p. 54).

The non-governmental sector was sometimes able to fill gaps in in-service teacher education and CPD that national or local agencies either could not fill or thought were not sufficiently important. 'All means *all*' in relation to the inclusion of students in schools: the needs of even one student and of minorities of any size are, by any definition, important and worthy of CPD attention:

> Nevertheless, training courses relating to the teaching of Roma children have only been offered as part of in-service training organised by some NGOs such as Step by Step and the Forum for Freedom in Education (Croatia country report, p. 47).

Many countries' researchers had much to say about the extent of effort and, in particular, the detailed and principled approaches to inclusive education shown by international donors and NGOs. In this respect the sector

has provided a moral compass that is also followed by many, beyond the sector, who share its commitment to inclusive education and potentially marginalised students:

> UNICEF involvement was mainly through the Child-Friendly Schools programme that included teacher training activities in 83 schools in Kosovo. The systematic approach and philosophy of the programme come closest to the broader meaning of inclusion, as this approach involved individuals (children, teachers and parents), the community, institutions and authorities and included a variety of groups like ethnic communities, at-risk groups, girls and parents (Kosovo country report, p. 48).

The training of trainers has been an important part of donor and NGO work and, along with training manuals, guides, translated texts, is part of their very considerable heritage that ensures their work will live on after the organisations are no longer there (Montenegro country report, p. 55). For countries such as Albania, which started at such a low economic baseline, this contribution with the work of its own local personnel was vital:

> Save the Children Albania employs a twin-track approach to education: it pilots inclusive education projects in 32 schools in six areas of the country (Tirana, Berat, Librazhd, Gjirokastër, Korça and Vlora) while, at the same time, supporting a cascade-system of in-service teacher training for about 9,100 teachers in 400 schools in all 13 regions of the country (Albania country report, p. 45).

In conclusion, the implications for teacher development in the Western Balkan countries of the work of donors and national and international NGOs and of the reducing presence of INGOs are many. The most important of these are summarised here, while suggestions to address them are given in Chapter 7.

It is important that we record our recognition of the enormous contribution made towards inclusive education by international donors and their staff, both local and international, particularly through their capacity-building activities in in-service teacher education and CPD. The ultimate beneficiaries are the more diverse student populations already in more inclusive schools and those who will follow as schools become even more inclusive.

The diminishing number of international donors and NGOs in the Western Balkans will leave a gap in CPD and in-service teacher education provision for inclusive education that local NGOs and some governments may find hard to fill. Lessons can be learned from both the positive and more problematic aspects of their CPD and in-service teacher education provision that should guide governments as they, it must be hoped, pay greater attention and allocate more realistic budgets to their own provision of this essential service.

Among the lessons learned are those related to the fragmented and sparse cover of CPD and in-service teacher education, which has been insufficiently regulated and collaborative and which has not always ensured sustainability through the full training of enough trainers. NGOs and many international donors who supported CPD, projects and model establishments failed to do so substantially in relation to the secondary school sector and especially vocational schools. This is a real loss and makes VET development for inclusive education even more urgent.

On the positive side, there is a substantial heritage of the work in the form of the high calibre staff developed by international bodies and the many teachers whose competences for inclusive education they developed. There are many NGO publications that support and illuminate inclusive education in the Western Balkan countries, as well as numerous model schools. Donors and NGOs have modelled ethical commitment to inclusive education and, above all, to genuinely and potentially marginalised students and their families.

7. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND WAYS AHEAD

In this chapter we set out what we consider to be the major findings from the study, draw conclusions about the issues identified in this regional report and reflect on their implications for the development of teachers for inclusive education in the Western Balkan region. We also consider possible ways ahead and potential contributions of different players to improving the situation. Let us turn to the three key research questions addressed in this regional study and consider what the main messages of the report are in relation to each question.

What issues, challenges and good policies and practices can be identified in the Western Balkans, considering the regional, European and international contexts of teacher development for inclusive education in situations of social and cultural diversity?

A total of 28 issues, many challenges and some opportunities have been identified in relation to the development of teachers for inclusive education in the region. These have been discussed throughout this regional report, along with some examples of policies and practices that illustrate the issues and highlight relevant policies and practices from the region and from other countries. Some of the examples show positive policies and practices while others serve to highlight problematic issues. Conclusions in relation to each issue have been highlighted at the end of the relevant discussion. Rather than reproduce the list of issues and related conclusions, here we set out, under the relevant question headings, twelve overall crosscutting messages based on the report as a whole and a list of targeted recommendations or suggestions as a menu of possible ways forward, from which the seven countries, either separately or together, can select items for further consideration and possible action.

An all-encompassing message from this study offers little comfort to anyone concerned with the lives of children and young people and especially with their education.

Message 1. Existing policies and practices in the region are generally not well oriented towards the development of teachers for inclusive education in the broad sense, nor do they enable teachers to contribute as much as they could to social inclusion and social cohesion.

Planning teacher development systems that enable teachers to be more inclusive is a challenge that will require joint efforts by relevant players in the countries across the region. An in-depth understanding of the current situation is a prerequisite, as in any other sphere of public policy, for the design of successful and sustainable reforms in teacher education.

Before considering what could be done to improve the situation let us consider what other broader conclusions can be drawn from the regional report regarding the second and third research questions.

How do regional specificities relevant to this topic link with the wider thematic fields of teacher development for inclusive education identified in the international research literature and the EU agenda?

The regional specificities of teacher development for inclusive education and social inclusion as conceptualised in this study (see Section 2.2) can be described through a number of contradictions.

Message 2. While there seem to be many good intentions and much activity in the region in terms of targeting inclusive education, the underlying restricted and narrow understanding of the concept of inclusive education may serve to maintain counter-inclusive practices and may even reinforce practices leading to exclusion and/or negative stereotyping of some students and groups of students.

Historically, teacher development systems in the region have not considered the social and cultural diversity of student backgrounds. For years, teachers have been trained to teach an imaginary average student, while students with SEN have been viewed as requiring special educators and special schools or classes (or only basic care if they were judged to be uneducable). This study shows that the new discourses about inclusion have largely been adopted by policy makers, teachers and other educators in the region. At the same time, a narrow view of inclusion is assumed that understands inclusion as bringing students with SEN and – sometimes – Roma students into school. This assumption is evident, in the research leading to this report, in all the issues and in approaches to teacher development policies, e.g. when more courses on particular disabilities are seen as a first step in preparing future teachers for inclusive education.

This narrow conceptualisation of inclusive education has historical roots related to professional thinking and attitudes from the past: quasi-medical approaches to SEN; progress within rigid curricula and behaviour of students as the main markers of teacher effectiveness; paternalistic assumptions in defining the role of education professionals, allowing little room for parental rights and views or for student voices in their own education; and the view of equity as 'the same' and of difference as 'strange', 'deviant', 'abnormal' or 'less'. These inherited traditions in education, sometimes combined with fragmented international influences, seem to have led to much of the work done in the region, in the name of

inclusive education, resting on this narrow conceptualisation. This is no longer appropriate to the present context or useful in developing inclusive education along the lines of the concept underlying this report. While the former arrangements for diversity in education, including teacher development, had a distinct logic and philosophical basis within socialist education, we strongly suggest that these need to be revisited and radically revised as one element in current education reforms.

Narrowly understood inclusive education is seen to involve special competences and the separate special preparation of teachers, while a number of generic competences identified in the literature as essential for the broader understanding of inclusive education adopted in this study remain unaddressed. Belief in the need for specialist competences, as a series of add-on preparatory steps to make standard education broader so as to include the relevant 'categories' of 'different' students, entrenches the fragmented education of specialists in education; this makes the change from a medical to a social paradigm of inclusion more difficult. It also suggests that students' educational abilities and needs may be assessed and met by reference to their 'category' rather than by working with and observing each student as an individual. The acquisition of generic competences can make some so-called specialist competences redundant. Once generic competences have been acquired, it is possible to assess the need for additional competences, largely in the areas of communication and language, that may need to be acquired or accessed subsequently by teachers working with a very small proportion of students.

Message 3. The countries in the region have generally adopted policies and regulations granting minorities entitlement to culturally and linguistically sensitive education, but this, in some cases, has contributed to the segregated education of students from different ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

There seems to be little recognition in the region that inclusive education cannot be enclosed in a school classroom. Inclusive education takes place in a social and political context. Parallel school systems designed to grant culturally and linguistically relevant education should not be used to maintain divisions in the region. Mono-ethnic schools are counter-inclusive. Upholding minority rights does not need to imperil the right and need to learn the culture and language of others. Intercultural education and bilingualism need to be firmly placed on the agenda in the region. Young people in the countries concerned are not generally bilingual in neighbouring languages and this is often a factor in social exclusion. This narrow vision may even apply to the selection of student teachers, among whom minority groups are rarely represented. Where school students of different groups are taught by teachers from the 'matching' group in separate classes, the teachers' professional and in-school social lives may be totally and deliberately segregated from those of teachers from the other group, even when both function under one roof.

Message 4. Although there is a widespread belief in the importance of values and of a developmental moral role for teachers in the region, there is little focus on enabling teachers to acquire the most relevant competences for this role, including reflexivity (the capacity to appraise their own thoughts, feelings and actions self-critically and to take any appropriate remediating action)**.**

The participants in the study across the region have expressed benevolent views on inclusive education but have shown little awareness of the huge and problematic implications of the loss of a moral compass – one of the profound issues in countries in transition. The previous frameworks for a reflection on values in the region were ideologically given and did not aim at an open-minded and reflecting practitioner. Yet it seems that there was less public criticism then of teachers and schools. Today, the claims by the public and parents on education are more diverse (see Section 2.1.1), yet teachers have little opportunity to develop the necessary competences for working with diversity and reflecting on the implication of these diverse, sometimes competing, values and their educational impact. Different deeply held beliefs about how best to meet the interests of learners are in dispute and these interests are therefore at risk.

Message 5. Although teacher education has expanded and been academically elevated as its importance is increasingly recognised, it does not seem to provide more adequate opportunities for teacher development either in the initial training and novice teacher stages or throughout a teacher's career.

In the last two decades, most pre-service teacher education institutions in the region have been transformed from colleges (under strict political and ideological control) to faculties within universities. However, teacher education at universities in the region is often treated as inferior to traditionally distinguished disciplinary faculties (which develop only subject-related competence in their future teachers). Teacher education does not seem to recognise the formative value of practice and research. Besides, teachers cannot be 'complete' and perfected during their faculty studies – even if their curriculum does have a substantial proportion of practical work. The existing education of teachers in the region is not designed to support the continually changing teaching profession and teachers' need for lifelong or career-long learning.

Message 6. Policies and practices targeting inclusive education do not cover the VET sector, which serves the largest proportion of secondary students and which is being promoted within the EU as playing a key role in enhancing social inclusion and cohesion.

There was little evidence in the country reports regarding the role of VET and vocational teacher education in inclusive education and social inclusion. The pre-service teacher education faculties are reduced to pre-primary and lower primary teaching. The collapse of the economies of the region and of industries that grew up in the previous political era led also to the disruption of VET, where recovery is still far from complete. Most school teachers

and all teacher educators have progressed through the more academic routes in their own education and have little knowledge and understanding of the value and potential of VET. More research is needed about the education and training of VET teachers in the region.

Message 7. Although international partners have been valuable developmental factors in the region, their influence and activities have in some ways also been restrictive.

The region has benefited from a multitude of projects addressing inclusive education, however understood, and related to them, teacher development for inclusive education. However, conceptual confusion, a lack of coordination between various projects and organisations and national authorities, lack of financial means, a frequent lack of political interest and, perhaps, a lack of 'space' for the countries to develop and manage comprehensive strategies for changing their systems have resulted in a patchwork of initiatives that fit particular missions but which do not add up to coherent approaches to the long-term planning of large-scale changes.

How can the design and implementation of relevant future policies and practices in the Western Balkans be improved to respond to regionally identified challenges in relation to teacher development for inclusive education?

Following the pervasive argument of this report regarding the narrow conceptualisation of inclusive education in the region and its effects on activities targeting inclusive education, it seems unlikely that more of the same efforts towards inclusion would be sufficient or effective. As already discussed, attempts to improve the quality of education provision separately for specific target groups could even exacerbate the problem if they are predicated on a 'deficit' view of certain human differences. The logic would therefore suggest a process of unlearning and relearning, by teachers and policy makers alike, rather than simply trying to adapt or modify existing concepts, policies and practices.

There are deep implications for redefining professional identities, education institutions and the delivery of teacher education and CPD. The study raises many questions that challenge current teacher professional roles and identities and brings into question, not only the value of past efforts towards inclusion, but the educational paradigm itself. One of the biggest challenges is likely to be sustaining motivation in those teachers whose deeply held beliefs about the organisation of education and society are threatened by the wider paradigm of inclusive education.

Message 8. If schools and their teachers are to fulfil their potential as important vehicles and agents for positive change in their communities, all sections and levels of the education and training system need to work together to promote teacher learning for inclusive education and to sustain this throughout teaching careers.

In this study we considered the topic of teacher development for inclusive education in a wide, systematic approach that included perspectives on the practice of teaching and on the broader standing of the teaching profession in society, policies at different levels and the practices of different institutions and players. This approach offered a coherent system-wide perspective on the topic and a way of thinking about the topic at a macro-level. Clearly, any improvements in relation to the issues identified in this study would require not only that appropriate actions are undertaken by the relevant players but also that substantial cooperation be developed between different players in promoting a consistent change in teacher development.

Message 9. Cooperation between teacher training institutions and schools needs to be institutionalised to enable mutual learning by staff, to enhance the quality of teaching, learning and staff-student relations and to link theory and research to school practice, for example, through action research and communities of practice and by shared responsibilities for student teacher practice and novice teachers.

Some models of cooperation between different players have been recognised as concentrating on the school level and building common quality assurance and enhancement frameworks. Schools are the units in and through which such system-wide cooperation can be brought to fruition. The formal framework (legislation, ratification of international conventions, etc.) cannot bring about actual improvements in teaching practice without actions and measures at the school level, initiated and coordinated by local authorities as the process of devolution of powers to them becomes functional.

Message 10. There is much need for further research into relevant issues in the region and, in general, for strengthening research capacities in education.

Research is needed both by the research community and by education practitioners and should include the development of qualitative as well as quantitative research skills. Using research evidence for policy making and in some forms of educational evaluation also needs to be strongly supported as a way of ensuring the most effective investment of effort and resources. Quality data from improved education management information systems within schools, locally, nationally and regionally should enhance quantitative research, while greater concern for the academic and social outcomes of education of school students should motivate more qualitative educational research.

Message 11. Although improved and coherent quality assurance systems in education in general, including in teacher development, are fundamental to positive change, the education system cannot build a more inclusive and cohesive society on its own. Inter-ministerial and other high level cooperation is also needed.

Quality assurance systems can be powerful instruments in building coherent frames of reference for teachers, schools and teacher education institutions. Engagement in

debates about what standards of quality for the teaching profession a society should set could be a starting and meeting point for the relevant stakeholders to agree common criteria. These criteria could then be consistently used in different quality assurance systems for teacher education institutions, in school self-evaluation and external school evaluation systems and in teacher promotion systems. Such common frames of reference could help the relevant players build shared expectations of teachers, shared concepts and language and complementary actions that support teachers in developing the necessary competences.

It is clear, however, that a sound education system and policies are not enough; there are many issues which go beyond education and can only be addressed by other public policies. Education policy needs, in fact, to be coordinated with these other policies at the national level and the education ministry should be supported by the social affairs ministry, the ministry responsible for minorities and other ministries with related responsibilities. Overwhelming evidence suggests that joined-up education and wider social policy initiatives are much more effective in removing barriers to equality and inclusion. Education and training policy measures need to be articulated with wider social and economic reforms to ensure effective intervention against the vicious cycle of disadvantage. Partnerships at the local, regional and national levels, including bottom-up approaches, are crucial for decision making and implementation. They help to link the education and training sector more effectively to other policy areas (employment, family, health, housing, migration and youth) and to the wider society (including business, community and the non-governmental and voluntary sectors).

Message 12. It is clear that commonalities in the problems and challenges that relate to teacher education for inclusive education co-exist with variations across the region and between countries. The commonalities, allied with limited resources and shared uncertainties as to ways ahead, suggest that regional and inter-country collaboration in developing and implementing policies and practices potentially offer economies of scale and support for peer learning and would thus improve prospects for attracting funding from within and outside the region.

Given the histories of the Western Balkan countries, it might be anticipated that inter-country collaboration would be viewed with some suspicion, cynicism and distaste. However, again given the histories of these countries and the devastating impact on their populations, the various players concerned with the education of a new generation in all of the countries may wish to do everything in their power that will enable all children and young people to live their lives as peaceful neighbours in increasingly prosperous and cohesive societies. Inclusive education cannot guarantee this, naturally, but it could make a very valuable contribution towards it. For this reason, it will require carefully selected and effectively developed teachers.

We now make some concrete suggestions that we would like to bring to the attention of national and local policy makers, development partners engaged in external support to the region, teacher educators, expert advisors, teachers and school principals. They are based on our interpretation of the findings presented in this report and the overall aims of improving the policies and practices of teacher development for inclusive education in the region. Some of the recommendations are adapted for several groups of stakeholders since, as suggested in Messages 8, 11 and 12, their collaboration will be necessary in many developments.

The recommendations and suggestions that follow have not been prioritised by the authors. Although most of the issues and challenges are common to all seven countries, some are not common to all the countries nor are they all experienced to the same degree. There are also differences in some of the preliminary paths chosen towards inclusive education and in early moves towards educating teachers for inclusive education. Despite much commonality, each country is unique. It would be wrong, therefore, to assume any right to guide countries' individual choices as to which suggestions to follow or which countries to choose as collaborative partners in developments. We simply hope that the findings of the country reports and the discussions in this regional report, contextualised within wider European and international developments, will illuminate the thinking and planning of key players at all levels.

7.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS

Education management and information services

- Development of national, local and school-level education management information systems from pre-school to tertiary education could serve the threefold purpose of monitoring the development of inclusive education, monitoring student attainment and anti-discrimination and providing reliable data for national, regional and international research and comparison.
- Teachers and school principals need to be trained in using education management information systems and related technologies.
- In the longer term, countries should work towards levels of student application to become teachers that would allow effective selection of good candidates by establishing conditions of service and professional standards conducive to enhancing the standing of the teaching profession. There are lessons to be learned from other countries' selection procedures.
- Education management information systems should enable national planning to balance the numbers of graduating teachers with probable post vacancies.

Competences, standards and quality assurance

- Integrating teacher competences for inclusive education when establishing national, local, and institutional quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms could ensure an all-pervasive approach to

developing all teachers rather than treating competences as specialist knowledge.

■ When introducing teacher standards in a country for the first time, care should be taken to ensure that these include generic teacher competences and commitments to promoting equality and social inclusion.

■ Standards should be agreed among all stakeholders, including policy makers, pre-service and in-service teacher educators, teachers and school principals.

■ It is important that teachers and other education professionals are involved in the formulation of policies and are consulted when new laws are being drafted.

■ Quality assurance systems for CPD should specify that inclusive approaches are embedded in all forms of CPD, on the presumption that all schools have students who will, for many varied reasons, experience difficulties in learning for some or all their school career. Inclusive education should be seen as quality education.

Schools and teachers

■ Establishing systems of incentives and rewards for innovative schools and teachers could inspire them to change and develop practices towards greater inclusion. Such schemes could motivate greater in-school collaboration and whole-school development.

■ A national training programme for a school principal qualification should be planned, with responsibility for enhancing a school's inclusiveness as a key element.

■ All school staff require development to recognise and accept their critical role in engaging in education and with students at the greatest risk of non-enrolment, poor attendance and dropping out.

■ Financial support for students should be focused on the most socioeconomically disadvantaged students and practical and logistical support should be provided to those who need it most, e.g. transport to school for rural students and for students with SEN and offering books and other learning materials on loan to students whose families cannot afford them.

■ Policy makers at the national, local and school levels should seek to provide opportunities for teachers' reflection, discussion, dialogue and peer-support systems within teaching contract hours.

CPD provision

■ There is a need for a realistic level of funding for teacher CPD and a transparent system of allocating CPD to ensure that national, local, school and individual teachers' needs and wishes for development are met. All of these levels are considered of significance in planning CPD provision.

■ Professional development reviews of teachers' previous professional development and their CPD needs and wishes, by school principals/senior school or local authority personnel, could be linked to other quality assurance, teacher competences and standards to ensure that there is a rational approach to adding to CPD profiles and records. This would also

contribute to the justified wish of teachers to be involved in planning their own development.

■ National systems that specify hours of CPD to be undertaken annually (or over longer periods) could specify a proportion of that time for teachers' own choices of CPD provision.

■ Some CPD opportunities should lead to initial or further qualifications for teachers who either do not have an initial qualification or who wish to add to a qualification in order to add depth or new expertise, specialise or change the direction of their career.

■ In relation to individual teachers, there is a need for national CPD and in-service teacher education systems to ensure that development undertaken and verifiably implemented is systematically recorded and accredited (along with other relevant activities and achievements) towards career and salary progression. Evidence should be required of the benefits derived by students as well as teachers from the implementation of learning from CPD and in-service teacher education activities.

■ There should be a move away from the usual in-service teacher education out-of-school taught courses towards CPD in a variety of forms, some of which should involve whole school staff and be based in school and in communities of learning, and which could also involve others in the wider school community (including school specialist staff such as psychologists and pedagogues, teaching assistants, parents and other relevant professionals from social services, youth and health services, etc.).

■ Schools might also collaborate locally in CPD, in-service teacher education, exchange visits and developmental projects with other schools, including special schools, and schools at different age levels. Developing innovative approaches in CPD, including optimising the use of IT as it becomes generally available, will be a key task.

■ With the slow devolution of central powers and funding for education, the allocation of management responsibility for the continuing development of teacher and other professional school staff needs to be placed with reliable and appropriate agencies and personnel who can be responsible for quality assurance and enhancement measures for CPD providers and consumers as well as for planning and managing coherent and equitable CPD programmes.

Non-governmental sector and external development partners

■ Countries which are not already doing so should work towards ensuring that the ideas, plans and funding of the non-governmental sector and external development partners contribute to a coherent and agreed plan for countrywide inclusive education with linked teacher development for inclusive education.

■ The expertise, experience and ethical and deep commitment to inclusive education of local international NGO staff and the trainers that they have developed is invaluable and should not be lost to a country when an NGO leaves the region.

7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND DONORS

- Partners in development could make a greater impact on sustainable change if they allowed more room for domestic players to internalise strategies promoting inclusive education, social inclusion and social cohesion. Countries need to form their position, negotiate and put their chosen strategies into practice.
- External agencies need to better understand the transition context and the way it affects the understanding of inclusion, equity and diversity in the region. Where the concept of inclusive education is being used simultaneously with different meanings, there is a risk that external agencies and their host country counterparts may talk and plan without fully meeting or understanding each other, and thus fail to narrow the conceptual gap.
- International and national NGO initiatives promoting inclusive educational policies and practices could be much more effective if their activities within a country were collaborative and coordinated (e.g. CPD providers could collaborate to ensure coherence in in-service teacher development provision, especially in relation to inclusive education, and could collaborate with governments at the national and local levels in providing more opportunities for school-based CPD in inclusive education with less emphasis on out-of-school in-service teacher education).
- More NGO and donor development partners should support and undertake quality research both to provide reliable baselines for inclusive developments and to evaluate developments with governmental partners.
- NGO and development partners could consider widening their range of approaches to research methodology beyond questionnaire surveys and focus group discussions. Student voices are still not heard enough in education research.
- Where international or research institute/faculty-level researchers undertake such work, teachers or final year student teachers could be funded by the development partner to act as research assistants or interns.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS

Pre-service teacher education

- Building links with schools could help teacher education institutions and their staff focus on how they can respond to ongoing changes in teacher roles and responsibilities and would also enhance opportunities for mutual learning between teacher education institutions and school professionals.
- Teacher education institutions could attract practising teachers and other education professionals to their study programmes by providing flexible arrangements for study, e.g. by making masters' courses available in afternoons or at weekends, by offering accreditation of verified experiential learning and by developing modular courses in cooperation with local education authorities to tailor their courses to the needs of schools and their teachers, principals and other specialist and support staff, including teaching assistants.
- Teacher educators could form communities of interest with colleagues in their own country and in the region to anticipate and plan for changes in the ways that teacher pre-service and CPD will be structured and delivered in the not too distant future.
- Teacher education for improvement of home-school relations and parental involvement would require teacher educators to address the following issues with teachers: respect for and support of the greater potential contribution of parents' at-home role in their children's educational achievements; sensitivity to and proactivity in providing the necessary facilitation for engagement in home-school activities by families from minority and/or socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds; and willingness to play a part, fully and over the long term, in whole-school partnership development programmes with parents.
- Vocational teachers need opportunities to develop competences for inclusive education and teaching before they enter the teaching profession, e.g. as part of specialised pre-service teacher education for vocational teachers or through the provision of additional training for vocational teacher graduates from other programmes.
- There needs to be greater awareness among teacher educators of the role of VET and opportunities available to diverse learners in VET. At the same time, assumptions should not be made that VET is the natural choice for students from backgrounds of disadvantage.
- Teacher education at pre- and in-service levels should provide opportunities for student teachers and teachers not only to develop awareness but also to demonstrate and be assessed on practical competence. Additional attention should be paid to competences for social inclusion and how they are demonstrated in teaching and classroom management.
- There is a need to create opportunities for teacher reflection on sensitive issues of reconciliation, values and identities. Teacher education should explicitly focus on the moral role of teachers and how they are exemplified in teacher thinking and conduct. In particular, values and principles promoted in the ratified international conventions and national legislation, and ways of promoting these values in practice with pupils, should be integral and explicit in pre-service and in-service teacher development programmes.
- As teacher status improves and pre-service teacher development courses become more selective, potential students might be asked to show evidence of some prior sustained activity or placement with youngsters or community groups from culturally and socially diverse backgrounds.

■ Encouraging student teachers and teachers to be more mobile would help them experience other cultures, school organisations and teaching and learning methods. EU Tempus projects could be used to this end, as well as inter-school exchanges between special and mainstream schools and between schools using different languages and short-term secondments of outstanding and inclusive teachers to work as assistants in teacher education institutions.

■ Teacher education institutions could provide support to access by student teachers from minority backgrounds, e.g. through supported access courses, grants, etc. The cognitive advantages of bilingual learning should be promoted in teacher education, in schools and with parents. All teachers require basic skills for working with bilingual learners and learners not competent in the main language of instruction.

■ Promoting teacher education as a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, learning outcomes-based study area would require working together, across institutions, the country, the region and Europe, to move teacher education up the agenda. Collaboration between subject faculties and teacher education faculties could start by establishing interdisciplinary inclusive teams from different departments.

■ As facilities permit at universities/faculties, teacher educators and student teachers should be obliged to use IT in their coursework and communications.

In-service teacher education and CPD teacher educators/trainers

■ As IT becomes increasingly accessible in schools, specific in-service education on pedagogical and communicative uses of IT should be undertaken and implemented by all trainers and school staff.

■ There needs to be a move away from the usual in-service teacher education out-of-school taught courses towards school-based CPD involving all school staff.

■ Inclusive approaches should be embedded in all forms of CPD and in-service teacher education, on the presumption that all schools have students who, for a variety of reasons, will experience some difficulties in learning at some time or throughout their school career. Some CPD and in-service teacher education should continue to be focused explicitly on developing teachers' competences for inclusive education. Specialist staff (psychologists and pedagogues) and teaching assistants should also be encouraged to participate in CPD.

■ Some CPD opportunities should be available that lead to initial or further qualifications for teachers who either do not have an initial qualification or who wish to add to a qualification in order to specialise or to change career direction.

■ Teacher educators at faculties and CPD trainers should collaborate to ensure coherence between the CPD work that both may undertake and between pre-service and in-service teacher development provision, especially in relation to inclusive education. Members of both groups may need to undertake some CPD themselves in relation to inclusive

education in order to be able to mainstream it in all their teacher development provision.

Professional development that individual teacher educators can undertake for themselves

■ Find time to do some work and/or research in inclusive schools and/or in diverse communities on a sessional or even sabbatical basis.

■ Plan courses with colleagues – in university and from other faculties/departments, locally, regionally or internationally – who have interest, current knowledge and experience of inclusive education.

■ Attend in-service courses aimed primarily at teachers in practice and, where available, university courses for higher education lecturers to update approaches to managing work, varying modes of delivery and communicating effectively with students.

■ Read widely, use the internet and seek opportunities to attend international conferences.

■ Undertake further post-graduate qualifications oriented towards inclusive practices.

Development for teacher educators organised by institutions to ensure up-to-date competences

■ Ensure that professional development reviews by line managers and/or peers are in place to assist staff in recognising their needs for development and ensure that they have some support for undertaking and implementing training.

■ Provide in-house (in-university/faculty) CPD for staff on approaches to teaching and learning and to working with students from diverse backgrounds.

■ Have systems for recognising development and achievements in teaching/working with student teachers.

■ Employ well-qualified school teachers on short- or medium-term teaching-fellow contracts.

■ Specify current /recent school experiences and research records in recruiting teacher educators.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL STAFF AND EXPERT ADVISORS

School principals

■ School principals could seek to involve communities, parents, students and teachers in school evaluation processes using tools such as the Index for Inclusion (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) or school self-evaluation handbooks.

■ Additional competences could be set for school principals, such as developing inclusive approaches and collaborative cultures within a school, commitment to achieving education for all in their community and contributing to societal cohesion in their community.

■ School principals could be supported in their specific development needs for leadership and management. A range of possible approaches to training and

exchange, mentoring systems, work shadowing, distance learning, in-service teacher education and experiential learning could be combined.

Teachers and expert advisors

■ School-based expert advisors (pedagogues, psychologists and speech therapists) should be able to access much of the in-service teacher education and CPD opportunities open to teachers and participate in whole-school development.

■ Teachers and expert advisors need to be aware of the positive impact on later education and life achievements of quality early education, especially for learners at potential disadvantage. Teachers also need to be aware of the negative impact of a lack of this early opportunity on learners at disadvantage and to persevere in positive approaches to their education. Principals could encourage teachers to sustain these efforts.

■ Teachers and expert advisors need to be competent in preparing their students for a wider and more diverse world than may be the case in their own school. Therefore all teachers need themselves to model and impart to their students their inclusive beliefs and approaches to diversity.

■ Teachers and expert advisors are preparing students for a life with many changes in which being flexible and willing to learn new skills and address new ideas will be important. Teachers and expert advisors can also model this explicitly by demonstrating and talking about their own professional and personal learning.

■ There needs to be greater awareness among teachers and expert advisors of the role of VET and opportunities available to diverse learners in VET. At the same time, assumptions should not be made that VET is the natural choice for students from backgrounds of disadvantage. Their opportunities to enter their own choice of secondary school should be optimised in terms of learning and encouragement.

■ Some experience for teacher and expert advisors in other schools might be mind-opening – whether for a month, a term or even a year, in a rural area if a teacher or expert advisor is normally employed in the city, in a gymnasium for a vocational teacher or in a special school for a gymnasium teacher, in a children's or young offenders' institution, or in a placement that crosses some of the still sensitive divides of ethnicity, language and religion prevalent in the Western Balkan countries.

■ CPD and in-service teacher education are more effective in terms of changes in practice when they are embedded in schools. All school staff, including teachers, school principals, specialist staff (psychologists, pedagogues and speech therapists) and teaching assistants should participate in CPD.

■ Professional development reviews of CPD already undertaken and of the CPD needs and wishes of individual teachers, by school principals/senior school or local authority personnel, could help orient teacher and expert advisor development towards teacher competences and standards for inclusive education and ensure that there is a rational approach to adding to CPD profiles and records. This would also contribute to the justified need for teachers and expert advisors to be involved in planning their own development.

■ CPD could be organised in a variety of forms, some of which should be whole-school-based and within communities of learning, which could also involve others in the wider school community including specialist staff (psychologists, pedagogues and speech therapists), teaching assistants, parents and other relevant professionals from social, youth and health services. Schools might also collaborate locally in CPD, in-service teacher education, exchange visits and developmental projects with other schools, including special schools and schools at different age levels.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Cedefop	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CPD	Continuing professional development
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
Eurydice	Information Network on Education in Europe
GDP	Gross domestic product
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IT	Information technology
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NUT	National Union of Teachers (UK)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OSI	Open Society Institute
RAE	Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (communities)
SEN	Special educational needs
SOU	Swedish Official Report Series
Tempus	Modernising higher education cooperation in the EU's neighbouring countries
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training (ILO terminology for VET)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
VET	Vocational education and training
YCRC	Yugoslav Child Rights Centre

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TA-32-11-692-EN-C

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