MAPPING POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR THE PREPARATION OF TEACHERS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN CONTEXTS OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA COUNTRY REPORT

WORKING DOCUMENT
JANUARY 2010

European Training Foundation

Report prepared by SCIENTER and
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FOREWORD

This report is the outcome of the ETF regional project promoting inclusive education and training policies and practices in contexts of social and cultural diversity in the Western Balkans and Turkey. In 2009, the European Training Foundation (ETF) commissioned a study resulting in 7 country reports[1] *"Mapping Policies and Practices for the Preparation of Teachers for Inclusive Education in Contexts of Social and Cultural Diversity"* with the overall aim to contribute to the promotion of inclusive education and training policies and practices in Western Balkan countries. The study has been set within a wider framework of other studies, research and policies already carried out by national and international organisations. Furthermore in the diverse social and cultural contexts of the Western Balkan countries the studies link the challenge of inclusive education to the broader challenges of social inclusion and social cohesion, which are high on the EU agenda.

The study was designed to explore various perspectives of the relevant actors, and relies on qualitative data collected through documents analysis, interviews and focus groups, as well as information collected in an on-line survey. It was conceptualised to be carried out in two phases. The first phase finalised by the end of December 2009, mapped policies and practices in teacher preparation in each of the countries under study. The primary focus of the study was teacher education in contexts of social and cultural diversity. While a number of studies have addressed on the one hand social inclusion in education and training where focus is placed on i) access, attainment and progression and ii) teacher preparation, still we can say that so far little research has been conducted in the region to look at teacher preparation for development of transversal competences for social inclusion. Therefore, the completed country reports bring additional value to the already existing research and data on policies and practices for teacher education in the countries under study. Moreover, much of the benefit of this research is through the process of carrying it out with local research teams, who through their research, have opened up the relevant issues in the countries as part of an on-going policy dialogue at all levels of the education system on the topic.

The first phase included the drafting of a common thematic outline used as a basis for country reports that provided relevant qualitative information as well as basic qualitative analyses. These country reports constitute the main preparatory work and stock-taking exercise for regional level analysis. In order to analyse the relevant aspects of the regional context and how to enhance and support the processes at country and regional level, a second phase of the research is agreed for the period 2010. This will lead to a cross country report which will analyse and synthesise the findings of the 7 country reports into a regional map of policies and practices. The cross country report aims to critically analyse and synthesise the policies and practices in teacher preparation for inclusive education in contexts of social and cultural diversity in Western Balkans.

A consortium company, SCIENTER and Centre for Education Policy (CEP) has been contracted to work with the ETF on the country and cross country reports. The ETF selected research team from SCIENTER/CEP have been working very closely with the ETF-supported Balkan Regional Policy Network during the research phase. The draft country reports have been reviewed by the ETF social inclusion team (Dagmar Ouzoun, Elena Pompilio, Evgenia Petkova, Henrik Faudel, Keith Holmes and Lida Kita) and been widely discussed and received feedback from the Western Balkans and Turkey key stakeholders during the 2009 ETF organised regional events.

We thank everybody involved for their contributions, support and commitment to cooperation in preparation of the country report.

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[1] Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (defined by UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CCC	Common Core Curriculum
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
CES	Finnish Cooperation in Education Sector
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DG EAC	Directorate General for Education and Culture
DG EMPL	Directorate General for Employment
EC	European Commission
ECHR	European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EFA	Education for All
ENIC	European Network of Information Centres
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
EURAC	European Academy Bozen/Bolzano
FBiH	Federation of BiH
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centre
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSCE	Organisation for European Cooperation and Security
OSF	Open Society Fund
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
REF	Roma Education Fund
RS	Republika Srpska
SEE	South Eastern Europe
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Survey
TEPD	Teacher Education and Professional Development
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WB	World Bank

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study was conducted within the European Training Foundation (ETF) regional project on social inclusion through education and training in South Eastern Europe. The present report maps policies and practices for the preparation of teachers for inclusive education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in order to analyse the initial training and in-service professional development available to teachers. The study is designed to explore various perspectives of the relevant actors and is built on qualitative data collected through interviews and focus groups, the analysis of documents and information from an on-line survey.

Inclusive education has been promoted in BiH since the education reforms began in 2002. The ratification of relevant European and international documents led to the introduction of a state-level framework for inclusive education policies and practices but the process of harmonising legislation across the country proved challenging due to the complexity of the decision-making structures in BiH. However, considerable help has been provided by the international community and the country is making efforts to follow progressive trends that will ensure compliance with European standards when adopting new legislation and policies. A review of education reform implementation clearly shows the progress made, but also highlights the fact that the standards for quality and access set out in the reform strategy have not been systematically applied across the country.

The reform strategies, laws and various policy documents promote principles of equal access, availability, acceptance, effectiveness and official recognition, non-discrimination and absence of segregation in education. However, provision of quality education for all students still represents a challenge to BiH authorities. Access to education for some of the most vulnerable groups (such as Roma, children from remote areas and girls) is a particular unresolved issue in spite of careful implementation planning. Budget restrictions and the fragmented financial framework within the education sector are partly responsible for this. The other big challenge for BiH is the issue of segregated schooling. Integration is needed between students of different ethnicities who all need to be provided access to an acceptable and culturally relevant education regardless of their geographical location within the country. The situation is further complicated by the lack of political courage and willingness to recognise and accept cultural diversity in post-conflict BiH.

This study finds that inclusive education is a hot issue faced by primary and secondary school teachers throughout BiH on a daily basis. Some teachers work largely independently to develop the relevant competences on an ad hoc basis, but they are rarely supported by any systematic initial or in-service training. This study shows that the introduction of rudimentary elements of the social inclusion paradigm is still largely reliant on the intuition and enthusiasm of individuals in the government or NGO sectors. Accordingly, there is limited and variable interpretation of the competences required for inclusive education among teachers and other education practitioners, and it seems that inclusion in education is most widely understood in its narrowest sense as the inclusion of students with special intellectual, physical and sensory needs mostly in regular primary schools, while important aspects relating to the inclusion of cultural diversity and secondary education are skewed, particularly in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector.

The issues relating to teacher training on inclusive education have been on the table in the country for some years and there is a recognised need for quality implementation of inclusive education policies in order to provide adequate training for teachers working directly with primary and secondary students.

Teachers could use their professional autonomy to implement inclusion in schools and communities, but they need support to develop their own competences in areas such as individualised approaches to teaching and learning, group management knowledge and skills, and cooperative attitudes.

This report suggests reforms of university-level initial teacher training have started with discussions on the restructuring of study programmes in line with the principles of the Bologna Process. However, few substantial changes have yet been made to the basic curricula or toward the competence development perspective. The teacher training higher education institutions need to make many changes including: the modernisation of curricula and greater alignment with the changes underway in schools; more effective hands-on training for student teachers; and better selection processes for future teachers. Further research is needed to evaluate the full implications of inclusive education competences on teacher training curricula.

Practitioners participating in this research have mentioned a wealth of practices and experiences gained over several years of cooperation with NGOs and INGOs as well as other organisations in the area of in-service teacher training and professional development. There is a need for systematic and regulated provision to capture this positive experience and implement it across the country. Pedagogical institutes and the State Agency for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education have been attributed a greater role in assuring the quality of in-service provision by setting criteria for accreditation consistent with teacher licensing and career progression systems. However, the challenge remains of how to secure reliable funding to prepare teachers for inclusive education, addressing their real needs in the development of relevant competences.

Mapping Policies and Practices for the Preparation of Teachers for Inclusive Education in Contexts of Social and Cultural Diversity

COUNTRY REPORT FOR BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Study Objectives and Context

1.1.1 Aim and Objectives

The overall aim of this study on *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, is to contribute to the promotion of inclusive education and training policies and practices in contexts of social and cultural diversity in the Western Balkans. The study is organised in two phases: a first phase which considers the national situation in each of the countries covered; and a second phase synthesising the reports into a regional map of policies and practices.

This report falls into the first research phase and the specific objectives are: (1) to analyse policies and practices on initial teacher training and in-service professional development schemes at the country level, and (2) to identify issues, challenges and good practices in the seven participant countries[2] with regard to the skills and competences needed for primary and secondary teachers to implement inclusive education practices.

The primary focus of the study is teacher preparation in the context of social and cultural diversity. A number of studies have already addressed social inclusion in education and training where the focus is placed on access, attainment and progression and others have approached the issue of teacher training, but thus far, there has been little research in the region to combine the two themes under the single issue of 'teacher training for development of competences for social inclusion.' Therefore, this study provides added value to existing research and data on social inclusion and teacher education in the countries under study. Moreover, great benefits have come from the local research process, opening up discussion of relevant issues in the countries as part of an on-going policy dialogue at all levels of the education system. This study has been set within a wider framework of studies, research and policies already carried out as described in Chapter 2 of the report. This report has been designed as mapping exercises to collect initial information on relevant issues in the Western Balkans and to evaluate that data against the most recent international research in the area.

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[2] Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Furthermore, the studies link the challenge of inclusive education to the broader challenges of social inclusion and social cohesion in the diverse social and cultural contexts of the Western Balkan countries; an issue high on the European Union (EU) agenda. This report points to potential new fields for more in-depth research on teacher education and social inclusion.

1.1.2 Context of the Study

The ETF is an EU Agency[3] and promotes the values and objectives of the EU. The work of the ETF is particularly based on the premise that vocational education and training makes a fundamental contribution to competitiveness, employability and mobility in modern economies. The ETF mission is to help transition and developing countries harness the potential of their human capital through reforms in the education, training and labour market systems in line with EU external relations policy. The ETF provides advice and assistance to the European Commission (EC) and a number of partner countries[4] receiving support from EU external relations programmes for the modernisation of human capital development policies.

In 2007, the EU introduced new external assistance instruments that aimed to establish clearer relationships between the EU and partner countries (EC, 2004). Candidate and potential candidate countries can move progressively towards accession with support from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) (EC, 2006).

ETF efforts to prioritise human resources provide many benefits as they: help provide a better living for individuals and families; reduce illiteracy, poverty and crime in partner countries; and encourage more stable relations between the EU and its neighbours. The outcome is reduced pressure for migration, more opportunities for trade, safer jobs in Europe, and, in short: prosperity and stability for both EU Member States and their neighbours.

Work on human capital development offers a solid foundation for the improvement of living conditions, strengthening of democracy and active citizen participation, encouraging respect for human rights and cultural diversity.

In addition, the ETF emphasises the lifelong learning aspect of education and training, especially bearing in mind the economic and political transition processes in partner countries and the need to expand capacities for learning and facilitate recognition of non-formal learning.

The ETF recast regulation adopted in December 2008[5] stating that it will work through EU foreign policy to improve vocational education and training systems in order to develop human capital, in terms defined as work that contributes to the lifelong development of the skills and competences of individuals. In response to this new mandate, the ETF prepared a new Mid-Term Perspective (MTP) 2010-13 setting the key perspectives for the work programme. The ETF is particularly focused on cooperation for gender equality and equity, lifelong guidance, sustainable development and social inclusion with partner countries. Equitable, inclusive and sustainable systems and responses to human capital challenges provide positive indicators for human

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[3]   The ETF was established by Council Regulation No. 1360 in 1990 (recast No. 1339 in 2008) to contribute to the development of the education and training systems of the EU partner countries.

[4]   ETF works with the following partner countries: Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Russia, Serbia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

[5]   Regulation (EC) No 1339/2008 of 16 December 2008

development and also have long-term benefits for society. They promote economic and social development and thus contribute to competitiveness and well-being.

The concept of wider European cooperation in education and training was launched at the 2002 Barcelona Council and the Commission Communication on an updated strategic framework for European co-operation in education and training(European Commission, 2008a) strengthened the process by focusing on four strategic challenges[6] for the 2010-20 period. The Council Conclusions on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)[7] state that, 'European cooperation in education and training for the period up to 2020 should be established in the context of a strategic framework spanning education and training systems as a whole in a lifelong learning perspective.' In reaching the objectives set within the strategic framework, particular attention is given to ensuring high quality teaching through adequate initial teacher education and continuous professional development for teachers and trainers.

While fully respecting the responsibility of Member States for their own educational systems, the strategic framework recognised that open coordination should draw on 'evidence and data from all relevant European agencies'. The ETF role in supporting enhanced mutual learning, transfer of innovation and policy development in the field of education and training in third countries is also mentioned.

Thus, ETF work on human capital development is guided by a number of international standard-setting documents, including the *Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* and the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*. Also, in view of the ongoing European integration process of some of the partner countries and territories (the so-called IPA group[8]), it must be stressed that human rights principles, including respect for and protection of minorities, are an integral part of the Copenhagen criteria for EU accession. This means that the Western Balkan countries are also required to comply with the EU legislative *acquis*[9] in the field of anti-discrimination and equal opportunities.

The Western Balkan countries have already ratified the main international conventions on human and minority rights and are in the process of adopting the *acquis*. The education ministers of the South Eastern Europe region signed a joint statement making a commitment to the area of human capital development in South Eastern Europe as a long-term investment at the Informal Conference of European Ministers of Education in Oslo on 5-6 June 2008. This statement expresses a commitment to promote: quality, diversity and equitable access to education; innovatory capacity within education systems; and intercultural capacities of educational institutions as key prerequisites to the prosperity and sustainable development of the Western Balkan countries and their integration to the EU. The ministers stated their intention to promote intercultural dialogue and cooperation at local, regional, national and international levels to foster environments conducive to creativity and innovation, *inter alia* by encouraging cooperation between the areas of education, higher education and research (Minister of Education from Southern Europe, 2008).

However, appropriate legislation alone cannot overcome the obstacles to social inclusion and integration as structural and institutional barriers also need to be addressed. A number of specific poverty reduction

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[6] Make lifelong learning and learner mobility a reality; improve the quality and efficiency of provision and outcomes; promote equity and active citizenship; enhance innovation and creativity, including entrepreneurship at all levels of education and training.

[7] www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/107622.pdf (page accessed 17th December 2009)

[8] These are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

[9] The Community acquis is the body of common rights and obligations which bind all the Member States together within the European Union. It compriss the Community law as well as the common objectives laid down in EU Treaties. Applicant countries have to accept the Community *acquis* before they can join the Union.

strategies have been adopted with support from international donors and intergovernmental organisations in a number of Western Balkan countries and these have started a trend in the right direction. A number of countries have also adopted specific education reform strategies in acknowledgement of the role of education and training in ensuring sustainable growth and social inclusion. These focus on inclusion in education in terms of access, participation, retention, completion and quality of learning outcomes to varying extents.

1.1.3 Education Reforms and the Role of Teachers in Inclusive Education

System reform on inclusive education is moving from the system level downwards in the countries covered by this study. Legislation and strategies are in place in most of the countries and in many cases implementation mechanisms such as new curricula are being developed and adopted for pre-school, primary and secondary education. The focus of attention is gradually being shifted onto what actually happens in classroom interaction between pupils and teachers. This places the emphasis firmly upon the disposition, skills, knowledge and motivation of teachers in adopting new approaches to the education of children from various socio-economic, cultural and experiential backgrounds. It is their input that is paramount in ensuring any real changes in practice, and hence impacts on the outcomes of learning. In the Western Balkans, however, research into teacher acquisition of the competences required to deliver inclusive education is at an embryonic stage.

One study of teacher competences (Pantić, 2008) reported teachers in BiH, Croatia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Serbia covered in the present research placed greatest importance on competences relating to equality, supporting the learning of all pupils and the promotion cultural diversity in the broadest sense. However, deeper understanding is needed of how the formulation of relevant competences actually translates into daily teaching practices and how present and future teachers can best be helped to develop those competences that best ensure and promote an inclusive society and education.

The ETF has therefore made a commitment to support the Western Balkan countries (2007-2011), placing emphasis on how education and training can reduce social exclusion in culturally heterogeneous societies and facilitating the development and implementation of long-term sustainable strategic policy approaches.

One of the first outcomes of this commitment was the *Social Inclusion of Ethnic Groups through Education and Training: Elements of Good Practices*, document commissioned by the ETF in 2007. Relevant areas for policy development were highlighted and several recommendations on designing and implementing inclusive education and training policies and measures in the Western Balkan countries were provided. The findings of the study were also discussed by national authorities and experts from Western Balkan countries, leading to the identification of challenges and to the drafting of related policy notes in some countries. Furthermore, an expert group was established for the Western Balkans, consisting of stakeholders from the region (a mixed profile of academics, policy makers and practitioners from public institutions or NGOs), representatives of international organisations active in the region and the EC Directorate General for Enlargement, Directorate General for Education and Culture and Directorate General for Employment). The work of this group is supported by the ETF.

Finally, in the concluding statements of the ETF conference in November 2008, participants from IPA countries and territories stressed the need for greater emphasis on intercultural or inclusive education and training in the broader sense, and especially on the role and competences of teachers in this context. This perspective was primarily prompted by the conclusion in both pre-service teacher training and in-service professional development in the Western Balkan countries that schools are widely assumed to be mono-ethnic institutions with homogeneous class compositions. Teachers are generally ill prepared to work with children and parents

from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. There is a need for increased teacher competence in recognising, accommodating and valuing diversity in the classroom and wider society and there must be enhanced teacher competence to overcome discrimination, exclusion and disadvantage in education.

Activities aimed at initial teacher training reform are additionally motivated and marked by the Bologna Process. This serves as an overarching framework for re-thinking the duration, content and organisation of teacher education study programmes for pre-primary, lower primary, upper primary and secondary education levels. In a number of countries, discussion of the university 3+2 or 4+1 dilemma[10] has inspired heated debate on the objectives and learning outcomes of particular teacher education programmes. Debate has also been provoked on the amount, type and delivery of didactic, methodological and pedagogical input for teachers, especially those training to teach specific subjects. However, there is currently no appropriate research evidence available to inform such change and provide insight on exactly how the new competences required by the teaching profession could best be developed in the current context.

Studies on existing teacher training in the region (Pantić, 2008; Rajković and Radunović, 2007; Zgaga 2006) invariably show present provision concentrates on theoretical and subject related knowledge and skills with little hands-on experience of teaching in real-life classrooms. In fact, some courses involve no classroom experience at all and provide no opportunities for the teacher to increase their capacity to deal with a number of out-of-school factors relevant to inclusive education such as parental and community involvement. This factor alone represents one of the major challenges to teacher preparation for inclusive education and training practices. One of the main objectives of this study is therefore how best to improve existing teacher training policies and practices in order to foster the development of teacher competences relevant to inclusive education and training practices.

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[10] Within the Bologna Process the study programmes are to be restructured into a two-tier structure in which Bachelor and Master programmes are to be of either 3+2 or 4+1 years in length.

2.   WIDER CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The countries in the Western Balkans have undertaken initiatives to adapt their education and training systems to national employment, social inclusion and competitiveness goals. However, implementation often lags behind declared policy goals. Persistent challenges include: the widening of choice and improvement of quality in vocational education, training and adult learning; the active engagement of social partners; the furthering of key competences; and, in particular, encouragement of the human sense of innovation and entrepreneurship so central to social and economic success. There is room for a massive improvement in teacher competences on inclusive education and efforts must also be made to reduce early school-leaving in contexts of socially and culturally diverse societies.

The term 'disadvantaged' could be attributed to many groups in the countries of this study when referring to access to, progress in and completion of aspects of quality education and training. A variety of minority groups are involved including ethnic communities (the Roma in particular but not exclusively) and disadvantaged children. The latter includes: children with disabilities and special needs; children from remote and rural areas; children of refugees or internally displaced persons; children from families deported from foreign countries (mostly within the EU); and many other groups. Gender is an important element, particularly when combined with any other factor of a disadvantaged background, and poverty is an attendant salient feature in the lives of a great many families in these minority sectors. The widest possible understanding of inclusion in education and training is needed if we are to capture the full scope of related problems and accommodate the specific problems of diverse disadvantaged groups in the Western Balkan countries. This is reflected in the conceptual framework of this study which takes an approach that is balanced between the general pluralism and equal opportunities perspectives.

This research is situated in a set of contexts where each country has different (and sometimes divergent) legislative, policy and practice initiatives in place. These contexts can be roughly categorised from most generic to most specific as:

1.   general context of social inclusion developments and the promotion of ethnic and other diversity and tolerance and overall democratisation of society in a post-conflict area. These developments for the countries under study should be viewed in the light of the European perspective which has contributed to peace and stability and encouraged political and economic reform. Demonstrated fulfilment of the Copenhagen accession criteria of 1993 with specific reference to 'respect for and protection of minorities' is of paramount importance for the countries in this study in the EU accession process;[11]

2.   wider educational context, in which education and training is seen as the primary tool for social inclusion, the promotion of diversity and tolerance, and the building of a sustainable democracy based on active citizen participation. Within the description of the wider educational context, specific attention will be focused on understanding existing institutional, structural, political and other obstacles to social inclusion;

3.   specific educational context of reforms to pre-service teacher education and in-service professional development, in line with the move toward learning outcomes and study programmes built around the professional competences concept and in accordance with the key role of teachers in ensuring perceptible favourable outcomes from education and training reform initiatives. Analysis of this context

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[11]   http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/accession_criteria_copenhague_en.htm (page accessed on 24 August 2009)

will also cover the specific regional challenges facing teacher education on inclusive education; elements that are reflected in attitudes to social inclusion and social cohesion in wider society.

2.1 General context – Social Inclusion and Diversity in a Post-Conflict Area

All of the countries involved in the study were exposed to some form of conflict in the period between the early 1990s and the present. The conflict ranged from open war, through ethnic-related violence at the peak of ethnic tension and oppression, to clashes within a single ethnic group motivated primarily by political differences and enabled by a weak rule of law and insufficient democratic culture.

The countries of the region are currently in a state of relative equilibrium although the situation is still unstable. Regional cooperation is on the increase through various trade agreements (such as Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA)) and bilateral or multilateral cooperation schemes. These developments are further supported by: the DG Enlargement Regional Programs and Multi-Beneficiary IPA Programming; the related Regional Cooperation Council,[12] and particularly the Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital;[13] the recent establishment of the South Eastern Europe Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning;[14] and the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe[15] which applies to Bulgaria and Romania as well as the countries in this study.

Mobility of people is also steadily rising for commercial, educational and private reasons. Although some specific administrative and political obstacles remain[16] many of the Western Balkan countries[17] benefitted from the lifting of visa regimes in December 2009.

The EU has identified policy areas and priorities relevant to inclusive education and training in the Enlargement Strategy 2008-2009 (EC, 2008b). While the Western Balkan countries are at various stages in EU membership process[18] their progress can be tracked in their respective EC Progress Reports. Furthermore, the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (EU DG EMPL) is also focussed on the issue of social inclusion within the *EU Social Protection and Social Inclusion Process,*[19] with particular attention on the situation in the Western Balkans (within the national reports) and that of disadvantaged groups like children and Roma. This entity commissioned a series of independent reports completed in August 2008 and synthesised in the January 2009 publication: *Social Protection and Social Inclusion in the Western Balkans: A Synthesis Report (EC, 2009)*. The report provides in-depth information, statistics and analysis on political, economic and demographic trends. This includes details of how the educational attainment analysed relates to labour market function; eligibility for, access to, and funding of social protection; general living conditions and groups at risk of poverty and social exclusion; access to pensions, healthcare and long-term care.

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[12] http://www.erisee.org/node/12 (page accessed on 24 August 2009)

[13] http://www.taskforcehumancapital.info/ (page accessed on 24 August 2009)

[14] http://www.seecel.hr/naslovnica/ (page accessed on 24 August 2009)

[15] www.erisee.org (page accessed on 24 August 2009)

[16] This is particularly the case between Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) and Serbia, due to Serbia not recognising Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) as an independent state.

[17] Visa regimes were lifted on the 19th December 2009,for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia while visa regimes remain in place for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244).

[18] Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have the status of candidates, while the remaining countries (except for Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) which has special status) have signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreements.

[19] http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/index_en.htm (page accessed 24 August 2009)

These countries are all signatories to a number of international standard-setting documents, namely: the *Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (CoE, 1995a)*, (ratified by all countries apart from Kosovo);[20] the revised *European Social Charter(CoE, 1995b); the European Convention on Human Rights (CoE, 1950); the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989); the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (UNESCO, 1960)*; and the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006)*.

Furthermore, the countries are all participants in the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, presided over by Serbia until 1 July 2009 when Slovakia took over the yearly mandate.

However, occasional outbursts of ethnically motivated unrest or even violence are testament to the fact that lasting peace and stability will only be achieved with the long-term, strong and holistic commitment of all social actors.

A particular issue of concern in this respect is the overwhelming poverty and significant differences in development within and across these countries. Low educational attainment in the population in general is one of the key factors of poverty. This is primarily viewed as a cause of poverty but is in fact also a consequence of a situation that is further exacerbated in certain ethnic groups and other minorities.

'POVERTY AND VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENTS INDICATE THAT ETHNICITY IS ONE OF THE SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SHAPING POVERTY … [THERE ARE] BIG DISCREPANCIES IN ACCESS TO EDUCATION' (ETF, 2007, PAGE 4)

These findings in essence reiterate those of other international or intergovernmental organisations such as the World Bank (World Bank, 2007) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2004) that ethnicity is a factor in limiting access to education and one that is particularly difficult to counteract given the political context. Additionally, the reports underline an even more complex situation for Roma who form an ethnic minority that faces multifaceted disadvantage of long standing in each of the countries. It also is important to stress that the issue of poverty and social exclusion is a pan-European issue, a fact further supported by the EU decision to dub 2010 the *European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion* including the countries of the Western Balkans in the list of participant nations.[21]

This brings us to the issue of obstacles in access to quality education. These obstacles may be of a financial, institutional or procedural, structural and socio-cultural, or political nature. The latter classification was developed for this study in order to adequately address the particular issues of the region.

Financial obstacles can include the lack of sufficient family or student resources for accessing specific levels of education (e.g. higher education where tuition fees are charged); the inability to access the necessary materials and resources for quality learning (from books and computers to sufficient space for independent learning); the lack of funds for maintenance while studying (which may force students to seek paid work or even to abandon their studies).

Institutional and procedural obstacles may include explicit tracking (i.e. explicit rules which prevent vertical and horizontal mobility between levels and types of institutions) but also implicit tracking due to specific elements of the transition procedures from one stage of education to the next.

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[20] Albania 1999, Bosnia and Herzegovina 2000, Croatia 1997, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 1997, Montenegro 2001, Serbia 2001.

[21] Article 11 of the Decision No 1098/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2008 on the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010).

Structural obstacles include problems with insufficient institutional networks (e.g. limited or non-existent possibilities in rural or underdeveloped areas), problems with transportation to schools, but also inappropriate or non-existent infrastructure for pupils and students with special needs (e.g. aids to learning adapted for pupils with visual or hearing impairments).

Socio-cultural and linguistic obstacles include specific procedures for enrolment, progress and completion which do not take into account individual differences in socio-economic, cultural or linguistic backgrounds. These may result in segregation as pre-school testing of children assumes working knowledge of the majority language and is therefore essentially discriminatory to minority children who may not have the necessary skills.

Political obstacles frequently arise from omissions of action rather than overtly discriminatory action. This apparent lack of overt action does not, however, reduce the exclusive impact of political inaction and lack of focus on constructive legislative and fiscal support for inclusive education in many of the countries in the study. The centrality and influence of this political neglect effectively condones exclusion at all levels throughout society and is particularly difficult to overcome as it would require a combination of democratic social pressure, collaboration between various public sectors (health, social welfare and education) and international pressure from the EU and beyond.

Given the various obstacles and their potential multiplicative impact, it is evident that a holistic approach to quality education is essential for groups faced with complex disadvantages such as: (1) refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), whose integration problems become increasingly 'invisible to the system' through the frequent changes in the administrative status of such persons (e.g. some become citizens of the host country), the concentration of refugees in 'collective centres' far from the eyes of the general public; and (2) Roma, who suffer enduring multifaceted deprivation, stigmatised by the deep-rooted prejudice of majority populations and essentially forming a minority wherever they live. Furthermore, the strong impact of the lack of education on poverty is further exacerbated through low employment opportunities for socio-economically vulnerable ethnic groups (Fetsi et al., 2007) and particularly for young people who could escape recurrent generational poverty given sufficient time and opportunities in the worlds of education and work. It should be noted that the potential public non-financial benefits of education (OECD, 2007) also include crime reduction, democratisation, improved public health, political stability and respect for human rights on top of poverty reduction. However, these potential benefits cannot be achieved unless there is assurance of an education system accessible to all and structured to promote inter-cultural dialogue and equity in learning outcomes. Finally, it cannot be stressed strongly enough that inclusive education and training is a necessary element of an inclusive society but is insufficient in itself. Additional measures in other public sectors such as social welfare and health are necessary to support education.

2.2 Educational context – Education as a Tool for Democratisation, Stabilisation, Inclusion and the Promotion of Tolerance and Intercultural Understanding

The countries under study all embarked on a 'root-and-branch' reform of their education systems as part of the overall political and economic transition and the EU membership process. In some cases, EU and international trends and processes - the Bologna process for higher education or the Copenhagen process for VET – also impacted on these reforms. Some are also affected by international attention and strong donor interest in a particular issue, as was the case with the Decade of Roma. The countries have also undergone policy and strategy development processes leading to changes in education legislation. In some cases, this has been followed by reforms to supportive policy instruments such as funding mechanisms. Local or national NGOs, regional networks of experts and policy think tanks were all strongly involved in these developments during the early stages or in providing parallel support.

In the past there was a significant lack of comparable and reliable data on education but the situation has somewhat improved in recent years with an extensive amount of literature produced in the form of regional or national studies and projects, assessments of international and intergovernmental organisations and national reports. A number of projects and activities touching upon the issue of social inclusion and education are ongoing in the region or have been completed recently. These include the Advancing Educational Inclusion and Quality in South East Europe[22] project of the South East European Educational Network. The Open Society Institute has provided support to civil society and has produced analytical reports including the ongoing Monitoring Education for Roma.[23] Meanwhile, the Roma Education Fund (REF)[24] has provided direct support in terms of scholarships for Roma students and has made sustained efforts toward building policy capacity in the region. The work of both these entities has contributed to the development of inclusive policy and inclusive societies. There have also been a number of recent projects focusing on teacher education, such as Enhancing the Professional Development of Education Practitioners and Teaching/Learning Practices in SEE Countries[25] and the Regional Tuning of Teacher Education Curricula in the Western Balkans (Pantić, 2008).

Such regional activities are reliant upon (or should at least take into account) the work of various international or intergovernmental organisations on the issue, such as:

- OECD, notably the analysis and recommendations offered in: *Understanding the Social Outcomes of Learning* (OECD, 2007); *No More Failures – Ten Steps to Equity in Education* (Field et al, 2007) (which recommends 10 steps related to structure, practice and resources in education); *Teachers' Matter – Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers* (McKensie et al., 2005), which underlines the importance of both pre-service and in-service training and also the need to make teacher education more flexible and responsive to the needs of schools and pupils; the *Teacher Education for Diversity* project 2008-2010[26] - an ongoing project focusing on common challenges and responses in the OECD countries in terms of teacher training for increasingly culturally diverse societies; and the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey TALIS,[27] especially the latest report *Creating Effective Teaching and Learning Environments: First Results from TALIS (OECD, 2009)* focusing on: teacher professional development, beliefs, attitudes and practices,

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[22] http://www.see-educoop.net/aeiq/ (page accessed 7 August 2009)

[23] http://www.soros.org/initiatives/esp/articles_publications/publications/monitoring_20061218/monitoring_20061218.pdf (page accessed 7 August 2009)

[24] www.romaeducationfund.hu (page accessed 24th December 2009)

[25] http://www.see-educoop.net/portal/tesee.htm (page accessed 7 August 2009)

[26] http://www.oecd.org/document/21/0,3343,en_2649_35845581_41651733_1_1_1_1,00.html (page accessed 7 August 2009)

[27] http://www.oecd.org/document/0/0,3343,en_2649_39263231_38052160_1_1_1_1,00.html (page accessed 7 August 2009)

teacher appraisal and feedback, and school leadership. Over 70 000 teachers and school principals were surveyed in 23 countries as part of the project;

▪ ETF, notably the aforementioned *Social Inclusion of Ethnic Groups Through Education and Training: Elements of Good Practice* (ETF, 2007) and the work of EURAC for ETF on *Access to Education, Training and Employment of Ethnic Minorities in the Western Balkans* (2006),[28] that identifies three different models of approach to the education of minorities and the use of minority languages in education;[29]

▪ Council of Europe, through its focus on intercultural dialogue;[30] minority languages - in particular the *European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (CoE, 1992)*; education for democratic citizenship[31] (where a number of recommendations, studies and toolkits have been developed); education of Roma[32], with a variety of activities and recommendations including the Recommendation of the Council of Ministers to the Member states on the education of Roma/Gypsy children in Europe (CoE, 2000); as well as *How All Teachers Can Support Citizenship and Human Rights Education: A Framework for the Development of Competences* (Brett et al., 2009) which focuses on approximately 15 core competences teachers need to put democratic citizenship and human rights into practice in the classroom, the school and the wider community;

▪ EURYDICE, the key source of data on education in Europe, which publishes thematic studies, such as: *Integrating Immigrant Children into Schools in Europe: Measures to Foster Communication with Immigrant Families and Heritage Language Teaching for Immigrant Children* (Eurydice, 2009a), *Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe: Tackling Social and Cultural Inequalities* (Eurydice, 2009b), *Levels of Autonomy and Responsibilities of Teachers in Europe* (Eurydice, 2008) and *School Autonomy in Europe. Policies and Measures* (Eurydice, 2007);

▪ UNESCO, in particular its *Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education (UNESCO, 2009)* which provides an overview of developments in the area of inclusive education (including an extensive list of relevant international conventions and declarations), addresses the issues of inclusion and quality in education, development of an inclusive curriculum, the role of policy makers, and, most relevant for the current study, the role of teachers; and

▪ work within the peer learning cluster focussed on teachers and teacher education under the Knowledge System for Lifelong Learning.[33]

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[28] http://www.eurac.edu/about/projects/2006/index.htm?year=2006&which=693 (page accessed 7 August 2009)

[29] (1) The entire curriculum is taught in the minority language, usually achieved by the establishment of separate schools or classes for teaching in the minority language, which essentially leads to segregation. (2) The entire 'regular' school curriculum is taught in the majority language, while minority pupils can take additional courses in their mother tongue, which increases their already high workload and openly segregates them. (3) The third model can be called 'bilingual education', in which mother tongue and the minority language are used in parallel, with divergent success and impact. This approach is rarely used in the countries under study.

[30] http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/ (page accessed 7 August 2009)

[31] http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/default_EN.asp (page accessed 7 August 2009)

[32] http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/roma/default_en.asp (page accessed 7 August 2009)

[33] http://www.kslll.net/peerlearningclusters/clusterdetails.cfm?id=14 (page accessed 7 August 2009)

This extensive list of international activities, analyses, policy developments and even legislative changes all support a strong focus on teacher competences. This perspective can be justified in several ways:

- Education system reform toward inclusive education is moving from the system level downwards in the countries under study. Legislation and strategies are now in place, many countries have well designed implementation mechanisms and new curricula are being developed and adopted for pre-school, primary and secondary education. The focus of reform is gradually shifting onto the interaction between pupils and teachers in the individual school and classroom. The change to more inclusive education will simply not happen if the key actors of the process, the teachers, are not equipped with the necessary attitudes, skills, knowledge and motivations within a supportive environment

- The global economic crisis, the economic situation of the countries in question and the intense competition for public funds between education and other public sectors (health, security, pensions) make it highly unlikely that additional resources will be allocated to the sector. The increased pressure for reform will not be reflected in significant budget increases for outstanding infrastructure improvements, in terms of: improved access to existing buildings and classrooms for all students; an extended network of schools in remote areas; and the development of teaching materials fitted to the learning styles and abilities of each student. This means the necessary education reforms are even more heavily reliant on those motivated and skilled teachers who are: responsive to the needs of the community and of the individual child; able to adopt new approaches to educating children from varied backgrounds; and willing and able to participate actively in the development of new curricula or new policy documents and instruments.

The strong EU and international focus on teacher education through the work of the EU, OECD and Council of Europe has led to significant advances, but the region is still lagging behind in terms of relevant analysis of the competences required for the effective, efficient and, most importantly, inclusive teacher. So far, just two projects have focussed on teacher education in the countries under study. The first of these: *Enhancing the Professional Development of Education Practitioners and Teaching/Learning Practices in SEE countries* highlighted the issue of insufficient practical teacher training. The document showed that while teachers in South Eastern Europe (SEE) receive theoretical training on subject knowledge and skills within their pre-service training programmes, they are given little practical experience of teaching in a real-life classroom. As a result, the key recommendation of the project was to ensure that teacher education study programmes focus on competences relevant to the actual practice of teaching in a given environment.

It was this recommendation that inspired the *Regional Tuning of Teacher Education Curricula.*[34] This project identified some of the gaps between existing teacher training and the teaching competences needed in practice. It was encouraging to find that teachers valued competences such as commitment to equality, support of learning of all pupils and promotion of tolerance as the most important elements of teacher training for inclusive education. However, detailed inspections of some existing initial teacher training programmes showed actual coverage of those competences to be rare and sometimes even completely lacking. These findings suggest that changes in teacher awareness of the 'new' topics in education and school practices are not necessarily reflected in adequate changes in teacher preparation programmes.

The Tuning project also showed that little value was placed on the importance of competences pertinent to teacher participation in development of the education system, their own institutions or cooperation with the community. Teachers need to develop the competences required for inclusive classroom practices, and teacher education policies and programmes therefore need to include elements that increase teacher capacity to deal with inclusion-related factors that reach beyond the classroom and the school into areas such as parental and community involvement. This lack of a wider vision is one of the major challenges facing the promotion of inclusive school practices.

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[34]   http://www.cep.edu.rs/eng/files/Tuning_Teacher_Education_Western_Balkans.pdf (page accessed 7 August 2009)

The low value given to teacher participation in system-wide debate on reform also implies a significant lack of a strong professional teacher voice of in terms of active teacher trade unions or other professional associations. While unions in the region tend to be quite vocal on issues of general employee rights, they are rather weak in terms of expertise on education reform, teacher education and inclusive education.

Furthermore, the lack of frameworks of standards for teacher training programmes, and the fragmented organisation of these programmes (pre-primary, class teachers and subject teachers[35]) form systemic obstacles to relevant and effective teacher education. The fragmentation diverts attention from the pedagogical and didactic education of teachers and hampers the development of a multidisciplinary focus on education in general and education research in particular. Finally, this region is facing a significant challenge to reinstate the good standing of the teaching profession[36] in terms of respect, remuneration and wider social status, a situation also common to many countries outside the region.

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[35] In the regional context, 'class teachers' refers to teachers in the first few years of primary education (the first 4 of a total 8 years) who teach the full spectrum of subjects on the curriculum. They are trained at teacher education colleges or faculties. 'Subject teachers' are teachers of particular subjects (mathematics, biology, history etc) and they are usually trained at separate faculties (faculty of mathematics or natural sciences, faculty of history or social sciences) and generally have insufficient pedagogical and didactic training, in both teaching theory and practice. Pre-primary teachers are trained in separate institutions of a non-university type in most of the countries under study..

[36] The 'teaching profession' includes teachers, head-teachers and those in higher management posts.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1 Key Concepts

For the purposes of this study *Mapping Policies and Practices for the Preparation of Teachers for Inclusive Education in Contexts of Social and Cultural Diversity,* the research team adopted common definitions of various key concepts. The definitions are based on academic research in the field and have been selected to reflect the common understanding of the concepts reached between the ETF and the researchers conducting the study. This report does not propose these definitions as norms for the study of teacher education or inclusive education in general, but they are included here to help interpret the findings of the present research.

3.1.1 Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is a much researched topic that involves a number of challenges for policy-making and implementation processes. Conceptualisations of inclusive education vary from narrower views as 'the attempt to educate persons with intellectual disabilities by integrating them as closely as possible into the regular structures of the educational system', (Michailakis and Reich, 2009) to broader definitions as a 'guiding principle helping to accomplish quality Education for All (EFA) – education systems that benefit from diversity, aiming to build a more just, democratic society' (Acedo, 2008).

Inclusive education is broadly understood in this study to be the process by which schools attempt to respond to all pupils as individuals by reconsidering and restructuring curriculum organisation and provision, and allocating resources to enhance equality of opportunity. This process enables schools to increase their capacity to accept all those pupils from the local community who wish to attend and in so doing reduce 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; Peček *et al*, 2006). Hence, inclusive education must become a mainstreamed general policy and practice in education and not a specific intervention addressing any one particular disadvantaged group. In this broader sense, inclusion is a process of increasing participation and decreasing exclusion, whereby participation means greater recognition, acceptance and respect along with inclusion in the learning process and social activities in a way that enables an individual to develop a sense of belonging to society.

Teachers also have a wider professional role to play beyond their direct personal impact on an individual school operating within various levels of the education system, including the municipalities. Decentralisation of the education systems in the Western Balkan countries implies increased autonomy for schools, which may in turn lead to increased rights for professional decision-making by teachers informed by their wider evaluation of the socio-cultural ends of education and schooling. Liston and Zeichner (1990) argue 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 obstruct the implementation of their aims (Liston and Zeichner 1990:5).

3.1.2 Teacher Competences for Inclusion

A number of authors including Michailakis and Reich (2009) claim that there is a specific body of knowledge for working with 'special' children that needs to be adequately covered during teacher preparation. This may involve gaining an understanding of the socio-cultural factors that produce individual differences, or specialist knowledge about disability and children's learning needs, awareness of educational and social issues that can affect children's learning, and so on. Another distinct current stance, according to Florian and Rouse (2009), is that teacher competences for inclusive educational practices should include skills relevant to the improvement of teaching and learning for all including the capacity to reduce barriers to learning and participation as inclusion is not only about 'special' children. According to this view, teacher competence on inclusion should involve a multifaceted pedagogy that recognises how decisions informing teaching should take account of: children's individual characteristics; the learning that takes place outside school; and learners' previous knowledge, individual and cultural experiences and interests (Florian and Rouse, 2009).

This study adopts a broader view of competence as an integrated set of knowledge, skills, and dispositions (Assumption 1 in Annex 4). Even the most comprehensive coverage of relevant themes is unlikely to anticipate every type of difficulty teachers might encounter in their professional lives. It is essential that teachers accept responsibility for improving the learning and participation of *all* children in their classes in order to develop teacher competences for inclusive education. For this, teachers need to develop competences that involve knowledge, skills and dispositions to teach equitably and to promote the learning of all pupils. Moreover, teachers need to be able to seek and use the support of other actors who can serve as valuable resources in inclusive education, such as support staff, parents, communities, school authorities and relevant others. Hence, pre-service and in-service teacher education and training should be aligned to inclusive education approaches in order to build the teacher capacities necessary to make diversity work.

3.1.3 Teacher Preparation

Teacher education in the Western Balkan countries (and elsewhere) has often assumed that schools are mono-ethnic institutions with homogeneous class compositions. It has been increasingly recognised that teachers need to be better prepared to recognise, value and deal with diversity, as well as to deal with issues of discrimination and disadvantage in education and training, and work with students and parents from diverse economic, social and cultural backgrounds. The present study explores to what extent such inclusive approaches are actually adopted in the existing policies and practices of pre-service and in-service teacher preparation in the countries under study.

Policies are understood in this study to refer to formal, governmental policies, regulations and legislation, as well as the actual implementation of these in existing practice by different relevant stakeholders in teacher preparation for inclusive education.

Pre-service teacher education refers to education that teacher candidates are expected to undergo in order to qualify for teaching. This involves both programmes specifically designed for future teachers, and programmes for a disciplinary area that equivalent to a school subject, which may or may not have a special track for teachers. Preparation of teachers based on competences for inclusion in real contexts of diversity is linked to higher education reform of in the Western Balkans, primarily within the framework of the Bologna Process.

In-service teacher training and development refers to education and training activities engaged in by primary and secondary school teachers following their initial professional certification, intended mainly or exclusively

to improve their professional knowledge, skills and attitudes in order that they can educate children more effectively in contexts of social and cultural diversity.

3.2   Research Questions and Study Design

The research design follows on from the key concepts described above and the assumptions adopted for the study based on an extensive literature review as presented in Annex 4. The following section describes the research questions and how they are explored in this study.

To reach the objectives set in the study, namely, (1) to analyse policies and practices regarding teacher pre-service training and in-service professional development schemes at the country level, and (2) to identify issues, challenges and good practice with regard to the skills and competences required for inclusive education practices by teachers from primary and secondary education; the following research questions are addressed by the study:

1.   What teacher competences are needed for inclusive education in situations of social and cultural diversity?
2.   What is the current situation regarding the inputs, processes and outcomes of a) pre-service b) in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education?
3.   How can the situation regarding a) pre-service b) in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education be improved?

3.2.1   Research Question 1: Teacher Competences Relevant for Inclusive Education

Exploration of the first research question about teacher competences relevant for inclusive practices, is based on the concept of competence understood as a combination of knowledge, skills and dispositions (Assumption 1 in Annex 4) and a belief that teachers and other education professionals are themselves an important source of information on exactly what the competences relevant for inclusive practices in situations of social and cultural diversity mean to their work (Assumption 2 in Annex 4). Thus, this report examines the extent to which internationally recognised elements of competence for inclusion are exemplified in participant responses collected in focus groups and interviews with teachers working in environments of diversity, but also those of school principals, parents and community members, government representatives, teacher educators and relevant NGO and donor representatives.

A special instrument was developed to serve as a starting point for discussions with teachers in the focus groups. The table of competences for inclusion (Annex 3) was developed using the relevant items from a previously conducted project *Tuning Teacher Education in the Western Balkans*, key European documents and international research. It thus combines the theoretical assumptions and formulation arrived at in the regional context. The table was used as an initial list in the focus groups to prompt discussion on how those formulations translate into daily teaching practices, the competences teachers need to develop, the best way to develop them, and so on.

It is important to note that the information collected in the focus groups was used critically to enrich understanding of how teachers perceive competence for inclusion compared to a theoretically based ideal and to provide context-relevant information. It was complemented by information collected from other relevant stakeholders such as teacher educators, school principals and support staff, community and parent representatives as already described above.

3.2.2 Research Question 2: Mapping of Policies and Practices for Teacher Preparation

Exploration of the second research question on the current situation of pre-service and in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education is approached from the perspectives of general pluralism and equal opportunities (Assumption 3 in Annex 4) and considers the importance of context for the development of inclusive dispositions (Assumption 4 in Annex 4). In the exploration of current teacher preparation, it is important to examine the extent to which all inputs, processes and outcomes include inclusion-relevant elements (e.g. individualised approaches to learning) while also attempting to identify any specific foci on issues relevant to dealing with students at risk of exclusion. The report thus concentrates on analysis of existing teacher preparation policies and practices and to what extent social inclusion related provisions are mainstreamed in policies relevant to inclusive education and teacher preparation in particular. There is further examination of whether the existing policies and practices contain implicit barriers to inclusive education, and whether they contain an affirmative focus on groups that have long been marginalised in the region.

Policy mapping involved the collection of information on the general context of teacher preparation for inclusion (e.g., policies on inclusion for potentially disadvantaged groups in education and training, general provisions for teacher preparation, etc.) and policies and regulations specifically referring to teacher preparation on inclusion (e.g., any provisions referring specifically to inclusion in the requirements for entry into teaching, teacher standards, induction, licensing and promotion).

The mapping of practices presented in this report includes an overview of both pre-service and in-service teacher preparation and development. This was accomplished through an online survey, by means of desk research, and in focus groups and interviews with relevant stakeholders. The approach was similar to that used in policy mapping; searching relevant data sources (catalogues of in-service programmes, existing secondary sources of relevant information on pre-service teacher preparation and in-service programmes implemented by various local and international NGOs, identification of other forms of continuing and sometimes informal professional development such as learning through networking, peer evaluation). These issues were listed in grids developed to guide data collection across the countries.

An online survey was developed to collect data on pre-service teacher preparation programmes. Research evidence on programme characteristics that help student teachers develop competences for inclusion (Assumptions 5 and 6 in Annex 4) were used to design online survey questions on course units, practical experiences, opportunities for interaction with families, critical reflection, discussion and dialogue, and beliefs about the nature of knowledge.

The data collected through desk research and the survey and the mapping of both policies and practices were complemented with qualitative data collected in individual and group interviews, and focus groups with information-rich policy-makers, course designers, teacher educators, teachers, school principals, community representatives and parents. These strategies provided opportunities for follow-up on issues identified in the desk research, granting comprehensive insight into various stakeholder perspectives on inclusive education practices and teacher roles.

3.2.3 Research Question 3: How Teacher Preparation could be Improved

The third research question asks how existing pre-service and in-service teacher education policies and practices could be improved to further help teachers develop competences for inclusion and considers the relevance of cross-national research for policy-making (Assumption 7 in Annex 4). This report discusses the information collected in mapping existing policies and practices with a view to identifying opportunities for

improvements bearing in mind desired competences for inclusive education identified in international research and the barriers identified in each country context.

On the basis of findings from both field work and desk research, the authors have compiled a number of recommendations for different stakeholders with the support of an editorial team of experts on inclusion and teacher training in the region. The recommendations primarily aim to indicate potential areas for improvement in pre-service and in-service teacher education. However, these recommendations and the report itself aim to serve as discussion material for wider policy debate on teacher competences in the context of social and cultural diversity.

The recommendations have been grouped according to their relevance for different stakeholders: policy-makers; teacher educators and course designers; and teachers. Also, examples of best practice on inclusion are highlighted and discussed in terms of their relevance and transferability across the region throughout the study.

3.3   Research Methodology

A predominantly qualitative research strategy was adopted with a view to answering questions on the relevance, unintended effects and impact of policies and practice. The qualitative approach allows for access to data in a natural setting with the researchers as the key instrument for data collection. Qualitative research is descriptive and is more concerned with the process than merely the outcomes. There was inductive data analysis of participant perspectives, thoughts, assumptions and views as expressed in their own words.

The qualitative approach allowed for a greater diversity of response, which was appropriate given the variety of education contexts and regulations in BiH. However, the limited number of participants in the field study precludes countrywide generalisation of the findings, especially in a country like BiH where there are multilevel systems of government, education policy making and implementation.

The researchers (two junior faculty professors and one practitioner) operated in different parts of the country in order to ensure coverage of different types of school and to capture the diversity of arrangements in teacher preparation. However, this situation hampered cooperation between the researchers as only limited live contact time was available for a project involving the analysis and interpretations of complex issues within the short research period. The issue was further complicated by the fact that qualitative studies are still fairly uncommon in the region.

The data collection techniques used in the study included:

- Collection and qualitative analysis of texts and documents collected through desk research

- Qualitative interviewing in the course of field work

- Focus groups in the course of field work

3.3.1   Desk Research Phase

Desk research served as the background to field research drawing on a comprehensive overview of contemporary research in inclusive education, particularly EU and national policy and legislative documents, and studies related to the teacher roles and competences needed to support inclusion. The desk research phase provided the basis for the field study and the selection of participants.

Although most of the documents were available on the Internet, researchers found it difficult to establish the levels of government targeted by each particular document and encountered problems in tracking recent

amendments. As the desk research was timed for the summer holiday season, researchers were not always able to contact the appropriate sources for recommendations or encounter the information they needed about important documents. Attempts were made to overcome these shortcomings by accessing additional documents recommended by participants in the field research at a later date.

The desk research covered three thematic areas:

- Context analysis

- Policies and practices for pre-service teacher preparation

- Policies and practices for in-service teacher education and continuing professional development

The context analysis aims to explain the overall policy and legislative context in which teacher preparation and inclusive education are embedded. It focuses on the system of education, human and minority rights, inclusion and exclusion in education and society.

The analysis of policies and practices for pre-service teacher preparation aims to provide information on the legislation and regulation of pre-service teacher preparation programmes. It focuses on elements related to: competences for inclusive education in the process of obtaining a formal degree in teaching; the organization and management of pre-service programmes; programme design; arrangements for mentoring of students during school practice; the recruitment process; professional standards; and the promotion of teachers.

The analysis of policies and practices for in-service teacher education and continuing professional development considers the general standing of the teaching profession in the country including: the recruitment process; professional standards and the promotion process; and the regulations and offer of in-service practice programmes relevant to the development of teacher competences for inclusive education. This section is particularly focussed on describing practices and the proportion of programmes focusing on inclusive education, and lists information on: providers; programme content; the profile and number of participants (where available); and application procedures. Details are also given of other forms of in-service development and incentives for teachers to develop their competences through general in-service training and particular programmes focusing on inclusive education practices.

The desk research included a critical review of various primary and secondary sources. The materials reviewed in the desk research included, but were not limited to: relevant legislative or sub-legal documents; national or government strategies on inclusion or education with particular focus on the role of teachers and teacher training; policies or regulation related to teachers; catalogues or similar descriptions of in-service programmes; any other relevant analysis by other organisations or individuals (secondary sources).

3.3.2 Field Research Phase

Field research is at the heart of this study and this section provided the opportunity for discussion of many issues with primary and secondary teachers, teacher educators, school principals and support staff, parents, policy-makers, local government representatives and NGO activists. The main issues discussed were: current programmes and trends in pre-service and in-service development of teachers for inclusive education; and the needs, barriers to and expectations of inclusive education in BiH, particularly with regard to teacher preparation. The field research included a variety of target groups and tools to achieve the intended outcome.

The three key target groups included: teacher educators and trainers in (1) pre-service and (2) in-service programmes; teachers; and parents and community members. The secondary target groups for the field research included: school principals

and school support staff (pedagogues, psychologists, etc), local government representatives, system level policy decision makers, student teachers, and representatives of NGOs and donors who currently provide training and teaching opportunities in inclusive education through pilot programmes).

The schools selected to participate in the field research covered a variety of urban and suburban settings in the municipality of Novo Sarajevo, Novi Grad, Ilidza, Tuzla, Mostar, Prijedor and Banja Luka. The selected schools all have the experience of inclusive education and strive to improve their work with students and parents. These schools have been recognised by the local community, governmental and non-governmental organisations as having an inclusive ethos (presence of children with disabilities, members of ethnic minorities, (e.g. Roma and other marginalised groups) and this was one of the most important and relevant criteria in the selection process.

The focus groups were led by teachers experienced in inclusive education and they covered a variety of issues relevant to inclusive education. Participants were asked to explore their perceptions of: the competences needed for inclusive education; the effectiveness of pre-service and in-service training for inclusive practices in education; the application of inclusive practices (what an inclusive teacher does in and out of the classroom); beliefs about students in terms of knowledge, learning and educability.

The focus groups were organised on the premise that teacher practitioners with hands-on experience are in a position to evaluate pre-service and in-service training and the importance of teacher beliefs in shaping practice and performance. Teachers were selected to participate in a focus group if they had students with additional support needs or students of various ethnic groups and minorities in their class, or if they had experience of teaching such students. All of the teachers selected were also expected to have participated in in-service programmes organised by government or nongovernmental organizations, and care was taken to have representation of both primary school teachers and subject teachers, including teachers of vocational subjects in secondary schools.

Other focus groups with parents and community members discussed the following: perceptions of the teacher competences necessary for inclusion; the role of the teacher in promoting inclusion; information about practices and issues involved in cooperation with schools (student well being, discipline, school achievement, particular educational needs); the impact of teachers (and their inclusive practices) on students in particular and society in general; the potential influence of parent and communities on decisions made at school level.

Parent participants were selected for the focus groups on the basis of a balanced representation of: different ethnic groups and minorities; parents of students with additional support needs, including gifted students; parents of lower and upper primary and secondary school students; members and non-members of parent councils; parents with more than one child in school, and those of single children.

The field research was also complemented by an e-survey which targeted teacher educators from teacher training programmes for class teachers, subject teachers and in-service teacher trainers. The survey was designed to investigate: whether competences for inclusive education occupy a specific area in teacher training programmes; the degree of mainstreaming of inclusion issues throughout the programmes; teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of existing teacher training programmes in developing inclusive education; and respondent perceptions of the competences they consider necessary for inclusive education.

There was a generally low level of response to the survey (Section 3.4.), possibly due to of the limited computer literacy of respondents. Nevertheless, information relevant to the development of pre-service and in-service programmes for teacher training was collected from teacher educators, teachers and student teachers.

The student teachers were surveyed through an online e-survey tool, but the secondary target groups were mainly interviewed either in person, via phone or e-mail. Selected individuals were targeted to provide further information and more detailed views of the relevance of teacher competences in ensuring inclusive

educational practices. Additionally, they provided insights into how they see their own roles in: ensuring the development of teacher competences for inclusive education; supporting teacher training in inclusive practices; and developing means of further enhancing teacher competences for inclusive education.

School principals and school support services were also interviewed to discuss how they see their roles in supporting teachers in developing competences for inclusion and inclusive practices. Local government representatives were interviewed to provide insights into the issues of relevance for inclusive education at the local level. They were asked for details of any support they are able to provide for the development of inclusive education and the role they assign to teachers in creating inclusive education in their local environment. System level policy makers are key stakeholders in ensuring the application of national policies on inclusive education and positioning of the role of teachers and teacher competences within such policies. Individuals at this level were interviewed on: the existence or non-existence of such policies, desired policies in that area, and the means for implementing such policies. Students were e-surveyed to discuss their views, beliefs and dispositions on inclusive education and the need for inclusive education competences in their education as future teachers. NGOs, international organisations and donors were asked about their views on the current provision of teacher education for inclusive education, and, more importantly, on the support they provide to help teachers develop inclusive competences and practices, both through formal courses and through experiential learning on pilot programmes.

Representatives of government organisations were selected on the basis of: willingness to answer questions in the interviews; their experience in the area of inclusive education (involvement in projects, education in the field of inclusive education.); and their authority in the field of education.

Representatives of the international community were selected to include: different levels of responsibility and position within the organisation (education officers at regional level, coordinators); experience and knowledge of the situation in the field of education and inclusion; and any activities they had undertaken to develop education policy and education system of BiH, with an emphasis on inclusive education. Representatives of NGOs were selected to include: different activities and experiences in the area of inclusive education (promotion, teacher and management training, support projects); wider coverage within BiH; and readiness to respond to interview questions.

University professors were selected to include: teacher educators working on teaching study programmes with extensive experience in researching the theory and practice of inclusive education; and teacher educators employed at subject teacher training colleges not directly involved in matters of education (Faculty of Philology, Faculty of Sport and Physical Education). Student teachers were selected from amongst the bachelor and master degree students studying teaching theory. These teacher educators and student teachers were fundamentally selected on the basis of their involvement and interest in the research and data collection process.

The accessibility of research participants depended on their willingness and openness to cooperation. Respondents from lower levels of education were easiest to contact and some difficulties were encountered in attempts to contact representatives of ministries, where time constraints prevented us from complying with the correct written procedures for access to all the relevant respondents. Researchers compensated for the shortfall by using their own professional contacts, in accordance with the criteria described above.

3.4. Participants

Respondents were selected through a purposive sampling approach, to identify information-rich individuals from relevant stakeholder groups and ensure a variety of perspectives. Seven focus groups were formed of elementary school teachers, parents and members of school management; there were 30 interviews with secondary school teachers, parents, representatives of local authorities in departments of education, school directors, school pedagogues and psychologists, teacher educators at university level, higher-level policy makers (including five international higher-level policy makers), NGO representatives, and in-service teacher educators and trainers. In addition, 11 teachers, 7 teacher educators, 2 student teachers and 25 other respondents filled out an on-line survey. A total of 101 participants were involved in field work in various municipalities across BiH. Visits were made to the Federation of BiH (FBiH), Mostar, Tuzla and three sites in Sarajevo (Novo Sarajevo and Novi Grad, Ilidža), and similar trips were made to Banja Luka and Prijedor in Republika Srpska (RS).

The focus groups were conducted with teachers and parents in schools with a varied experience of inclusion and diversity, ranging from completely mono-ethnic environments to degrees of mixed student populations. Two schools have extensive experience with the inclusion of Roma students and students with special needs. One inner city school is located in an area of low socio-economic background with a large Roma population, students from Albanian and Montenegrin minorities, and Bosniaks from Sandzak (in Serbia). At the same time, there are a few student returnees to Bosnia from the United States of America and European countries that received them as refugees during the war. The school is known for its efforts to adapt to the variety of its intake through cooperation with families. Another school is a flagship of cooperation with an NGO involved with training to provide individualised learning plans for students with special needs in order to ensure efficient inclusion in regular classes.

4.   OVERALL CONTEXT OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

4.1 Context

The mapping of teacher preparation for inclusive education is set in a very complex context in post-conflict BiH. Despite the progress made since the end of the war (1992-1995) society remains divided along ethnic lines, although the most recent human development report (UNDP, 2009) observed there is a public perception of greater friction between rich and poor than between different ethnic groups. The report suggests there is still much work to be done in strengthening the social ties between members of all communities, ethnicities, social classes and genders, and it highlights the importance of reinforcing the education system and improving retention levels. A brief description of the structural complexity of the education administration system in BiH is needed before considering the policy and legal framework for improving education and teacher preparation. There are also some specific constitutional arrangements relevant to any discussion of inclusion and diversity in BiH.

CONSTITUTION AND EDUCATION

The Dayton Peace Agreement signed at the end of 1995 serves as the BiH Constitution, and Annex 4 of this document established a constitutional structure characterized by multiple levels of government: the state level, with two major entities - the FBiH and RS; and the sub-levels of cantons (in FBiH), cities and municipalities. Within the state system there is also the separate Brčko District of BiH.[37] The two larger entities and the Brčko District each have their own government. In the FBiH, which consists of 10 cantons, each canton has its own separate government. The Brčko District falls under the jurisdiction of state authorities and not under the jurisdiction of any entity, meaning it has the status of an autonomous region under international supervision with its own political structures and bureaucracy. The Council of Ministers acts as the state government as established by the Constitution of BiH.

Education hence falls under the jurisdiction of the Republika Srpska, ten cantons within the FBiH and the Brčko District. Each of the twelve listed administrative units has its own Ministry of Education, education laws, education budgets, educational policies and all the other rights and obligations derived from jurisdiction over the organisation and functioning of education in their area of responsibility (Annex 2). At the level of the FBiH, the Federal Ministry of Education and Science coordinates the cantonal ministries of education. This federal ministry has an education budget that is mainly used for securing rights to education. In 2003, the Ministry of Civil Affairs obtained BiH state-level jurisdiction to coordinate activities between the entities and adopt responsibility for international cooperation on education. In accordance with its role as coordinator, the Ministry has no established system of funding educational activities. The administrative structure of the education sector in BiH includes 14 Ministries dealing with education including the Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2 entity and 10 cantonal Ministries of Education and the Department of Education of the Brčko District. We will refer to all of these as Ministries of Education (MoEs) in the text.

The Constitution distinguishes three constituent peoples (Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs) and a group defined as 'others' in reference to other smaller national minorities (Albanians, Czechs, Roma, Slovaks[38]) as well as those with no declared ethnic identity. Any discussion of minorities in BiH is complex as it refers to any groups smaller than the groups that constitute the majority population including: national minorities; and those

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[37]   Brčko was declared an independent district by the Decision of Arbitration Council for the Brčko District in 1999.

[38]   There are 17 officially recognised minorities in BiH constituting 6.8 % of the population (1991 Census).

members of any of the three other major constituent peoples who form a minority in areas majority populated by the members of another constituent people (so called areas of 'minority return'). The Constitution of BiH and especially the *Interim Agreement on Satisfying Special Needs and Rights of Returnee Children* guarantee special rights to the latter minorities including the right to an education which satisfies the specific cultural needs of students who are members of the minority ethnic groups. Therefore, there are two kinds of issues concerning inclusion in education in BiH: ensuring access to all children in the education system; and ensuring education that is acceptable and culturally relevant for all minority groups. Each of these issues is discussed below.

RIGHT TO EDUCATION

The right to education as a fundamental right of each child is guaranteed by the Constitution of BiH (Article 2). Primary education is compulsory and free of charge, while secondary education is free, but not compulsory. Data on primary school enrolment show that not all children in BiH enjoy their right to primary education. According to UNDP (2007) 95.9 % of primary school age children are enrolled in primary education.

The enrolment rate in pre-primary is estimated at 5.53 % and is falling. Small municipalities and more generally, rural areas in general, face the closure of many pre-schools and thus children resident in these areas are at a great disadvantage. The lack of facilities and trained personnel are just two of the problems facing rural areas. Estimated enrolment in secondary schools is 76.2 % (Council of Ministers of BiH, 2008). UNDP data (2007a) states that only 57 % of students who complete primary school in any one year group go on to complete secondary education.

The Roma minority are the group most at risk of exclusion. According to the Open Society Fund BiH (2006), only 15 % of Roma children are in primary education and UNDP (2007a) puts the figure at less than 10 %. Other groups at risk of exclusion include: children with special needs; children who have returned to areas where there is a majority from another constituent people; minorities from other ethnic and religious traditions; and children in rural areas without organised transport to school facilities. The problems also include early school leaving by girls at the end of the 4th grade, as well as restricted secondary school opportunities for disabled individuals. Children who do not attend school come mainly from poor families and many children with more severe special needs are not in school, but either at home or in residential institutions with very limited facilities (UNDP, 2007a).

RIGHTS IN EDUCATION

The schools in BiH do not yet appear to fully reflect the cultural diversity of the country. According to an European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) report on BiH 'Schools are reported to often still be 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, including in the area of religious education' (Council of Europe, 2005). The mentioned *Interim Agreement on Accommodation of Specific Needs and Rights of Returnee Children* was signed in March 2003, with an Implementation Plan adopted by all MoEs. This Implementation Plan offered parents for the opportunity to choose the curriculum of their choice within the national group of subjects: mother tongue and literature, geography, history, nature studies and society and religious instruction.[39] However, in most cantons of FBiH and in RS, the only curriculum in force is that of the majority ethnic group in the canton or entity, and school curricula are still ethnically coloured throughout the country (OSCE, 2005). This ethnic colouration is primarily seen in the so called national group of subjects listed above.

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[39] There are Bosniak, Croat and Serb curricula in corresponding languages and with different national groups of subjects. The decisions about which curricula are available in which part of the country are made at entity level in the RSand canton levels in the FBiH.

An attempt has been made to ensure that students learn a minimum of common elements across the entire country with the introduction of the Common Core Curriculum (CCC).[40] In essence, this means that a certain percentage of the curriculum is the same for all pupils in the subjects covered by the CCC, while the remaining percentage varies dependent on decisions made at the canton or entity level. The proportion of fixed content depends on the subject. In subjects such as mathematics or science, the common portion covers virtually the entire subject content, whereas the common content accounts for far less of the subject matter in subjects such as: language and literature, history, geography, nature and society. All MoEs adopted the CCC in 2003 with significant support from the international community, but implementation is not yet comprehensive or consistent.

There are discrepancies in teacher training in different parts of the country. Training in some of the cantons of the FBiH is considered too short and is unsatisfactory in accommodating the needs of teachers, while teachers in the RS have received only basic information and documents on the introduction of the CCC (OSCE, 2005).

Recent research on the up-take of national group subjects in schools in BiH shows the right to the curriculum of choice has been exercised only by every fourth ethnic minority student. Most ethnic minority students attend classes in segregated schools. The 'two-schools-under-one-roof' phenomenon provides one example of segregation in schools in FBiH. These schools teach parallel curricula to Bosniak and Croat students in physically separate areas with no interaction between either staff or students from the two groups. Students often use separate entrances and have different break times, while teachers do not share a staff room. Segregated schooling is also supported in BiH by bussing students to mostly mono-ethnic schools outside their catchment areas offering the desired curriculum.[41] This practice is still very common although education authorities have agreed in principle to stop bussing. Many parents continue to bus their children as they still do not feel that the specific needs of their children are met in the schools closest to their homes (OSCE, 2005).

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

BiH has signed up to many international treaties which affirm the right to education. These include the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Constitution of BiH incorporates the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) giving it priority over all domestic legislation. Article 2 of the Constitution states: 'Rights and freedoms forest forth in the ECHR and in its protocols shall apply directly in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These shall have priority over all other law [...] All persons within the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina shall enjoy the human rights and fundamental freedoms [...including...] the right to education.' BiH has ratified all of the most important UN and international human rights conventions and instruments (Commission of the European Communities, 2008). Upon accession to the Council of Europe, BiH has undertaken a certain number of post-accession commitments. Currently BiH has the status of potential candidate country for membership of the EU, and EU accession is defined as a strategic priority for the state. The European integration process has had a catalytic effect on the consolidation of strategic planning under a more systematic approach at the state level. A significant majority of the population sees their future within the EU (UNDPb, 2007).

The international community often provides heavy support and some leadership in overall reforms to the fragmented education system of BiH, as is certainly the case for inclusive education, where the role of

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[40] Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education (Article 59, paragraph 4) stipulates that a CCC must be implemented in all schools in BiH, at the beginning of the school year 2003/2004 at the latest.

[41] Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education (Article 12, paragraph 1) stipulates that all public primary schools shall have a catchment area, meaning that all students of compulsory school age living within that area shall have the right to enroll and attend this school, with a possible exception if it "is necessary to protect the rights of the child and is in the best interests of the child" (Article 12, paragraph 3).

coordination is attributed to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). A number of other international organisations are involved in education in BiH, including: the Council of Europe, the Delegation of the EC to BiH, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Open Society Found (OSF), Save the Children and many others.

The international community has built on the consensus of all the education authorities in BiH and has acted as a driving force behind reforms launched within a general strategy in 2002, promoting the principles of equal access, availability, acceptance, effectiveness and official recognition, non-discrimination and absence of segregation in education (OSCE, 2005). A number of laws and documents relevant to inclusive education and teacher preparation have been adopted since then through various projects promoting inclusive multicultural education, by and large with the help of international organisations. Some of the most important laws and documents adopted or drafted by relevant national bodies are mentioned below.

One of the major achievements since the reforms were launched in 2002 was the adoption of five framework laws for education at the state level: the *Framework Law on Pre-School Care and Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Parliamentary Assembly of BiH, 2007a), the *Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Parliamentary Assembly of BiH, 2003), the *Framework Law on Vocational Education and Training in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Parliamentary Assembly of BiH, 2008), the *Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Parliamentary Assembly of BiH, 2007b), and the *Law on Agency for Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education* (Parliamentary Assembly of BiH, 2007). State-level legislation has integrated the principles of availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability of the education system, but the elaboration is entrusted to lower administrative levels which stipulate different standards, funding methods and decision making. Thus, harmonisation of the legislation and its implementation in the education system is undermined by variable adaptation, administration and implementation at lower levels of government. As a result, legal provisions foreseen in state-level legislation (such as extending compulsory free education from eight to nine years) are not equally implemented in all parts of the country, even when prototype by-laws have been drafted (OSCE, 2005). For example, a prototype by-law on in-service teacher training and professional development has been adopted only in two cantons in FBiH and in Republika Srpska.

When the overall education reform in BiH was launched in 2002, a document entitled *A Message to the People of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Education Reform* (OSCE, 2003) was signed by BiH education authorities to serve as the basic reference framework for the reforms. Inclusive education is an essential part of this document. One of the five pledges reads: 'We will ensure that all students have access to quality education, in integrated multicultural schools, that is, free from political, religious, cultural and other bias and discrimination and which respects the rights of all children' (OSCE, 2003:10). In mid-2008, the Council of Ministers of BiH, released a strategic document entitled *Strategic Directions for the Education Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina* with the Implementation Plan, *2008–2015* (Council of Ministers of BiH, 2008) which serves as the basis for entity-level and cantonal strategies. This publication identified the main lines of development for education in BiH for the period up to 2015 and established an implementation schedule containing short-term (2008), medium-term (2009-2010) and long-term goals (2011-2015). A system-level policy maker who participated in our research reported that information on inclusive education is being prepared.

One of the priorities for education stated in this document is the prevention of social exclusion amongst children and young people (Council of Ministers, 2008:11) coupled with the aim of raising general educational levels amongst the population and improving education system efficiency. Issues have been raised

on the inclusion of students with special needs (students with developmental and learning difficulties) and the inclusion of marginalised or vulnerable children.

The issue of equal access and equity in education is given special status within the strategy as a unique strand in education development. The document advocates the right of everyone to at least the nine years of basic obligatory education (ibid.:17), education which meets the needs of minorities and which is of the same quality in different parts of the country, especially in demographically endangered and war affected areas, rural and mountainous areas and the like (ibid.:16-17).

Another aspect of the reform process relevant for inclusive education is curriculum modernisation that aims to update and develop teaching and learning at all levels. The focus here is on teaching objectives, learning outcomes and responding to the needs of many groups through: improved teaching and learning strategies; the use of modern technologies; better management; and the evaluation and improvement of initial and ongoing professional training of teachers at all levels.

One of the first attempts to implement the 2003 strategy document (OSCE, 2003) resulted in the Action Plan on the Education Needs of Roma and Members of Other National Minorities (OSCE, 2004). As one OSCE representative explained the registration of students:

"*WE ADOPTED THE ACTION PLAN FOR REGISTRATION IN, AND ATTENDANCE AT, THE REGULAR TEACHING PROCESS IN 2006. WE ADOPTED AN ACTION PLAN FOR ADDRESSING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF THE ROMA PEOPLE AND MEMBERS OF OTHER NATIONAL MINORITIES IN 2004, WHICH ALSO REGULATES THE ISSUE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION*".

In September 2008, BiH joined the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015. At the same time, the Council of Ministers adopted an *Action Plan for the Solution of the Issues of Housing, Health Services and Education for the Roma* and established a coordination committee to monitor implementation. An action plan on children with special needs was also created in 2005, but has not yet been signed by the Ministry of Education and Science. An OSCE representative freely stated the organisation's support for this document and described the progress so far in the following terms:

"*EVEN THOUGH AN OVERALL DOCUMENT AND STRATEGY ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DOES NOT EXIST, GUIDELINES ON CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN SCHOOLS ARE IN THE PROCEDURE OF ADOPTION WHERE THEY HAVE ALREADY BEEN ADOPTED ON LOWER LEVELS.*"

Two other representatives of international organisations and two system-level policy makers confirmed this state of affairs.

Other documents relating to the inclusive education policy include: the *Strategy for Pre-Schooling Education in BiH*[42], the *Action Plan for the Inclusion of Children with Special Needs into Regular Classroom* which is currently awaiting adoption by the ministers of education, and the *Strategy and Operational Guidelines for In-service Training of Teachers*[42] with a view toward establishing standards and procedures for the licensing and certification of teachers in pre-school institutions, primary and secondary schools. A working group guided by UNICEF and made up of representatives of official authorities has proposed a system-wide draft strategy of teacher professional development. The draft strategy deals with: pre-service education; in-service training; quality evaluation; accreditation of the programme; and certification of teachers. This document has not yet been adopted as none of the preconditions have been fulfilled.

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[42] http://www.unicef.org/bih/ba/education_4800.html

In May 2008, an initiative was launched by the Open Society Fund BiH, the UNICEF Office to BiH and Save the Children Norway for a rights-based educational system in BiH. The overall aim was to ensure conditions for equal access to quality education for all students and the development of an inclusive education system and contribute to the overall reintegration of BiH society.

The initiative will raise awareness of the current situation in education, its long-term implications and the need for changes in order to improve current educational practices in BiH.

In the field of vocational education and training, the new *Law on Secondary Vocational Education and Training* (Parliamentary Assembly of BiH, 2008) was backed by the adoption of a strategic document on the reform of vocational education: *Strategy for the Development of Vocational Education and Training in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2007-2013* (Council of Ministers of BiH, 2007). Reform of the vocational education and training sector is recognised as one of the most pressing challenges in the sector. At present, the professional training available to secondary school students is not fitted to the demands of the labour market as the curricula, equipment and teaching methods are all out-dated. These factors diminish the impact of secondary education as a means to prevent social exclusion (UNDP, 2007).

The adoption of new laws has led to the recent establishment of three new education agencies at the state level: the Agency for the Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance, the Agency for Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education, and the Centre for Information and Document Recognition in the Field of Higher Education (Annex 2).

In conclusion; educational reform strategies and relevant documents can combine with legislation to provide a legal framework for the introduction of inclusive education and the training of teachers to deal with this. However, there are still many disparities and shortcomings to implementation of international obligations in the field of education in BiH (OSCE, 2005). Students with additional support needs are unable to achieve inclusion within the education system because appropriate mechanisms and conditions are not yet in place. For example: the introduction of inclusive education was not followed by either the adaptation of curricula or by mechanisms for the involvement of the local community in providing support, and there are still many other difficulties to overcome in the implementation of inclusive school practices. More critically still, teacher education and professional development has not been properly adjusted in order for teachers to meet the diverse needs of their students. This last element will be discussed in the following chapters.

4.2 Teacher Competences for Inclusive Education

The present analysis of teacher competences for inclusive education is based on data collected through field research. This analysis includes comparison of data collected using the reference framework for teacher competences for inclusive education presented in Annex 4. The reference framework itself was not seen by participants in the focus groups in order to avoid influencing the authenticity of their perceptions.

Discussions with teachers and other relevant actors revealed that their view of the competences needed for inclusive education is narrower than the broader concept of inclusion adopted in the theoretical framework of this study. The development of competence in inclusive education in BiH seems to be characterised by intuitive ad hoc development of competences free of any form of commonly accepted values or a commonly understood set of goals. Participants talked of competences in terms of their own individual experiences in various projects, or their personal interpretation of new legislation to introduce the inclusion concept. As one system-level policy maker observed:

"THE LAW WAS ADOPTED TOO SOON, EVEN BEFORE ANY OF THE PRECONDITIONS FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION WERE ACTUALLY IN PLACE."

One school director explained that the lack of teacher preparation for inclusive education forced schools and teachers to seek help from NGOs:

> **"We were taken aback by inclusion. We had to organise it and work with it ourselves. The institutions responsible for preparation did not have anything completed in time. We entered the process with the students already present. Our school did not expect any practical solutions to be provided from above; instead we made contact with an NGO and embarked upon a process of on-going education."**

This sort of approach means the understanding of inclusion amongst education professionals could be largely shaped by the particular outlook of a given donor. This factor could limit the impact of inclusion to particular groups of eligible students; those with disabilities, for example. Most teacher participants in this study interpreted inclusive education competences as those needed for teaching students with developmental difficulties, even though some teachers expressed a broader understanding of the concept of inclusive education. One teacher described inclusion as "a way of thinking we ought to develop". School teachers gave a number of detailed statements on the competences they consider to crucial and we have grouped them into the two clusters most frequently cited as important for inclusion in teacher responses: a list of general competences related to teacher personality and transversal skills, and a narrower methodical and didactic set of competences:

- Competences related to teacher personality and transversal skills

    ◊ Compatibility with other teachers in terms of work styles, approach, culture of classroom organisation 'a balance of different underlying teaching styles'

    ◊ Ability to cooperate, function as a part of a team, 'ability to develop professional dialogue'

◊ Professional freedom and autonomy - responsibility for own practices and those of others, readiness to meet challenge and change

◊ Love of and dedication to the profession, constant evaluation of own work – from personal and professional perspectives

◊ Process of continuous increased awareness and confrontation of personal preconceptions and stereotypes, meta-supervision of own personal behaviour and functioning, reflectivity

◊ Self-help skills and support for own well-being; a teacher needs to 'be well-supplied with patience'; 'let every teacher experience their self as capable… without fear of failure, to be able to seek help at all times, without feeling ashamed to do so'

- Methodical-didactic competences:

  ◊ To have the power for diplomatic interaction and the ability to negotiate, initiate, balance and adjust to parents and students

  ◊ Communication skills coupled with good non-verbal communication

  ◊ Competence to manage a group of adults and children

  ◊ Acknowledgment and evaluation of the needs, abilities, potential and possibilities of each student, from below average to above average

  ◊ Contemporary theory and practical knowledge of development and the learning process ('class organisation based on different types of learning'; learning and teaching based on cognitive development theories)

  ◊ Acceptance of personality, respect for the individual personality of students and belief in them

  ◊ Evaluation of the learning process and ability to develop learning strategies with students, and teaching students to be independent learners 'How to learn with pupils, not just how to teach them.'

Many of the competences mentioned by participants resonate with those identified in the literature and other studies in the region (Annex 3). The significance of these teacher competences for inclusion was also strongly affirmed by most of the respondents to the online survey. They listed the following as very important teacher competences:

- Improve the competences of all students

- Tailor strategies to each child's needs

- Use various forms of assessment to help students learn and improve instructions

- Work effectively with support staff

- Adapt curricula to individual pupils

- Guide and support all learners

- Attend to the cognitive development and social-emotional and moral growth of students

- Relate to students and their families on an interpersonal level

- Recognise and respect cultural and individual differences

- Understand the different values held by students and their families

- Awareness of their own preconceptions and value stances

- Recognize how teacher assumptions influence teaching and relationships with different pupils

- Ability to recognize pupil special needs and provide for them or seek help

- Ability to recognize gifted pupils needs and provide appropriately for these

- Encourage intercultural respect and understanding amongst pupils

- Treat all students with respect, affirming their worth and dignity

- Belief in the educability of every child

- Help all students develop into fully participating members of society

- Familiarity with conventions on the rights of the child and anti- discrimination.

Somewhat lower importance was assigned to the recognition of knowledge as value-laden, constructed by the learner and reciprocal, and maintaining high expectations regardless of student backgrounds. These gaps are probably largely due to the lack of teacher education as reflexive practitioners and the fact that 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.

4.3   Barriers to Inclusion

Participants in the study identified a number of barriers to inclusive education practices in BiH. One of the most commonly mentioned of these was the extremely fragmented and expensive structure of the education system in BiH (Annex 2). The existence of several levels of government has serious implications for the politics of education. As an international organisation representative put it:

"THE EXTREMELY COMPLEX STRUCTURE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA MEANS THAT JURISDICTION OVER THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IS IN THE HANDS OF ENTITIES AND CANTONS, LEADING TO A SITUATION WHERE ELEVEN RELEVANT MINISTRIES MUST ADOPT ANY GIVEN REGULATIONS IN ORDER TO SECURE THE LEGAL BASIS FOR THE ENTIRE COUNTRY."

Participants in the online survey also cited the fact that education is the most politicised social service in BiH, that the political structure of the country is fragmented and that the policies adopted cannot be implemented due to the lack of resources.

The lack of full access to education is also mentioned as a barrier, where marginalised groups and national minorities are especially deprived of exercising the right to education, as the education system contains no affirmative action mechanisms to improve the position of these groups. Children from these groups do not have automatic access to primary education, especially in the case of: girls from poor families and remote areas of

BiH; children of national minorities, especially Roma children and returnees; and children with some form of disability (OSCE, 2004).

Segregated education, reflected in such devices as the 'two schools under one roof,' and the lack of political courage or will to deal with the issue are commonly cited forms of barrier. As one system-level decision maker put it:

"PREJUDICE, POLITICS AND SUBSTANTIAL PROFESSIONAL IGNORANCE, PROFESSIONAL AND POLITICAL FEAR...IN THE SENSE OF 'I WILL NOT KEEP MY JOB UNLESS I OBEY THE POLITICAL PARTY THAT APPOINTED ME'. THE INSTRUCTIONS OF SOME POLITICAL PARTIES ARE CLEAR: THERE WILL BE NO MINGLING, THERE IS NO COLLECTIVENESS."

Or, as remarked by a representative of an international organisation:

"DESPITE THE GROWTH OF CIVIL SOCIETY VALUES, A MORE SUBTLE SOCIAL OBSTACLE IS POSED BY THE POORLY DEVELOPED AWARENESS OF TOLERATING DIFFERENCES."

There is also a perception of inadequate or insufficient teacher preparation. Whole class teaching and rote learning continue to be the dominant style in schools (Council of Ministers of BiH, 2008). This is partly due to the lack of adequate teaching aids, insufficient teacher training for the implementation of modern teaching technologies, the poor quality of teachers at universities and the lack of ongoing teacher education. As one system-level decision-maker said:

"INCOMPETENT TEACHERS ARE WORKING IN CLASSROOMS DUE TO THE LACK OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF" while *"QUALIFIED AND SKILLED INDIVIDUALS ARE HIDDEN IN THE CORNERS LACKING SUFFICIENT SELF-ESTEEM TO COME OUT"* (IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATOR).

Responses to the online survey also stated that modern teaching methods are not actually used in pre-service training, adding that there is a need for reform in teaching faculties and pedagogical institutes in line with education reform requirements.

Participants also recognised: a lack of good quality professional development systems; the fact that professional NGOs are not recognised as teacher training providers; a lack of standards for students, teachers, curricula and schools; and the lack of a teacher certification and accreditation system.

Funding forms yet another barrier, as reforms to education are not supported by appropriate funding for training and the development of teachers and school management teams:

"LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE AUTHORITIES ON ALL LEVELS HAVE INSUFFICIENT AWARENESS OF THE NEED FOR GREATER INVESTMENT AND SUPPORT FOR THE EDUCATIONAL SECTOR." (SCHOOL MANAGEMENT LEVEL RESPONDENT)

Some geographical areas suffer particular neglect, with teachers still awaiting initial training in inclusive education (UNICEF, 2009).

4.4 Policies Relevant for Teacher Preparation and Development

Education of teachers as key stakeholders in the implementation of inclusive education is considered the most important element in promoting the provision of inclusive education. Promise 2 of the *Message to the Citizens of BiH: Reform of Education* (OSCE, 2003) reads: 'We shall ensure that students are taught by well trained teachers in adequately equipped and efficiently run schools.' But the deadline of 2003-2004 set for the three elements of well trained teachers, adequate equipment and efficient organisation has come and gone, and the extent of pre-service and in-service teacher training in inclusive education has fallen well short of implementation goals. Research by UNICEF (2009) quotes teachers as still 'crying out' for in-service education in inclusive education five years after the initial time limit and our analysis of data collected during field research brought us to the same general conclusion.

The development plan (Council of Ministers of BiH, 2008) implicitly requires reform of pre-service and in-service training on working with students with additional support needs provided to teachers and educators. This includes the training for individualised approaches and inclusion in education that all teachers must be given by 2015. The Council of Ministers (2007) recognised that a high-quality, motivated and well-paid teaching staff is the key factor in implementation of the reform strategy, which means support must be provided for the on-going professional development of teachers, school principals and other education staff, helping them to meet demands for new competences and qualities in the educational process. Professional development and on-going teacher education is one of the general goals of educational reform. Recommendations for the first step include the modernization of graduate 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 by the public budget, with priority placed upon the knowledge and skills for working with students with special needs.

In practice, the implementation of reform plans in this particular segment faces challenges such as: the issues involved with teacher selection and status; teacher standards; pre-service and in-service preparation; and career progression. We will present and discuss perspectives collected on each of these issues during the field research.

SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT OF TEACHERS
According to our respondents, the selection of students for teacher education is in fact non-existent as teacher education institutions are forced to accept all applicants regardless of their level of motivation, as the number of applicants falls far below the number of training places available.

This is probably linked to the fact that teacher salaries are lower than those of other public employees.[43] Selection is also a non-issue in faculties providing training for subject and secondary teachers, as many students will take a teacher training course either during or after their subject studies as a matter of course.

School teachers are employed by the school principal on the basis of a public vacancy announcement stating the requirements in terms of qualifications. Before they can take up employment in a school, a teacher must meet the requirements laid down in the *Guidelines on the Type of Qualifications of Teachers and Associates in Schools*. In addition, some schools prepare and guidelines for employment at school level where they can add their own criteria. As the management of one school informed us:

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[43] Education salaries and wages also vary between the cantons (in FBiH), BrčkoDistrict and Republika Srpska. Even when carrying out the same duties at the same level of the educational system, teachers in BiH are not paid at the same level throughout the country.

"IN ADDITION TO THE GENERAL CRITERIA, WE ALSO HOLD INTERVIEWS. CANDIDATE ANNOUNCEMENTS ATTRACT TEACHER TRAINEES OF EVERY TYPE OF CLASS AND WE EVALUATE PERSONALITY AND ATTITUDES TO WORK…NEPOTISM IS EXTENSIVE AND INFLUENTIAL".

TEACHER STANDARDS

Although teachers are paid from the public budget, there are no standards on teacher quality citing specific competences relevant to inclusive education. In such a situation there are many diverse interpretations of the teacher competences required for inclusive educational practices. Insight into the relevant documents and practices showed that inclusive education in BiH tends to refer mostly to the education of students with any kind of disability in regular schools. This was corroborated by some of the participants in the field research:

"THERE IS NO SOCIAL CONSENSUS ON DEFINING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND ITS GOALS" (REPRESENTATIVE OF AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION, IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINER).

Similarly, there is no coordination between the pre-service preparation of teachers, their entry into the teaching profession and their progression within it.

PRE-SERVICE PREPARATION

According to respondents in this study, newly trained teachers are not adequately trained in current developments, processes and changes at school level. Some of the reasons suggested for this include:

"MINIMAL NUMBER OF CLASSES THAT FACULTIES ARE READY TO PLAN FOR THE PEDAGOGICAL GROUP OF SUBJECTS, TRADITIONAL PROGRAMMES FOR THE PEDAGOGICAL GROUP OF SUBJECTS, MANY THEORIES, HISTORICAL APPROACH, WORK ACCORDING TO A PARALLEL MODEL OF TEACHER'S EDUCATION, NOT A CONSECUTIVE ONE" (PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATORS)

Some respondents mentioned the persistence of outdated practices, such as:

"WE STILL HAVE SPECIAL PEDAGOGY AS A PART OF THE FACULTIES' CURRICULUM, WITHIN WHICH HISTORY IS BEING TAUGHT" (SYSTEM-LEVEL POLICY MAKER);

"CLASSES AT FACULTIES ARE GIVEN BY TEACHERS WHO HAVE NO PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE IN CLASSROOM TEACHING" (PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATORS);

"NO TECHNIQUE OR PRACTICAL TEACHING METHODS ARE LEARNED IN THE FACULTIES, ESPECIALLY NOT IN THE SENSE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION." (REPRESENTATIVE OF AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION)

"TEACHERS ONLY LEARN THE BASICS WHEN THEY START WORK." (SYSTEM-LEVEL POLICY MAKER)

IN-SERVICE DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER PROGRESSION

Reponses suggest the in-service training and education of teachers is not sufficiently systematic in building teacher competences for new educational practices and linking them to career progression. An NGO representative participating in the research pointed to the inconsistency and lack of systematic approach to teacher preparation and development; an in-service teacher trainer said: "system solutions exist in declarations, but are not being applied in practice;" another said "there are unequal opportunities to access quality programmes;" and many reported widespread casualness and conservatism in implementation of official government programmes. One system-level decision maker and two school managers described the programmes as devoid of teaching content and commented that participation was not evaluated in terms of progress and teacher status.

The *Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education* (Parliamentary Assembly of BiH, 2003) requires employees in education to attend in-service training, and this is especially emphasized in Article 21: 'In order to acquire new knowledge, advancement and professional development, teaching staff, pedagogues, psychologists, special education teachers, speech therapists and school principals shall be covered by mandatory training programmes, specialization and evaluation.' In-service training in inclusive education is not specially emphasized, nor is there any indication of how many hours are required.

Working groups at entity and canton levels are currently developing by-laws on teacher licensing and career progression. The Federal Ministry for Education and Science expert group has developed a professional development model for teachers, principals and research assistants. According to this model, teacher in-service training and professional development and the award of higher professional status are to be regulated at canton level by the *Statutes for Verification, Advancement, Acquiring Professional Qualifications of Employees (to be published)* at pre-school, primary and secondary school and issued by the Minister of Education. A Commission for Teacher Verification and Monitoring will be appointed in schools in compliance with the Statutes for Verification in the following areas: programme planning; teaching preparation and performance; use of planned lessons and programme content; management of pedagogical documentation; cooperation and communication with pupils, parents, employees and other staff; school participation in cultural, sporting and public activities; and professional development. Teachers, educators, professors and research assistants are to be assessed and promoted according to their demonstrated expertise, efficacy at work and working experience. Higher professional status will be achieved by mentors or superior research assistants if their work is evaluated as 'exceptionally successful' on three successive occasions. Inclusion in education is one of the themes covered by the teacher professional development but the model described has yet to be fully implemented. RS guidelines are currently being prepared on the licensing and career progression of education employees.

The professional development of teachers in BiH faces many problems at present: most participants report there is no verification of in-service teacher training programmes, nor is there a system for promotion within the profession. This situation is demotivating as it relies on an outdated model that correlates grades of professional advancement with the number of years of working experience.

Elements such as: quality of work in the classroom; cooperative work with other teachers; individual participation in forms of advanced training; participation in the education of other teachers; and gaining higher qualifications in the formal education system are all graded as important in the award of specific professional status (mentor, advisor, superior advisor) by the research participants.

In general, the significance of continuing professional training for staff working in all levels of the education system (from director to classroom teacher) tends to be underestimated. Participants in the study indicated that the professional development system is not based on practical needs, but on current resources and is unrelated to long-term goals and plans. Practitioners have developed 'survival strategies' based on enthusiasm for hyper-production of programmes. It is hoped the competences for inclusive education offered by such programmes will put into use in the future.

The research participants emphasised the significance of professional and personal development in terms of: improvement of efficiency and creativity, fulfilment of interests and satisfaction. However, another trend shows that schools and communities are learning to recognise the importance of properly trained teachers. In this regard, participants noted that many schools respect teacher competence and quality work in classrooms. Some of them point out that professional excellence is a safe way in which to secure additional income through a sideline in organising and conducting seminars.

Another major inconsistency in in-service training provision seems to be the discrepancy between the allocation of responsibilities and resources at the lower levels. Schools are not provided the funding they need for the in-service teacher training demanded by the reforms. Low levels of resourcing in many schools contribute to the low position and social status of teachers and reduce their enthusiasm for the reform process.

5.   MAPPING TEACHER PREPARATION FOR INCLUSION

5.1   Pre-service Preparation

Teachers are educated at eight public universities in BiH and two private higher education institutions. There are several faculties of teacher education within each university (Faculty of Educational Science, Faculty of Philosophy, etc.). Faculties of teacher education prepare primary teachers (and sometimes subject teachers for upper primary schools) while subject teachers for secondary schools are prepared at non-teacher faculties for the relevant subject discipline as are most subject teachers for upper primary schools. Non-teacher faculties sometimes have a department for teachers. Teachers who teach subjects in vocational schools are prepared at the same higher education institutions where students are prepared for the corresponding vocations with no specific teacher training departments or courses provided. However, before they can teach they are obliged to pass an examination in the so-called methodological-didactic group of subjects at another institution that provides relevant courses. The data from our study indicate that the process for passing this exam varies substantially from one school to another, ranging from a purely cosmetic exam with no real preparation, to one example of a compulsory intense one-year preparation course for the exam. A general problem in secondary vocational schools is that teachers of vocational subjects come from non-teacher faculties and have little or no training in the educational sciences, psychology or teaching methods.

Developments in pre-service teacher education form part of the general changes to higher education. A set of documents relating to implementation of the Bologna Process has been adopted. The state-level Law on Higher Education in BiH adopted in 2007 is based on the Bologna Declaration ratified by BiH in 2003. This established details of: the organization of higher education in BiH; the authorities in charge of the sector (including law enforcement authorities); and quality assurance methods in the field of higher education. This Law forms the basis of the law on higher education at entity and cantonal levels, which are then faced with harmonising legislation across the country. Despite the obstacles, the higher education institutions launched reforms in alignment with the principles of the Bologna Declaration even before the legislation obliged them to do so and this process is still ongoing.

Today, studies at both teacher and non-teacher faculties are organised in three cycles, with representatives from different faculties opting for either a 3+2+3 or a 4+1+3 model for studies. The intention is that BA students may only work in a class as teaching assistants alongside a qualified teacher. Following the MA level (and once they have passed the licensing examination[44]) they may work as a teacher in a school. There are both differences and similarities when comparing the pre-Bologna courses with current study specifications. Generally speaking, the essence of the study programme has remained the same with minor differences (as will be discussed below). For instance, some courses take now one semester with ECTS credits collected, while studies have been prolonged by one year. Discussions of substantial changes in higher education, including the introduction of learning outcomes and competences as foundations for the new curricula, are recently getting underway at the universities in BiH. Essentially, the reforms have just started and higher education institutions have yet to make significant improvements in the quality of services offered. On the teacher training front, change is particularly needed in the preparation of teachers for vocational education.

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[44] Once employed in a public educational institution teachers have a 6-12 month induction period during which they take classes and perform other activities under the supervision of a mentor. The mentor can then recommend that they take the licensing examination - a state examination which qualifies them to teach independently. The examination consists of delivering a lesson and completing a test on relevant legislation.

Some important courses relevant to inclusive education have been introduced in universities as part of cooperation projects with the Finnish government. A project known as Teacher Education and Professional Development (TEPD) was implemented in 2000-2003 and was continued in a project known as Finnish Co-operation in the Education Sector (CES) of BiH. The projects included two international postgraduate study programmes in the area of individualized approaches and inclusion at the Universities in Banja Luka and Džemal Bijedić in Mostar as part of support to inclusive education in BiH (which included the training of Ministry representatives and school directors). Lecturers from the Universities in Sarajevo, Tuzla, Mostar (Sveučilište) and from the Universities of Jyvaskyla and Joensuu in Finland delivered these programmes. Forty students have been trained at each of the two universities. 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 provides six-week summer courses in the field of special needs education at the University of Oslo. It also includes a component entitled *Classroom Research and Innovation* that consists of a comparative research study in two primary schools in BiH linked to another classroom research project in a selected school in Oslo.

The Universities of Sarajevo and Tuzla also participate in a regional cooperation project between six universities in five Western Balkan countries and the University of Oslo. The theme of this project is development of the inclusive school in alignment with UN principles, through the acquisition of new knowledge and the improvement of competence based on comparative classroom studies and joint research workshops combined with study visits and continuing discussions.

The general view of participants in this study is that current pre-service preparation of teachers in BiH needs considerable improvement with regard to the development of teacher competences on inclusive educational practices. Most participants consider urgent change is needed to pre-service teacher preparation, including the vocational faculties. Some of the major shortcomings in terms of student admissions, curricula, practical preparation for dealing with a variety of students and parents in real contexts are discussed below.

Student admissions to universities are generally based on consideration of their general achievement over four years of secondary school education (those graduating from a three-year school course are not eligible), along with achievement in subjects particularly relevant to their course of study (languages, sciences, humanities). A candidate can gain extra points for achievements in competitions or for excelling in their year group. Most faculties have an entrance exam consisting of one or more elements and this often culminates in interviews with candidates.

"GENERALLY, I THINK THAT MANY STUDENTS DECIDE TO BECOME TEACHERS BECAUSE THEY WERE UNABLE TO GET INTO THEIR FIRST CHOICE OF CAREER. ONLY A FEW DECIDE TO BECOME TEACHERS FROM LOVE OF THE PROFESSION. I ALSO THINK THE CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE AND EXAM RESULTS SHOULD BE MORE DEMANDING" (STUDENT TEACHER).

Such an admission procedure disregards important aspects of potential student teacher disposition to inclusion such as motivation, previous experience, inclination for reflection and self-evaluation. Furthermore, it does not encourage or facilitate the enrolment of students from particular disadvantaged backgrounds, even though there are recognised shortages of teachers who speak minority languages in BiH schools. Even where measures have been adopted to introduce lessons about Roma culture, literature, language, and history within primary school curricula (as in Tuzla canton) there are no Roma teachers to teach those lessons (Čičak and Hamzić, 2006).

Our respondents generally criticised the teaching and learning process in pre-service education as being too traditional and based on how the professors themselves were taught; as the following participant comments illustrate:

"Classes alone are not enough, they are for the most part boring and students are sitting entirely passively because they have to get the teacher to sign their grade books. Traditional professors at faculties like to listen to themselves, students can only learn from them, not the other way around". (system-level decision maker).

or

"This system is far from what we want in our schools today...we have the same academic teacher education system that we had 30-40 years ago." (system-level decision maker).

It seems the current curricula and programmes at faculties of educational sciences do not respond adequately to needs in practice. The training offered at faculties has shortcomings in terms of current inclusive education practices in primary and secondary schools and on recent developments in education theory. Most respondents stated that the faculty curricula and programmes in particular should undergo internal reform in future in order to incorporate current content, working methods and research practice. A similar point was made by an OSCE representative:

"Conclusions from round tables and seminars organised by the OSCE office in Banja Luka in the 2004 to 2007 period pointed out the need to incorporate inclusion in the academic education of future teachers".

A school manager offered a similar critique:

"There are many insufficient and unclear issues in curriculum and education programmes. The focus is on the quantity, not the quality of content in the preparation of future teachers. The content is mainly theoretical, while practical preparation is avoided. Unfortunately, students are loaded with information, and when they graduate, most of them have never been in any education institution except the one where they attended pedagogical practice classes limited to the mere taking of notes on pedagogical practices."

Responses from different groups suggest that pre-service education at faculties should be more progressive; include more workshop-like activities; and professors and teachers who have the experience in inclusive classes should hold practice classes. Data collected during fieldwork suggests that teachers who learned about inclusion in seminars or through participation in projects and practice in inclusive classrooms seem to achieve better results. Thus, faculties should: change curricula; introduce programmes and subjects related to inclusive education, especially for teachers who did not graduate from any of the pedagogical faculties; make more contacts with schools; and provide more opportunities for practice in schools. They could also build cooperation with schools in order to enable student teaching practice and the use of the experiences and knowledge gained through this.

Many teachers suggested improvements could be made in teacher training by increasing opportunities for practice, as did this NGO representative:

"[TEACHER EDUCATORS NEED] TO INTRODUCE CONTENT ON INCLUSION, BUT [INCLUSION IS TAUGHT] PRIMARILY THROUGH PRACTICAL WORK, EXCHANGE OF GOOD PRACTICE IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS. [THEY 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."

> **Field data suggests that examples of good practice do exist but are very rare. For example, some student teachers attend practical classes given by teachers, gaining real experience of life in the classroom and school students. This provides them with insights into their future work in real contexts.**

Indeed, the inclusion of opportunities for practice, practical classes and practical knowledge for students all appear to be vital issues facing existing academic education. Almost all participants agree that the separation of theory from practice is the greatest obstacle in the preparation of future teachers - a situation that has been maintained at pedagogical faculties for decades. As one school manager suggested:

"THEY SHOULD LEARN ABOUT WHO THE STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND DEVELOPMENTAL DIFFICULTIES ACTUALLY ARE IN PRACTICE, THEY SHOULD GET ACQUAINTED WITH THESE CONCEPTS IN PRACTICE."

Such views are strongly supported by fieldwork data. A student teacher suggested that the separation of scientific and pedagogical faculty courses would, from the very beginning, provide a greater number of classes for the pedagogical and psychological preparation of future teachers and allow for the content of major subjects to be interpreted through the perspective of actual social problems. In other words, the final goals of the teaching and learning process should include comprehension skills and the analysis and resolution of current problems in educational practice, whilst seeking answers through the perspective of the profession for which the student is being prepared. All student teachers interviewed in the course of the fieldwork agreed that faculties which educate future teachers should include as much practical experience of inclusive classes as possible.

The general feeling that pervades the student teacher responses is that they are not adequately prepared for inclusive classrooms:

"I DO NOT FEEL READY TO WORK IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM, I THINK I'D HAVE TO RELY MORE ON MY OWN INTUITION AND THE KNOWLEDGE I HAVE WOULD NOT BE OF ANY GREAT HELP FOR SUCH WORK. SO LITTLE ATTENTION IS BEING DEDICATED TO PREPARING STUDENTS TO WORK IN INCLUSIVE GROUPS, WE MAINLY PREPARE TO WORK IN THE BEST CONDITIONS WHICH ARE NOT THE CURRENT REALITY, AND THE OBSTACLE IS THAT WE DO NOT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENCOUNTER INCLUSION IN PRACTICE NOR TO ACQUIRE ANY EXPERIENCE" (STUDENT TEACHER).

Most professionals participating in the study also felt that young people were not prepared to work inclusive classrooms, whether they were talking from the personal perspective of a former student or from the perspective of an independent observer:

"SPEAKING FROM MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, I THINK THAT STUDENT TEACHERS WHO HAVE NOT YET COMPLETED THEIR STUDIES ARE NEITHER READY NOR SUFFICIENTLY PREPARED TO WORK IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS." (SCHOOL MANAGEMENT)

Another school manager described the gap between the needs for new school practices and the way students are traditionally prepared for implementing lessons in different stages:

"STUDENTS SHOULD IMPLEMENT ACTIVITIES, NOT LESSONS; THEY SHOULD BE TRAINED FOR FLEXIBLE INTEGRATION OF CONTENT WITHIN DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES. THEY SHOULD NOT BE STRICT AND IMPOSE ON THEMSELVES THE INTRODUCTORY, MAIN PART AND PLENARY OF A LESSON. TEACHING SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED ONLY TO CLASS TIME AND CLASSROOM, BUT SHOULD BE THE PART OF OUT-OF-THE-CLASSROOM SPACE".

or:

"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." (TEACHER, SCHOOL DIRECTOR)

From a parental perspective, the most powerful message is that 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.

> **"Every one of us has a special kind of story; each of our children is specific and special. This means that in order to have this kind of quality education and work with our children, teachers should be provided with all possible information from us." (parent focus group).**

In the opinions of parents, teachers who work with students must learn to accept the real life stories of parents in order to become more sensitive to the context of diversity as teachers. One of the preconditions for this is participation in this type of learning in real situations to gain experience and knowledge, and learn directly from students and parents in socially excluded groups. Furthermore, 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).

Another important issue for parents is raising teacher awareness of out of school situations, as only a fraction of a child's education takes place in class:

"A TEACHER SHOULD PAY ATTENTION NOT ONLY TO CHILDREN IN HIS OWN CLASS, BUT TO ALL CHILDREN. IF THEY SEE SOMETHING HAPPEN ON THE STREET THEY SHOULD NOT JUST PASS BY WITHOUT TAKING ACTION" (PARENT FOCUS GROUP).

Parents notice the difference between upper primary and lower primary education approaches, pointing out that many significant problems emerge for them and their children in upper primary education. The reason for this might be the lack of education competences among secondary teachers:

"EVERYTHING WAS OK DURING LOWER PRIMARY EDUCATION, BUT IN UPPER PRIMARY EDUCATION THEY ARE ONLY LOOKING FOR KNOWLEDGE, THERE IS NO DEVELOPMENTAL PART" (PARENT FOCUS GROUP).

Also, according to the respondents it is noticeable that:

"STUDENT TEACHERS DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK ON THEIR OWN PREJUDICES AND STEREOTYPES, TO GRASP THE BASIC CONCEPT OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION AND WHAT THIS MEANS IN PRACTICE." (NGO REPRESENTATIVE).

In conclusion, 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, yet they will work in the diverse classrooms of the 21st century. Models of teacher education need to be redesigned to integrate issues relevant to the present day and the future needs and priorities of society in the preparation of teachers of all subjects, and not only within specialised subjects such as Social Pedagogy or Democracy and Human Rights.

5.2   In-service Preparation

The regulation of in-service professional development for teachers is at various stages of development in different parts of the country. Generally, in the course of their work, teachers are obliged to undertake in-service training in the technical, methodical and pedagogic-psychological field in different ways: individually, within a group or collectively, in order to gain the necessary points to extend their licence after a period of four years.

In Republika Srpska, the law stipulates an obligation for in-service development for teachers in primary, but not in secondary education. The route to obtaining a licence is regulated by a statute currently being developed for licensing pre-primary, primary and secondary teachers. Pedagogical standards regulate teacher conditions of service. All employees in educational institutions have a 40-hour working week. A class teacher spends 24 hours a week in face to face education (and related activities). An additional 12 hours are prescribed for the preparation and marking of class work and 4 hours for other duties (professional training, teacher duties, administrative duties etc.). The standards do not prescribe specific time for preparation for inclusion, although there is mention of the need to be sensitive if a class is attended by a student with developmental difficulties.

Teachers are directly accountable to the school principal and also to an advisor from a pedagogical institute responsible for a given area. There are eight pedagogical institutes operating within the education system across the country (Annex 2). They have jurisdiction over professional monitoring of educational institutions, including: curriculum development; approval of new approaches and methods; organization of training for teachers; monitoring and supporting school directors; and carrying out other activities in their jurisdiction. In-service teacher education provided by the pedagogical institutes varies both in terms of themes and quality. Although most institutes do provide some training related to inclusive education, there is no common understanding or commonly agreed framework for formal approval of in-service training programmers. We were however informed by some participants that pedagogical institutes may formally grant permission for training programmes provided by NGOs.

Teachers have a certain level of autonomy in school. They are free to decide on up to 30 % of the curriculum, using the materials and technical resources they prefer (within student health and safety constraints). They can use any method they like to deliver classes and define the starting points they perceive to be appropriate,

provided they are not totally different from those of their colleagues. For example, if a teacher wishes to bring a carpet into a classroom they must get prior clearance from the principal and school counsellor, as well as parents. Teachers select their preferred methods of student assessment, although some constraints are determined on a whole-school basis. The teacher may individualise classes, but each area of curriculum planning is the responsibility of a team (teacher, school counsellor, parent, principal and other appropriate technical support staff).

However, research suggests that teachers do not seem to have the competences needed to make use of the existing degree of autonomy allowed for inclusive practices. Most teachers believe that they are not adequately trained for working with students with special needs. They frequently express their need for additional training in knowledge and skills which would help them improve their professional performance. Some of the areas in BiH (e.g. Podrinje canton) seem to be especially neglected in terms of training for inclusive education, while in Sarajevo, Bihać, Banja Luka, Mostar and Tuzla, teachers were provided with training in three stages: raising awareness about inclusive education; identification of students with special needs; and the development of didactic material for work with students with special needs (UNICEF, 2009).

UNICEF research (2009) shows that teachers, principals and support staff all express needs for additional training to develop competences for work with students with special needs including:

- how to recognize a student with a special need

- how to evaluate student abilities

- how to work with students with certain disorders and difficulties

- how to develop individual programmes

- how to assess students with special needs

- how to improve cooperation with families

- how to help students accept one another, including students with special needs

- how to plan and implement team work

- how to reduce prejudices among students, parents, teachers and the community as a whole.

One NGO representative informed us that

"ANALYSIS OF ALL [TRAINING] NEEDS CONDUCTED ON A LARGE SAMPLE OF TEACHERS (2200) SHOWED THE ISSUE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND ESPECIALLY WORK WITH STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IS TOP OF THE PRIORITY LIST. TEACHERS RARELY HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO CHOOSE, BUT THEY 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."

Other topics teachers participating in this study evaluated as useful and worthy of coverage in practice include:

- raising awareness amongst all staff (from cleaners in schools to advisers and managers in pedagogical institutes)

- basic philosophy of inclusion in society, schools and kindergartens

- adapted and individualised work plans

- how to apply student-centred pedagogy

- work with parents

- team work of all teachers within schools

- cooperation with support staff (dialectologists, speech therapists) on the level of teachers rather than students in an inclusive classroom

- classroom teaching assistant (their role and recruitment criteria)

- role of mobile teams

Other NGOs (EducAid, MIOS, DUGA, Step by Step)[45] were extensively engaged in teacher training in BiH in general, and in the field of inclusive education in particular, together with international organisations such as UNICEF and OSCE that administer training in the field of inclusive education. NGOs and international organisations often play a more important role than state institutions and make more significant contributions to inclusion, although the role of pedagogical institutes is significant in the in-service training of teachers in cooperation with NGOs.

Some positive examples of in-service teacher training are organised within the open interactive schools project in Tuzla, including the following programmes: Towards Inclusion - Training for Teachers/Staff; Towards Inclusion – Training for Trainers; Training for Teachers from the Interactive Education Area; and Training for Teachers in the Field of Intercultural Education[46]. 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 FBiH 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

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[45] EducAid is supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Italy and Region of Emilia Romagna and Marche. The materials (module) in the field of inclusive education were created by an expert team from the University of Bologna with expert groups from BiH; MIOS-Međunarodne Interaktivne Otvorene Škole (International Interactive Open Schools), Tuzla www.ioskole.net; DUGA-NGO in BiH supporting inclusive education and parents of students with special needs; Step by Step – COI-Centre for educational initiatives, member of the International Step by Step Association (ISSA)

[46] http://www.ioskole.net/

qualitative standards in schools. All these modules were completed by teachers participating in the Child Friendly Schools project. This was implemented by UNICEF throughout the country in 2002 and resulted in training for 96.5 % of teachers in lower primary education and 58 % of secondary school teachers in BiH. UNICEF also developed a module promoting social inclusion exploring appropriate issues on educational interventions to promote social inclusion. These developments in cultural education should be extended to further communities and educational establishments, both in a formal and informal manner.[47]

The United World Colleges International Baccalaureate Organisation Initiative (UWC-IBO) in BiH, Education from Conflict to Internationalism offers professional training to secondary school teachers in the development of analytical skills and discursive approaches to sensitive and controversial topics. It also introduces a multi-perspective approach to the teaching process that is free of prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination.

Analysis of in-service programmes and the findings of this research indicate that the international community and NGOs offer some very helpful projects in inclusive and multicultural education in BiH. Respondents recognised their high quality implementation. A system-level decision maker 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 on-going teacher education.

In general, research respondents recognised that some progress has been made in raising general awareness and acceptance of the concept of inclusive education in recent years and that some good examples of inclusive practice have been developed in BiH. There also seems to be a high level of agreement among different stakeholder groups as to the nature of the greatest challenges that lie ahead. The following section presents respondent opinions on the need to make in-service training more systematic in order to ensure continuity and to reward the teachers who take up the offer.

Most respondents in this study thought the pedagogical institutes should pay experts in the inclusion field, those who effectively 'live' the experience, to hold the in-service seminars. Action research in schools can document successful local initiatives that have improved the quality and level of inclusion in schools. A representative of an international organisation told us:

"WE MANAGED TO CREATE AND STRENGTHEN TRAINER RELATIONSHIPS WITH TEACHERS WHO ARE MOSTLY WORKING IN SCHOOLS, BUT THERE ARE ALSO THOSE WHO WORK IN PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTES WHO HAVE BECOME THE MAIN RESOURCE IN THEIR MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION AND WHO PROVIDE FURTHER TRAINING. I THINK IT IS ABOUT TIME THAT THE SYSTEM RECOGNISED THEM, BECAUSE IT HAS NOT DONE SO YET, EXCEPT IN SOME PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, IN OTHERS IT IS NOT THE CASE."

There have been suggestions that pedagogical institutes should identify the issue of inclusion as a fixture in their annual working programmes with specifically allocated funds. A few respondents stressed the importance of continuity in in-service training. One NGO representative pointed out that:

"TRUE PROGRESS DEMANDS CONTINUITY AND A LIFELONG LEARNING PROCESS. ALTHOUGH SOME TRAINING PROGRAMMES ARE EFFICIENT, THEY ALONE ARE NOT NEARLY SUFFICIENT UNLESS THERE IS ALSO SYSTEMATIC SUPPORT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF LEGAL PRECONDITIONS. THUS, IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO CREATE DEVELOPMENTAL TEAMS ON THE INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL LEVEL, ENABLING AND USING LOCAL RESOURCES AND COMMITTING TO CONSTANT MONITORING AND IMPROVEMENT OF PRACTICE. EXTERNAL HELP CANNOT BE EFFICIENT UNLESS THERE ARE INTERNAL MECHANISMS. THE ENTIRE WIDER SYSTEM, INCLUDING MATERIAL CONDITIONS, LEGISLATION AND ON-GOING WORK IS ALSO CRUCIAL."

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[47] External evaluation of the project "Child friendly schools" project 2002-2007. UNICEF BiH, November 2008.

In the opinion of a school manager, professional development must be legally regulated and have its own budget:

"THE LAW COVERS [THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS] BUT PROVIDES NO STRICT GUIDELINES, EVERYTHING IS DELEGATED TO THE SCHOOLS WHICH ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION, I.E. DEVELOPMENT...RARELY DO TEACHERS FROM ALL SCHOOLS ATTEND THE SEMINARS, BECAUSE SCHOOLS DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO PAY FOR THE TRAINING".

Teacher development must function as efficiently and effectively as possible. In-service training should be organised outside class time, with topics, educators and dates determined in advance, normally in the winter, spring and summer school breaks. This way, each teacher would be able to reserve a place on the seminar of their choice in a field where they wished to develop.

Teachers must also be motivated to participate in the effective building of their competences through in-service training and there must be some formal recognition of this element in teacher career progression. There has been no standardised provision of in-service education for teachers in BiH so far. Teachers are not systematically licensed as professionals, nor are they offered financial or other motivations or rewards for improving their quality of work (Council of Ministers of BiH, 2008).

Some teachers feel they are well educated, but are unhappy at not being recognised as experts. Their professional development and individual initiative, efforts and improved performance are not adequately validated (Kordić, 2007).

"THE SMALL NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO ARE WILLING TO WORK ARE NOT MOTIVATED BY SCHOOL MANAGEMENT, NOR ARE THEY WELL RECOGNISED BY PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTES THAT DO NOT KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT THE ISSUE TO APPRECIATE THEIR INPUT" (SYSTEM LEVEL DECISION MAKER).

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. Some school management teams have also started to recognise the importance and potential of their own resources, listening to teacher needs and proposals.

Parental views of the usefulness of training ranged from this sceptical comment in a parent focus group:

"WHAT COULD THEY LEARN IN TWO DAYS? ONE SERBIAN LANGUAGE TEACHER FROM VI TO IX GRADE WAS SENT ON A TWO-DAY SEMINAR TO PREPARE FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION. NO CHANCE."

to more positive perceptions of the benefits of teacher in-service education for students:

"THE TEACHER IS ALWAYS ATTENDING SEMINARS AND AFTERWARDS SHE PASSES IT ON TO THE STUDENTS. SHE TEACHES THEM ABOUT COLLECTIVE APPROACHES AND NEW SKILLS, SHE IS CONSTANTLY BRINGING IN SOMETHING NEW."

In conclusion, it seems that teachers in BiH have gained a number of positive practices and experiences in inclusive education through participation in programmes supported by various organisations. What seems to be missing in the system is a mechanism to capture all those positive experiences and establish quality standards to ensure the more systematic development of teacher competences for inclusion in both pre-service and in-service teacher preparation.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The context in which teacher competences for inclusive education are mapped in BiH does not appear to be the most fertile setting for the development of inclusive practices in schools. The schooling of students from different ethnic groups is largely segregated, with most students and teachers in the country having no contact with the members of other communities. The continuation of this situation is largely enabled by the constitutional arrangements and the fragmented educational system. Although many conventions ratified by BiH are directly applicable, those related to education still fall short of full implementation at levels that vary widely across the country. However, relevant documents and legislation adopted at the state level do provide a legal framework for inclusive educational practice in BiH schools. The remaining challenge is to ensure that such legal provisions apply across the country by harmonising legislation at the lower levels of decision making.

When we compare the competences for inclusion cited by teachers (Section 4.2) with those identified in the reference framework of this study, we can conclude that the teachers who participated in this study seem to be sensitised and informed about inclusion in education to a large extent. However, most of the teachers seem to perceive competences for inclusion as an additional set of knowledge and skills that could be covered by adding relevant programmes or courses to existing teacher preparation. They rarely show any understanding of the need to change our entire perceptions of knowledge and learning in order to make education accessible and relevant to all students.

Participants from the various stakeholder groups by and large agree that the current provision of teacher pre-service and in-service preparation mapped in Section 5 has many shortcomings with regard to the development of teacher competences. Teacher competences for inclusion identified in the theoretical framework (Annex 3) are not yet systematically integrated into current pre-service and in-service teacher preparation throughout the country. In contrast, the map of teacher preparation remains a motley patchwork of practices and approaches to inclusive education, often determined by the strategies of donors and the various organisations involved in teacher preparation.

With regard to pre-service teacher preparation, participants from different groups of respondents (teachers, student teachers, school managers, parents and teacher educators) observed that traditional pedagogy is inappropriate to the effective preparation of teachers for changed educational practice in schools. Lack of actual teaching practice by student teachers is one of shortcomings most often cited by participants, as alongside the inadequate student teacher selection processes. Pre-service teacher preparation practices rarely include the opportunities for contact with families, reflection and discussion identified in the literature as conducive to the development of positive attitudes to inclusion. Teachers do not place sufficient importance on recognition that knowledge is value-laden, constructed by the learner and reciprocal, probably as a result of being given few opportunities for reflection on values. In our view, this challenge will only be addressed when the relevant information is owned by a critical mass of academics prompting a paradigm change and large-scale impact on future generations of student teachers. In the meantime, efforts must be made to better capture and propagate existing knowledge, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

A number of positive practices do already exist in in-service teacher preparation, but there is still plenty of room for improvement. According to our interviewees; in-service provision should be standardised so that all teachers across BiH have access to quality programmes. Participants also strongly stated that more systematic development of teacher competences for inclusion should be supported by strengthened links between professional development and career progression, and by making in-service preparation available to all teachers in all schools.

There are major inconsistencies in the availability of in-service training, where there is a discrepancy between the amount of responsibilities and resources allocated to the lower levels. Some of our respondents reported that schools do not even have sufficient funding for the in-service preparation of teachers demanded by the reforms. In the authors' view, local education authorities could play a greater role in teacher development, especially given the importance of coordinating inclusive practices between schools and local communities.

6.   IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study into the context of teacher preparation for inclusive education in BiH suggest that promotion of inclusion through teacher preparation must be regarded as one more task among the bigger challenges of issues such as the post-conflict reconciliation facing BiH society. In a country where most schools are mono-ethnic despite a history of ethnic and religious diversity, teacher preparation for working with diversity seems to represent a serious challenge. We would argue, however, that preparing teachers to deal with social inclusion and differences is an even more worthwhile and necessary effort in such a context.

The outcomes of these efforts may not become apparent in the immediate future, but urgent steps must be taken to ensure that future teachers in BiH develop the necessary competences. The following section lists actions possible to foster the implementation of inclusive practices, including teacher preparation.

The findings on practitioner understanding of competences for inclusion suggest that inclusive education is understood mainly as a principle for including students with special needs into regular classes and not as a wider philosophy or a 'way of being'. Inclusive education should be understood in its broadest sense as good quality education for all students, with appropriate attention paid to groups and individuals marginalised on the grounds of ethnicity, religious affiliation, language, disability, poverty, or any similar cause. These findings point to a need for conceptual questioning, de-construction and re-construction of the concepts of inclusion and inclusive education with the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders.

The recommendations listed below are clustered according to the target stakeholder group. However, most of the recommendations require concerted action from different sections of stakeholders and are therefore mentioned in more than one group. Some recommendations were suggested by respondents during the research process (as is clearly indicated below), while others were proposed by the research team on the basis of insights gained in the course of this study, from analysis of documents and field data. The small qualitative research sample size means the findings of this study cannot be generalised to whole populations, but should be viewed as illustrative of the views of various respondent groups. The recommendations should be considered as possible courses of action that require further research and investigation. We have indicated whether a particular recommendation is suggested for immediate or longer-term application wherever possible.

6.1   Policy Makers

STATE-LEVEL
The authors share the view of many of the participants in the study who pointed to the immediate need for the development of teacher standards to include specific competences relevant for inclusive education. Such standards would inform the development of pre-service teacher education curricula and guide requirements for licensing and criteria for the accreditation of in-service training programmes. The mandate of the recently established Agency for Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education for the development and monitoring of the implementation of standards means this Agency could be charged with initiating and coordinating the process of developing standards with relevant stakeholders.

ENTITY (RS), CANTONAL (FBIH), AND DISTRICT (BRČKO) LEVELS
Strategies, legislation and policies must be harmonised with their state-level counterparts at entity, canton and district level in order to ensure balanced high quality provision of education across the country.

Moreover, the implementation of laws and policies should be ensured by the allocation of appropriate budgets. Special attention and sufficient funds must be attributed to affirmative action for groups at risk of exclusion, such as members of national minorities, vulnerable sections and marginalised groups. For example, the *Action Plan on Educational Needs of the Roma and Other Minorities* establishes mechanisms for implementation of the plan and for the monitoring of this implementation.

Further steps must be taken to ensure sufficient funding for the Roma population which still faces extremely harsh living conditions and discrimination on a daily basis. Similarly, legal solutions and policy mechanisms must be established to ensure the availability of school places for students with severe disabilities in order for them to exercise their right to education, especially in rural areas of BiH.

A more far-reaching and effective role should be given to the network of pedagogical institutes. These would also benefit from internal reorganisation for quality assurance and to improve work on education throughout the country. Centres could be established within the institutes to provide continuing professional development for teachers including a special sector for inclusion and building upon existing networks developed through cooperation with the NGO sector.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

The local community can and should undertake important roles and tasks in cooperation with schools in order to support greater inclusion, response to local cultural diversity and the various needs of students as individuals or members of a group. They must also support teacher development if this is to be achieved. Some municipalities are already working on a local level to create action plans for children and youth which address the issue of inclusive education. Some local government representatives interviewed in the course of the study informed us that these action plans are based on the principle of 'child-centred municipality' and 27 municipalities in BiH have signed an Inclusive School and Inclusive Community document in partnership with international non-governmental organisations.

6.2   Teacher Trainers and Educators

6.2.1   Pre-service

The most urgent need for change in pre-service teacher preparation involves the curricula of graduate study programmes for teachers. This includes the introduction of study programmes for teachers where they do not exist, as is the case for teachers of vocational subjects. Teaching courses need modernisation, placing emphasis on teaching methods rather than on the content to be taught. Some participants suggested teaching methods should be taught as a subject for four semesters rather than the current two. Greater emphasis must also be placed on educational sciences in accordance with current changes in education.

More substantial provision of practice opportunities and better integration of practice into pre-service teacher education is another vastly important immediate consideration. This should include longer periods of practice in inclusive classrooms and closer cooperation between schools and faculties is essential in order for this to come about. Our respondents stated that experiences gained through the in-service training of teachers, expert associates and school management could be used as valuable resources in helping student teachers develop competences to work in real, diverse classrooms. Teacher and non-teacher faculties should also use the Bologna Process and the introduction of the ECTS credit system to offer students the option of accumulating credits by working in schools.

In the medium-term, such an approach should help faculties work with practitioners to: evaluate curricula against the needs of practice; develop relevant interdisciplinary modules; and improve the quality of student practice with supervision by school-based mentors.

In the longer term, faculties should develop a practice-based approach to teaching theory working on the systemisation of practical experiences and recognising the high relevance of practice in developing understanding of theory. Teacher education should no longer be limited to teaching practices, but should take a step further to provide meaning and build a relationship between current practice and future developments.

Another longer-term consideration for teacher education institutions involves improvement of student selection procedures to include an evaluation of applicant motivation and their potential to develop communicative, social, adaptive and transversal competences for inclusion.

6.2.2 In-service

In-service teacher training needs to be quality assured in order to capture a multitude of existing good practices and to provide them in a more standardised and systematic manner across the country. As has already been suggested, this role could be attributed to the Agency for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education and Pedagogical Institutes, where special departments could be established to deal with on-going teacher education, creating a bank of programmes for the professional development of teachers.

In-service training and professional development programmes should be linked to teacher licensing, career progression and salaries. Some commonly agreed teacher standards would provide a useful frame of reference for licensing, career progression and the accreditation of in-service teacher programmes.

In-service teacher training should contribute to the development of competences based on student educational and social needs. It should involve the evaluation of NGOs and other in-service training providers, and consider the interests of teachers and other education professionals such as management and support staff. In our view, this form of coordinated evaluation of teacher development needs would be best administered at the local level.

Some participants pointed out that in-service training should also be organised outside of the normal teaching timetable, allowing staff to select the topics, providers and dates of their training in advance, preferably during school breaks.

6.3 Teachers

Competences for inclusive education should be taken into consideration as part of employment procedure in a manner far wider than has been used to date. In order to establish the implementation of inclusive practice throughout the educational system, increased opportunities for training on inclusion must be offered to teachers in secondary schools just as they have to primary teachers.

Teachers should be encouraged to exercise their autonomy to choose teaching models and methods and to implement curricula adjusted to the needs of their students and the class as a whole. In order to do this, these teachers must be provided with support to develop the necessary competences and the principle of lifelong learning should be vigorously promoted among education practitioners and coordinated among different actors from local communities to the Ministry of Education.

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ANNEX 1 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Additional support needs – the need of children and young people for extra support to benefit from school education at any time, for any reason (e. g. very able students; students whose education is disrupted by illness, or by being a refugee; students with a chaotic home life; bilingual learners, etc.).

In-service teacher training - education and training activities engaged in by primary and secondary school teachers and heads following their initial professional certification, and intended mainly or exclusively to improve their professional knowledge, skills and attitudes in order for them to educate students more effectively.

Mentor teacher - a teacher who is qualified, promoted or assigned to monitor student teachers while they visit schools for practice.

Pedagogical institutes - agencies in charge of monitoring and evaluating the work of all educational institutions from pre-primary to secondary education within their area of responsibility.

Pre-school education - education in pre-school institutions or schools that precedes primary education and serves as preparation for this.

Pre-service teacher education - education that prospective teachers are requested to undergo in order to qualify for entry into teaching, including both programmes specifically designed for future teachers and those programmes in where students study a disciplinary area that is an equivalent of to a school subject.

Primary education - education in primary schools including lower years in which classes are taught in all subject areas by a class teacher and upper years of primary schooling where different teachers teach different subject areas.

Secondary education - post-primary education in any academic or vocational secondary school, academic or vocational.

Special educational needs - include students who have physical, sensory or cognitive or other specific disabilities or any combination of these. It might also include students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Student teacher - a student studying at a pre-serves service institution preparing primary class or subject teachers and secondary school teachers, both academic and vocational.

Teacher - overall term for those qualified to teach at any level of school, including pre-school teachers, primary class teachers, primary subject teachers and secondary school teachers.

Teacher educator - university professor or other college or higher education institution lecturer who teaches student teachers in pre-service education and who provides training for practicing teachers in primary and secondary schools.

ANNEX 2 | THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The education system in BiH is extremely fragmented, with education devolved to various entities. In the RS education is the responsibility of this entity, whereas in the FBiH education has been further devolved from the entity level to the 10 cantons. Education also falls under the responsibility of the Brčko District. At the state level, education comes under the remit of the Ministry for Civil Affairs but the actual power is devolved and there are 13 additional MoEs with varying remits.

The education system is mainly reliant on public funds from the entity, cantonal, Brčko District and municipal budgets, depending on competence. In practical terms, this means there are thirteen separate budgets for education in BiH depending on geographical location: two at the entity level, one in the Brčko District of BiH and 10 cantonal budgets. Considerable differences in per pupil funding have been identified at all levels of education between the entities, cantons and Brčko district.

Pre-primary education: Enrolment in early childhood education programmes is very low in BiH. This includes 150 hours of compulsory pre-school programmes before children officially start school. At present, there are various laws in force throughout the country, each with different standards and unequal and unreliable sources of funding. In the meantime, pre-school education is in a dire and declining state with an estimated enrolment rate of 5.53 % and falling. Small municipalities and rural areas in general are facing the closure of many pre-schools putting children resident in these areas at a great disadvantage. A shortage of facilities and trained personnel are just two of the problems in this area. Although the state has adopted a law on 150 hours of compulsory pre-school education there is no system in place to provide this.

Primary Education: Primary education lasts for nine years in BiH. The students enrol in primary education when they are between 5 and 6 years old. Classes are composed of two cycles: from 1st to 5th grade, where one teacher is in charge of teaching all subjects, and 5th to 9th grade, where several teachers are involved in teaching different subjects. Education reform in BiH in line with the Framework Law on Primary Education in BiH is concentrated on the introduction of nine years of compulsory education organised in three 3-year cycles (1st to 3rd, 4th to 6th, and 7th to 9th grades). The RS fully introduced nine year education at the start of 2003/04. In the FBiH, in the lead up to the 2004/05 school year, the FBiH MoE co-ordinated the development of a concept model for nine year education and the model curriculum for the first grade of the nine year education cycle, with the input and consent of the cantonal MoEs and their pedagogical institutes. All cantons in FBiH have now introduced nine year primary education and it is fully functional although still marked by the out-dated teaching practices and textbooks, complex structures, old and in most cases dilapidated teaching facilities common to the education system of BiH.

Secondary Education: Secondary education is provided by general and specialized secondary schools where studies last four years. Technical and vocational secondary education can provide three or four years of classes. Students graduating from general secondary schools can enrol in any faculty or academy by passing an entrance examination prescribed by the institution. Students graduating from teacher training schools, technical, art and religious schools can enrol in related faculties by passing an entrance examination prescribed by the faculty or academy. Students who graduate from 'specialised' secondary schools can enrol in any faculty or academy if they pass two additional entrance examinations prescribed by the faculty. Secondary education is not compulsory in BiH. According to the UNDP National Human Development Report for 2007, only 73 % of the population aged 16 -18 years attends secondary school, while repetition and drop-out rates mean only 57 % of the overall number of students who completed primary school in one school year group went on to complete secondary education.

By contrast, the EU average is more than 93 %. No appropriate model for catch-up classes has been developed for students who drop out. The inconsistent implementation of education legislation and reform across the country and its consequences for student mobility also affect VET. Due to the absence of strong co-ordination mechanisms and quality assurance bodies as well as appropriate legislation that would set the same standards throughout BiH (such as Departments in charge of VET within the Standards and Assessment Agency and the Curriculum Agency as provided for by the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education), there is great disparity in the quality of education available to students from one school to another.

Higher education: The BiH higher education system comprises eight universities and art academies, consisting of some 90 faculties with the status of higher education institutions. University degrees are acquired at the faculties and arts academies. There are 22 private higher education institutions and the law on higher education (passed in July 2007) treats private and public higher education institutions equally. The signing of the Bologna Declaration in 2003 has given BiH a strong incentive to reform higher education at the state level and within universities themselves. The reform also presents many challenges in issues such as the introduction of the ETCS and diploma supplements and a state-wide system of quality assurance and recognition.

INSTITUTIONS DEALING WITH EDUCATION AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive authority institutions:

- **Ministry of Civil Affairs BiH**: Monitoring, analysis and reports on the educational sector in BiH; coordinate activities and define educational policies and strategic planning in education in BiH; coordinate activities of the entire educational sector in the area of EU integration and on the international level; coordinate intersectional cooperation at the BiH level

- **Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska**: Concentrates services and tasks on policy development, evidence-based strategic planning, elaboration of legislation, funding of education and general administrative issues

- **Federal Ministry of Education and Science:** Requires redefinition of existing coordinating and advisory function according to committee procedures for coordination of educational system in BiH and changes at cantonal level, in order to provide expert and other support to relevant cantonal ministries for the successful implementation of policies established at state level

- **10 Cantonal Ministries of Education (FBiH)**: Educational policy development, strategic planning and evidence-based planning, elaboration of legislation, funding of education and general administrative issues

- **Department for education Brčko District**: Further development of the educational system focussed on full incorporation to educational coordination system processes at BiH level

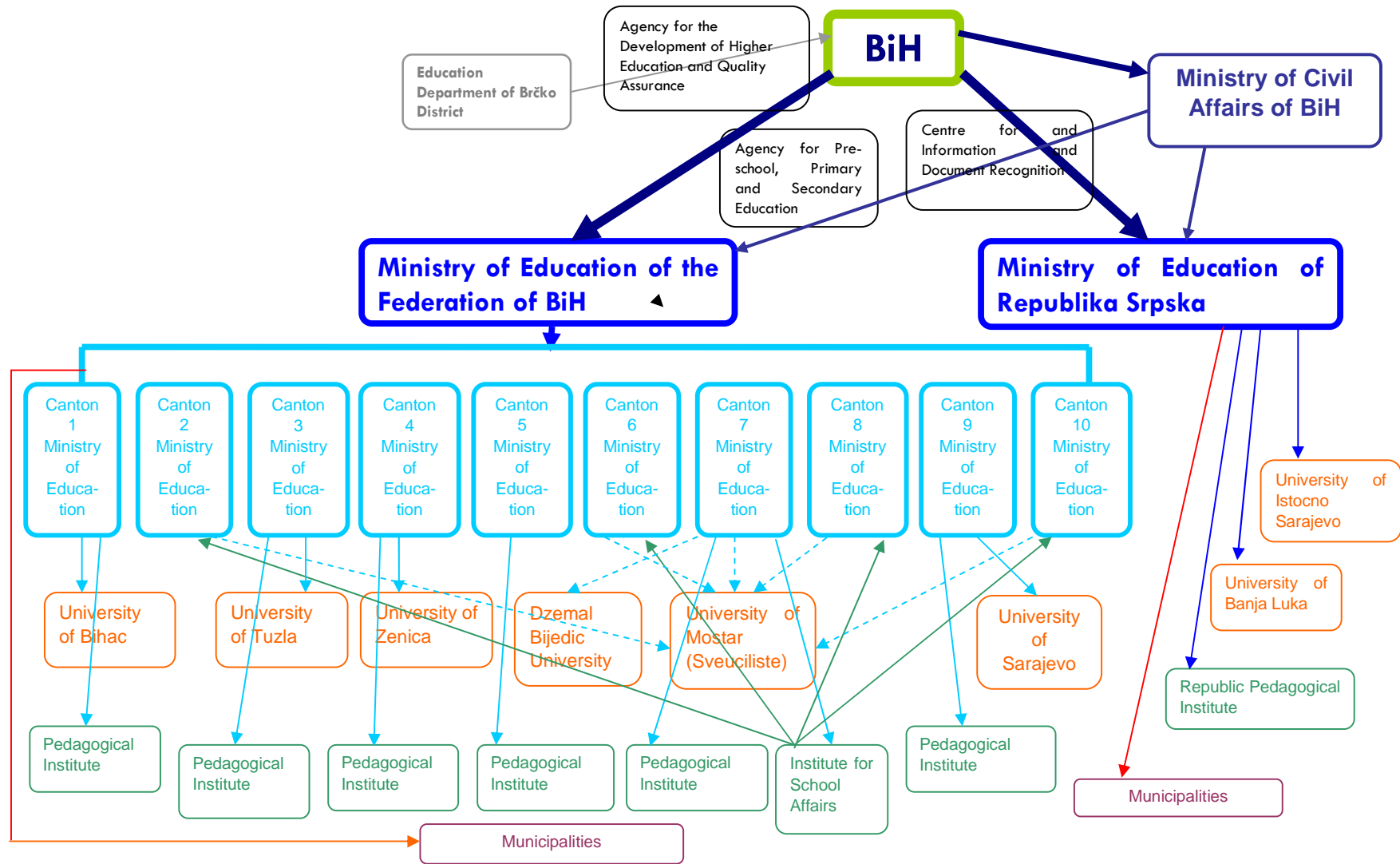### Quality assurance institutions:

- **Agency for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education**: Development of assessment standards; development of achievement standards; coordination of implementation, follow up and evaluation of common core curriculum content; reporting on education situation in the country; participation in international development projects; and research in education such as Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)

- **Pedagogical Institutes:** Development of teaching plans and programmes; professional training for teachers, assistants and managers of educational institutions; advisory services for educational development and improvement of educational process in schools; school support in implementation of educational standards and curriculum; assessment

organisation and performance in collaboration with the Agency and schools; research and development projects in education

- **Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance**: Establishing criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions and the adoption of minimum standards for the higher education area; imposition of recommendations on criteria and standards for the funding and closure of higher education institutions; management of the state register on accredited high school institutions; establishment of quality standards, quality analysis; determination of form and general content of diploma and diploma attachments

- **Centre for Information and Document Recognition**: Responsible for information and document recognition in the higher education area within the framework of the convention on the recognition of diplomas in higher education (the Lisbon Recognition Convention); also forms part of the European and international network of information centres (ENIC/NARIC)

Adaptation of a scheme provided by the courtesy of OSCE

ANNEX 3 | TABLE OF COMPETENCES FOR INCLUSION

	basic	advanced
Pesonalised approach to learning	Improves competencies 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 and so on
	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 of diversity (gender, socio-economic 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 her 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 educations' contribution to social inclusion
	Treats all children with respect, affirms their worth and dignity	
	Believes in 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	

Table developed on the basis of Tuning Teacher Education in the Western Balkans (Pantić, 2008) and European documents such as Common European Principles for Teachers' Competences and Qualifications (EC, 2005) and Improving Competences for the 21st Century (EC, 2008c).

ANNEX 4 | RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Research Design

The figure below reads horizontally to show how the theoretical assumptions adopted in the conceptual framework inform corresponding parts of the research design and methodologies.

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND (THEORIES, BELIEFS)		RESEARCH DESIGN AND INSTRUMENTS
Competence is an integrated set of knowledge, skills and dispositions (Assumption 1) Teaching professionals themselves should be the main source of information in the process of defining teacher competence (Assumption 2)		The table of competences for inclusion developed in Pantić (2008) and key European documents were used for focus groups with teachers working in diverse environments
Social inclusion should be mainstreamed in all policies for teachers (general pluralism) and balanced with a targeted approach for children from marginalised/vulnerable groups (Assumption 3) Dispositions are predominantly socio-culturally developed (Assumption 4)		The country team looked into: - policies and regulations - data from interviews with policy-makers, course designers, teacher educators, teachers, school principals, parents, community representatives and others
Programmes based on beliefs about knowledge being value-laden and constructed by the learner are more inclusion-friendly (Assumption 5)		Online survey of initial Teacher Education programmes including questions on course units, practical experiences, opportunities for reflection and dialogue, the beliefs of teacher educators
Teacher Education programme experiences building teacher competences for inclusion include: - focus on inclusion-relevant topics in courses - provision of practical experiences - opportunities for interaction with families - opportunities for critical reflection - opportunities for discussion and dialogue (Assumption 6)		Catalogues and other sources of information about in-service programmes
Cross-country similarities are important for policy making (similar heritage, prospective European integration and relevant policies and practices) (Assumption 7)		Collection of examples of best practices from the Western Balkans

Assumption 1: Competence is an integrated set of knowledge, skills and dispositions

The concept of competence is central to the three main questions addressed by this study:

- What teacher competences are needed for inclusive education in situations of social and cultural diversity?

- What is the current situation regarding the inputs, processes and outcomes of a) pre-service b) in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education?

- How can the situation regarding a) pre-service b) in-service teacher preparation for inclusive education be improved?

It is therefore necessary to outline the definition of competence as it is adopted in this study.

The concept of competence has gained popularity and credence in literature for teachers and teacher training on the international scale. Competence features in some key European documents for teachers (EC, 2005, 2008), some European projects on higher education curricula reform (Gonzales and Wagenaar, 2005) and recent studies in the Western Balkan region (Pantić, 2008; Rajović and Radulović, 2007; Zgaga, 2006).

Studies from the region invariably suggest that teacher training provides sound academic coverage of subjects and pedagogical knowledge on themes and issues, but that knowledge on how to identify and deal with problems in a real life setting is largely missing. Such expertise involves a combination of cognitive and practical knowledge and skills, but also values, motivation and attitudes - a combination widely referred to as 'competence' in the literature (Rajović and Radulović, 2007). It has been suggested that teacher education should be oriented toward the development of certain key competences that can help teachers perform effectively in their daily practice.

However, this competence-based model has been criticised for an overly narrow understanding of teacher expertise as the mere observable performance of daily teaching routines, downgrading the role of teacher to the simple technical implementation of policies and programmes. Critics argue that teaching is an ethical, normative profession that presupposes something of value is to be taught, whereupon they are bound to encounter problems that are not susceptible to resolution in value-neutral, technical terms (Carr, 1993). This is reflected in some of the most recent frameworks for competence (Tigelaar et al., 2004; Stoof et al., 2002) that adopt a view of competence that combines theoretical and practical knowledge and skills with attitudes and values.

This study adopts the broader view of competence as an integrated set of knowledge, skills, and dispositions. A number of authors claim there is a specific body of knowledge necessary for working with 'special' children, and that these competences for inclusion need to be adequately covered during teacher preparation. Such training may involve developing an understanding of the socio-cultural factors that produce individual differences, or specialist knowledge on disability and children's learning needs, awareness of educational and social issues that can affect children's learning, and the like.

Another distinct stance operates on the basis that inclusion is not only about 'special' children, and that therefore teacher competence for inclusive educational practices should include skills relevant to improved teaching and learning for all, whilst reducing barriers to learning and participation.

This sort of approach could involve a multifaceted pedagogy recognising that: decisions taken to inform teaching should be based on children's individual characteristics; learning takes place outside school; learning

must build on previous knowledge, individual and cultural experiences and interests (Florian and Rouse, 2009).

Teachers need to develop their dispositions alongside their knowledge and skills when considering competences for inclusion. Even the most comprehensive coverage of relevant themes is unlikely to anticipate every type of difficulty teachers might meet in their professional lives. Teachers undergoing preparation for inclusive education must be made to accept their responsibility to improve the learning and participation of all children, and be disposed to teach all learners equitably. Dispositions are tendencies for an individual to act in a particular manner under particular circumstances, based on their beliefs (Villegas, 2007). They involve teacher beliefs about the purposes of education, knowledge, learning and the educability of their students. The latter is of particular importance for inclusive education as this forms the basis of teacher expectations of their students. These expectations can lead them to treat students differently, resulting in positive or negative performance, aspirations and self-images dependent upon the original teacher assessments.

The definition of 'competence' as a combination of knowledge, skills and dispositions is reflected in the approach to both the definition of teacher competences and to the evaluation of existing policies and practices where all these aspects are featured.

Assumption 2: Changes in educational policies and practices fare better when they are congruent with teachers' beliefs about what is worthwhile in education

Growing research evidence states that the success of reforms introducing new practices such as inclusive education are critically dependent on their compatibility with teacher beliefs on the value of the change and transferability to daily teaching practices (Beijaard et al., 2000; Day, 2002; Day et al., 2007; Fives and Buehl, 2008; Wubbels 1995). Literature on change and innovation in education suggests that changes in education practices require careful consideration of the differences between the existing and desired models with a view to identifying consensual and/or competing forces in the change process. Changing systems are typically characterised by the coexistence of old and new 'states of affairs'. The emergent new state may have elements in common with the old one, and the wider apart the two states are initially, the more difficult the transition process will be (Anchan, Fullan and Polyzoi, 2003; Fullan 2007).

We must have a clear understanding of existing policies and practices of teacher preparation for inclusive education in the Western Balkan countries and of teachers' own perceptions of the competences they need and the help they require to develop these competences in order to identify the true extent of scope for improvement. An earlier study of teacher perceptions of competences conducted in the region (Pantić, 2008) reported that teachers attributed high importance to competences on equality and supporting the learning of all pupils. However, detailed study of examples of teacher preparation in the region showed current teacher preparation of does not adequately cater for those competences as it does not provide enough opportunities to connect theoretical knowledge with actual teaching experiences in real-life classrooms and does not address issues such as parental and community involvement that would build teacher capacity to deal with a number of out-of-school factors relevant for inclusion.

Hence, teaching professionals themselves are the best source of information on how inclusion-relevant competences translate into their daily practices and what kind of support they need to develop those competences. However, school principals, parents and communities, government representatives, teacher

educators and course designers, and relevant NGO and donor representatives must also be consulted regarding teacher competences for inclusion as these stakeholders can provide important insights into the context in which teachers operate.

Assumption 3:   A philosophy of pluralism prevails among inclusive and culturally aware teachers

Educational inclusion is a much researched topic involving a number of challenges encountered in the policy-making and implementation processes. Interpretations of the notion of inclusive education itself vary from narrower senses as 'the attempt to educate persons with intellectual disabilities by integrating them as closely as possible into the normal structures of the educational system' (Michailakis and Reich, 2009) to broader definitions as a 'guiding principle helping to accomplish quality Education for All (EFA) – education systems that benefit from diversity, aiming to build a more just, democratic society' (Acedo, 2008), or even as a process by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals by reconsidering and restructuring curricular organisation and provision and allocating resources to enhance equality of opportunity.

This process helps a school to expand its capacity to accept all pupils from the local community who wish to attend and, in so doing, reduces all form of exclusion and degradation of pupils on the grounds of disability, ethnicity, or any other issue that could render the school life of some children unnecessarily difficult (Sebba and Sachdev, 1997; Booth and Ainscow, 1998; Peček et al, 2006). In this broader sense, inclusion is a process to increase participation and decrease exclusion, where participation equates to recognition, acceptance and respect, inclusion in the learning process and social activities in a way that enables an individual to develop a sense of belonging to a group.

Similarly, in the literature on intercultural education, a variety of approaches range from 'culturalism', which places an emphasis on cultural differences and a need to accommodate any differences seen as typical of entire groups, to approaches known as 'pluralism' (ethnic or general) in which the emphasis is placed on diversity within groups (with or without explicit reference to ethnic relations), involving working on good relations within and between groups and their educational opportunities. The latter comes close to the 'equal opportunities approach', built on a vision of intercultural education where the emphasis is on pupils from ethnic minority groups and their educational opportunities. Intercultural education is seen as a means of combating the educational disadvantages of pupils from an ethnic minority background (Leeman and Ledoux, 2005).

In this study, we adopt the broader view of inclusive education as a process to reduce exclusion and contribute to the opportunities and skills for participation in society of all pupils, whilst adopting a balance between general pluralism and an equal opportunities approach to intercultural education.

The rationale for this choice is grounded on the arguments that such approaches reduce the emphasis on 'different' or 'additional' needs and any 'us and them' kind of antithesis, and imply the extension of what is 'generally available' in order to improve the learning and social participation in of all children. Extending what is 'generally available' reduces the need to provide support for what is 'different from' or 'additional to'. This approach is comparable to the architectural concept of 'universal design' where solutions are anticipated by improved access for everyone and the avoidance of physical and other environmental barriers in the first place (Florian and Rouse, 2009).

The next argument in favour of the pluralist approach, is that a philosophy of pluralism prevails amongst culturally aware teachers (Ford and Trotman, 2001). Culturally aware teachers attempt to understand the worldviews of diverse students and respect them as different and legitimate. Educational research, even where it traditionally focuses on effective instruction and academic success, as in the Netherlands or Finland, recognises that quality of education is partly determined by the individual pupils, the moment and the context, and recognises that the professionalisation of teachers should focus more on 'diversity' and reflection of how diversity occurs in teachers' educational practice and on their actions on the basis of this reflection (Leeman and Volman, 2000).

Finally, the selected approach has the advantage of exposing two of the issues common in educational exclusion in the Western Balkans. Firstly, it is very common for schools to use subtle and not so subtle forms of exclusion (from the lack of communication with families and lack of language and learning support to physical barriers) to emit strong messages that some students are not welcome (Roma, ethno-linguistic minorities, disabled children) to the point that these children and their parents will seek segregation or avoid school altogether rather than experience rejection, humiliation or 'failure' in their local school.

Secondly, a pernicious notion of the school 'need to exclude' is exposed in some cases. This is phrased in terms of systemic factors that appear to place inclusion beyond the apparent benevolent human capacity of school staff to be more inclusive. Such exclusion is often voiced in regretful statements, such as "We would love to have more Roma children here but they come to us so late and are so behind in everything that they cannot pass the tests to progress up the school."

These systemic factors very often cover deeply held prejudices or profound ignorance of what can actually be done to include more diverse children, and these negative views often prevail over what is intended to be pro-inclusion legislation.

Assumption 4: Dispositions are predominantly socio-culturally developed

Socio-cultural theory offers a productive way of thinking about the development of teacher dispositions for inclusive education (Huizen et al, 2005; Lasky, 2005; Korthagen, 2004; Wubbels, 1992). In the Vygotskian tradition, the functioning and development of human individuals is studied in the context of participation in socio-cultural practices, of which teacher education is but one example. Individuals also learn and change through contact with other people in various contexts where people participate in activities. Such participation pre-supposes the 'moving inward' of social functions to be appropriated as psychological functions (Vygotsky, 1988-1999). In order to do this, individuals (teachers in this case) need an environment modelling an ideal standard and supporting conditions for a successful approximation of this standard – the zone of proximal development. They also need opportunities to explore public and social meanings behind the standard in relation to what makes participation personally meaningful to them.

Vygotskian and neo-Vygotskian theories on teacher preparation are important in consideration of the opportunities for the development of inclusive dispositions provided by existing policies and practices in pre-service and in-service teacher preparation. Teacher preparation needs to help teachers orientate themselves towards the values and goals provided in the cultural and political setting of the schooling in which they engage. Other influential theories, such as Kolb's theory of experiential learning (Kolb and Fry, 1975) and Schön's notion of the reflective practitioner (1983) suggest that the learning processes of the professional are

associated with making sense of concrete experiences. Professionals do not just apply theories. They learn by doing and engaging in on-the-spot problem-framing and experimentation followed by reflection. Student teachers need opportunities to exercise their judgment in practice.

Moreover, some of the most influential authors in the literature on teaching professionals argue that the role of the professional extends beyond reflection on their own practice into the wider societal context in which they find themselves (Zeichner and Liston, 1987). This will be taken into account when considering the context and mechanisms for supporting and motivating teachers to adopt inclusive dispositions, both during pre-service preparation and in-service practices.

Assumption 5:   Programmes based on beliefs about knowledge being value-laden and constructed by the learner are more inclusion-friendly

A comparative study of teacher education programmes (Tatto,1999) identified two types of approaches underlying the design of teacher preparation programmes characterised as 'constructivist' and 'conventional'.

Constructivist approaches seem to:

- look at teaching as a vehicle towards a more equal and just society

- encourage student-teachers to see themselves and their pupils as makers of meaning

- provide opportunities for learning through discussion, reflection on and challenges to traditional conceptions of the teacher role, learner role, subject matter and pedagogy

- allow learning to teach to occur in context.

On the other hand, conventional approaches seem to:

- be driven by technical views of teaching and learning to teach

- show a tendency to see pupils as fixed entities or uncritical recipients of knowledge

- aim at helping teachers to fit into pre-existing school structures

- divorce teaching knowledge about subject matter and pedagogy from practice.

The study showed that in constructivist programmes, where teachers were seen as professional individuals capable of making informed instructional choices, teachers had more opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills to adjust instruction to the diverse needs of learners.

This finding is relevant in the consideration of existing programmes of pre-service preparation of teachers. The above characteristics of programmes were included in the items of a survey designed to explore the provision of, and assumptions underlying, teacher education programme designs and teacher educator beliefs about the nature of knowledge.

Assumption 6: The programme experiences that help student teachers develop culturally responsive dispositions include five dimensions

A qualitative study (Kidd et al, 2008) of student teacher accounts of the experiences within teacher education programmes that helped them develop competences for inclusion, showed the importance of the following teacher education components:

- focus on issues of culture, linguistic diversity, poverty and social justice in special course units

- provision of practical experiences in diverse classrooms

- interactions with diverse families

- opportunities for critical reflection

- opportunities for discussion and dialogue

The survey within this study on behalf of ETF explored the presence of the above elements in existing pre-service teacher preparation. In the future, the survey findings will be used to consider how these key components can be enhanced to support teachers in developing the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively increase the learning of all pupils, and to provide experiences that enable student teachers to examine issues relevant to social inclusion and understand how their own values, beliefs and teaching practices are shaped by their cultural backgrounds and prior experiences.

Assumption 7: Comparison of historically, culturally and politically similar countries can generate a knowledge base for evidence-based policy making

The knowledge base for policy making should be sought through cross-national studies with the aim of establishing meta-national commonalities in teacher competences for inclusive education in this region. Comparative research in education advocates cross-national research as valuable and even indispensable in establishing the generality of findings and the validity of interpretations derived from single-nation studies (Broadfoot, 1990; Kohn, 1989). Where similarities in cross-national studies are found, 'structural constants' or 'identities in social structures' should be identified that enable generalisation at the policy level. Given the similarity of issues addressed in this study across the countries involved, the findings can inform efforts to improve pre-service and in-service teacher education policies and practices in the Western Balkan region.

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