



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

FOSTERING PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE THROUGH ANALYSIS AND REVISION OF HISTORY CURRICULA AND TEXTBOOKS IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE

Preliminary Stocktaking Report
2006



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Acronyms and abbreviations

- CDRSEE:** Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in South East Europe, Thessaloniki
CoE: Council of Europe
CSBSC: Center for the Study of Balkan Societies and Cultures
EDC: Education for Democratic Citizenship
EUROCLIO: European Standing Conference of History Teachers' Associations
GEI: Georg Eckert Institute
GNP: Gross National Product
IBE: International Bureau of Education
NSF: National Salvation Front
OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHR: Office of the High Representative for the United Nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina
OSCE: Office for Security and Cooperation in Europe
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF: The United Nations Children's Fund
UNMIK: United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

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1. Introduction

In the years following the signing of the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords, which brought the 43-month war in Bosnia to an end, the countries of Southeast Europe affected by the conflict and by the previous period of political, social and economic instability have embarked on a difficult but in most cases steady path toward the construction of stable and democratic societies. Other countries in the region, even though not directly involved in the recent conflict or the political upheavals accompanying the breakup of the Soviet Union, have mutual interests and share common concerns.

The ambitions of several Southeast European countries¹ to fulfill the conditions of European Union membership – which is to say, stable democracies which guarantee the rule of law, human rights and the protection of minorities – also serves as a significant catalyst for transformation. Based on the precedent that education systems play an essential role in the construction of such societies, special emphasis has been placed on promoting education for peace, human rights and democratic citizenship.

In particular, deep reforms in the history teaching curricula and the content and design of history textbooks are seen as key elements in the long-term process of enabling the culturally and linguistically diverse peoples of Southeast Europe establish and sustain a lasting peace based on understanding and respect for each others' past and present identities. Together with the introduction of innovative approaches to education in general and the support of advances in methodology and new technologies, these reforms have enhanced the process of political and social transformation.

The Study

Within the framework of the cooperation between UNESCO and its Southeast European Member States, the Education Sector initiated the current project as the first step of a longer term effort to respond to regional and national priorities in history teaching. The purpose of this preliminary study is to take stock of activities in history curricula and textbook reform which have been undertaken since the end of major hostilities, with the ultimate aim of identifying the needs and priorities of participating countries.

To accomplish this aim, the study reviews policies and processes for developing history curricula and producing history textbooks in ten participating countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Romania, Montenegro², Serbia, Slovenia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). The resulting report has been compiled for the dual purpose of (1) presenting a composite picture of the educational policies and practices in these countries with regard to history teaching and textbook production, distribution and use; (2) laying the groundwork for the development of national and/or sub-regional initiatives aimed at improving the processes currently in place.

¹ Greece has been a member of the European Union since 1981. Slovenia officially joined in 2004; Bulgaria and Romania are on track to become members in 2007; Entry negotiations, which can take ten years or longer, began with Croatia and Turkey in 2005.

² As Montenegro declared its independence from the former union of Serbia and Montenegro on June 3, 2006 (based on the results of a referendum held on May 21), a separate section of this report was created based on data collected during the course of the study.

From this first phase of stocktaking, a set of general recommendations for revising history teaching materials in the for the purpose of promoting peaceful co-existence through mutual understanding, dialogue, openness of thinking, awareness of the human cost of war, and acceptance of the free flow of information and ideas are proposed.

An Underlying Assumption

History teaching plays an important role in the development of identity. In Southeast Europe, as elsewhere, history education has commonly been used as a tool for promoting nationalistic ideologies. However, it has also gained recognition as having a key role in the process of reconciliation, democratization and long-term stability.

Underlying this is the assumption that history is first of all oral; a narrative of events constructed by adults, young people, and even small children to transmit their experiences and share their understanding of others and of the world. In societies recovering from violent inter-ethnic conflict and especially among those who have experienced personal loss, memory is an especially potent reminder of life-changing events. Physical and psychological damage are still present as painful reminders of the recent past and anger against the perpetrators can be repressed instead of resolved.

Throughout the history of Southeast Europe, group identities, as defined by language, culture, place, livelihood, religion and other binding factors have been preserved through strong oral histories and literary works. A decade after the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords³, it is important to evoke the role of memory in constructing and maintaining values, traditions and culture, all of which define the existence of a people or combination of peoples in the form of multi-ethnic, multi-lingual nation states.

In its formal dimension, writing history is also a process of constructing a narrative based on collective memory through which a social group perpetuates its self-image, and in so doing constantly re-invents and asserts itself. School history textbooks, whether produced by a government or by private publishers, and whether approved by national or local authorities, are official versions of that memory as interpreted through the lenses of current events and future aspirations.

Sources and Methodology

For the preliminary phase of the stocktaking project, information on teaching history in Southeast Europe was gathered from a wide range of publications in English and French. The basic source list was comprised of individual or collective reports and surveys made by internationally known organizations.

³ Agreement on a comprehensive settlement was reached on 21 November, 1995 in Dayton, Ohio.

In addition, a number of written communications and personal interviews with historians, teachers, principals of schools, and researchers were also conducted, mainly via email and telephone. These will form the basis of a deeper and more comprehensive method of data collection during the anticipated second stage of the stocktaking⁴.

Limitations

History curricula and textbooks in the ten countries surveyed⁵ are, of course, written in the language(s) of instructions of those countries. Due to time constraints and the lack of resources that would be needed to read source documents in all languages, the decision was taken to first review the available sources existing in English and French. The research undertaken for a report normally predates its publication by at least a year; therefore, in order to gather more recent data in a rapidly changing area, a data collection tool was designed to gather as much information via email, fax and mail as possible. Responses were received from each of the ten countries (twenty-nine out of thirty-four individuals contacted), with additional information gathered from follow-up communications and interviews.

While much valuable and detailed current information on history curricula and textbooks was gathered as a result of these methods, the picture is far from complete. In order to embark on meaningful interventions for the purpose of changing these processes in a comprehensive way, it is essential that a more thorough and penetrating study be undertaken in participating countries. It is anticipated that such a study would build upon the collection and analysis of information in this report to undertake an in-depth review and assessment of the curricula and materials currently in use, involving a network of country-based researchers engaged in reciprocal analysis projects using a common methodological framework.

Presentation of information from respondents

While the same questions were asked of each respondent, the information received was quite varied in the amount of detail provided. Under the decided reporting mechanism, all responses (including the compiled list in Annex I) are identified by country⁶ Further, the number of responses returned from each country varied between one and four. Therefore, there is considerable inconsistency in the amount of information reported on each theme. In instances where the information provided by respondents has been paraphrased, this is noted. In others, where the exact words of respondents are used, the text is italicized. In cases where more than one response is reported, the separate quotations are noted (i.ii.iii...)

⁴ The second phase is foreseen as a significantly more in-depth study involving researchers, curriculum planners, historians and textbook publishers in joint activities in at least three selected countries.

⁵ Due to the limited time frame and the complexity of the information requested, the preliminary survey did not include all of the countries of Southeast Europe. A decision was made, pending additional time and resources, to undertake a separate study of history teaching curricula and textbooks in Moldova, Cyprus and Turkey.

⁶ Names of individual respondents have been kept confidential, and with the exception of official sources, are referred to in the report as “the first respondent,” “another respondent”, etc.

2. General Background

2.1. History teaching and textbook revision in 20th Century Europe

It has been well documented that the methods and materials used to teach history in schools throughout Europe during the early part of the 20th century did little to promote international understanding. They were, in fact, a major source of the deep divisions among peoples and nations that periodically erupted in the form of inter-ethnic violence, deliberate genocide and two world wars. The role of history education in these conflicts was recognized as early as the 1920s and 1930s, when a series of initiatives involving reciprocal analysis of textbooks were undertaken under the auspices of the League of Nations.

In 1921, the European Committee of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace debated the content of textbooks used by countries involved in the First World War. The purpose of the discussion and resulting study was to detect the spirit in which textbooks were written and to note how international conciliation and the bringing together of peoples were treated in history, geography, morals and civic education textbooks and reading materials (Grossi, 2000, p. 433).

In 1932, an international conference was also held in The Hague (Netherlands) on history teaching. The aim of the conference was “to provoke a discussion on the idea of bringing together better understanding between (IBE, 1996, p. 22).

In 1946, the first session of the General Conference of UNESCO adopted a nine-point resolution inviting Member States to improve textbooks for international understanding. Particular emphasis was placed on history teaching and civic education.

Since then, there have been many conferences, workshops and reports on textbooks and teaching materials in general and on history curricula and history textbooks in particular. With the founding of the European Union and the increasing pace of globalization, the international dimension of education has become even more important in school curricula, with special attention to the revision of history and geography textbooks.

2.2. A Contemporary Southeast European Perspective

While it is not the purpose of this report to present a comprehensive overview of the recent history of Southeast Europe, certain facts and events are important to keep in mind as background to the formation of new nations following the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1989. These facts will be given with particular reference to the countries which were formerly part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and FYR Macedonia, all of which contributed to the study, and which will be the central focus.

Because the history of the entire region is one of the movement of peoples; that is, the assertion of cultural and linguistic identities in the wake of the creation and recreation of national borders; the present situation of history teaching in the former Yugoslav republics is presented alongside that of their neighbors.

7 Following the earlier work of the committee set up in 1913 leading to the publication of the controversial *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Cause and Conduct of the Balkan Wars*.

8 For an annotated list of UNESCO's work in this area, see *A Strategy for Textbooks and Learning Materials*, pp. 31-39.

The Breakup of Yugoslavia and Formation of the New Republics

Under the rule of President Josip Broz Tito, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia consisted of six republics (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia), and two autonomous provinces (within Serbia). Within this system, each republic had a different ethnic, linguistic and religious composition, as follows:

- ♦ Slovenia: Slovenes
- ♦ Croatia: Croats, Serbs
- ♦ Bosnia and Herzegovina: Serbs, Croats
- ♦ Serbia: Serbs
 - Vojvodina*: Serbs and Croats, Hungarians, Romanians, Slovaks, Ruthenians
 - Kosovo and Metohija*: Albanians, Serbs
- ♦ Montenegro: Montenegrins
- ♦ Macedonia: Macedonians

The death of President Tito in 1980 gave rise to a period of increasing ethnic tension and political upheaval, exacerbated by a rapidly deteriorating economy. These factors helped create the conditions for the series of violent conflicts which broke out in 1990, resulting ultimately in over 200,000 deaths, destruction on a massive scale, and the uprooting of large numbers of people.



By 1991, three of the republics (Slovenia, Croatia, and FYR Macedonia) had become independent nations. As the situation calmed down in these three states, the war in Bosnia flared up at the beginning of 1992 with the declaration of an independent state by Bosnian Serbs. This left the republics of Serbia and Montenegro the only ones who had not seceded from Yugoslavia. After the infamous Srebrenica massacre in July 1995, relative calm came with the Dayton Agreement in November 1995, which fixed the borders between the principal entities.

Beginning in 1996, hostilities between Yugoslav security forces and ethnic Albanian separatist fighters in Kosovo escalated, resulting finally in the NATO bombing campaign (March 24-June 10, 1999) which led to an indefinite period of NATO administration of Kosovo as an autonomous province.

In 2000, the European Union persuaded Serbia and Montenegro to form one Federal Republic and to collaborate in diverse areas such as security. The constitution of the two entities adopted on February 4, 2003 specifies that after three years, each part will have the opportunity to vote for their independence. Since then, Kosovo has been a protectorate under international peacekeeping troops. As of June 21, 2001, Montenegro has become an independent state (the Republic of Montenegro) and, as of this writing, Kosovo is preparing to enter negotiations to declare independence from Serbia.

The six countries replacing the former Yugoslavia, as well as the other newly independent nations of Southeast Europe, have created their own national emblems and anthems. Existing countries “like Romania, changed all national symbols – flag, national anthem, national emblem, national holidays.” (Koulouri, 2002, p. 27). For those countries, changing these things was a way to show their identity, moving from dictatorship to democracy. It was also a way of improving their self-esteem in the eyes of neighboring countries and the international community.

Within the current borders of each of these countries (except for Slovenia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), the ethnic composition of the population has changed significantly as a result of wars of the last decade. In the formation of Education systems and the rewriting of history in official textbooks of each country and/or autonomous area, issues of language, identity and image of the “other” remain sensitive and extremely political.

Not surprisingly, most of former Yugoslavia’s ethnic groups now mingle within the boundaries of almost all the newly formed countries. For example, outside of Serbia, there is a significant community of Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina (48% of BiH’s population). Others live in Croatia (4.5% of Croatia’s population), Slovenia (2% of Slovenia’s population) and FYR of Macedonia (1.8% of the FYRM population). Outside Croatia, significant numbers of Croats live in BiH (14.3% of the BiH population), and a small community also live in Slovenia (1.8% of the Slovenian population). Albanians constitute sizable minority populations living in the countries of the former Yugoslavia. Especially in FYROM and Serbia.

In other Balkan countries, there were large migrations of people, mainly to neighboring countries. For example, in Bulgaria, there is a significant community of Turks (9.4% of the Bulgarian population). In Romania, Hungarians constitute a large part of the population. Grouped by religion, Muslims and Orthodox Catholics are the main religious groups in the Balkans. They are living in almost all of the ten countries taking part in this survey.

Over the last fifteen years, much of Southeast Europe has undergone a radical transformation from political and economic life under the Soviet system to more open, democratic societies. Political changes have influenced all sectors of development, including education.

Several specific factors impact on the long process of reconciliation. They include: (1) the existence of hostile acts and feelings based on painful memories of recent conflict; (2) the continuation of resentment based on discrimination, misunderstanding, and economic disparity; (3) education in general and (4) history teaching in particular. With respect to the last two points, the fact that the recasting of political systems occurred during a period of extreme violence based on ethnic, religious and linguistic differences has had (and continues to have) an impact on how history is taught and textbooks are developed.

With this in mind, the report presents a series of current snapshots or “freeze frame” images of what we can assume will continue to be a process of rapid change. An overview of research and multilateral projects undertaken by international organizations and others in support of history teaching and textbook reform in Southeast Europe will conclude the study, together with a summary of common problems and concerns identified by academics, teachers and administrators in the region.

2.3. Common Features of History Teaching in Southeast Europe

For the majority of countries outlined in this report, history textbooks have generally “denied any common history apart from a common political history” and “produced a kind of cleaned up version of history” (Karge, 1999, p. 3) to help support the positive national image desired by the country’s leadership .

Since the end of major hostilities, a number of energetic and productive initiatives (see Section 5) have been undertaken by international organizations and NGOs to work with educators and policy makers. They seek to include the concept of a shared, regional history within the general approach to history teaching. Such initiatives have been very effective in terms of allowing historians and history educators to re-conceptualize their roles in creating a regional identity. However, most countries have been slow at the policy level to undertake comprehensive curriculum reform that would fully endorse the approach in the development of textbooks and teachers’ guides. According to Koulouri (2002), “Balkan textbooks on history (as well as geography books and literature) still contain ethnocentric accounts of the collective past and occasionally regress to nationalistic expressions and negative stereotypes about the neighboring people” (p. 32). In some countries, history textbooks often portray “the other” as enemies rather than friends; that is, not as fellow-citizens with common values and culture, but rather as foreigners living in the country and taking advantage of its opportunities and relative wealth.

From the point of view of teachers and teacher educators, another common problem is what they consider to be the poor quality⁹ of the history textbooks and lack of stimulating, interesting supplementary materials (including maps, audio-visual aids and Web-based resources). They also have limited methods to actively engage learners in discussions based on their own experiences and perceptions.

⁹ For example, the density of the texts, lack of illustrations, and absence of engaging classroom based activities or projects are among the problems noted by teachers.

3. Country Profiles: States Emerging from the Former Yugoslavia

3.1. Bosnia and Herzegovina

Borders: Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro,
Adriatic Sea (narrow corridor, 20 km coastline)
Area: 51,129 sq km
Capital: Sarajevo
Population (2006 est) 4,498,976
Ethnic Groups: Bosniak (48%), Serb (37.1%),
Croat (14.3%), other (0.6%)
Languages: Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian
Religions: Muslim (40%), Orthodox Christian (31%),
Roman Catholic (15%), other (14%)



3.1.1. Background

Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence from the former Yugoslavia in March 1991 and in 1992 formed a new government with Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks) occupying the leading positions. Most Serbs and Croats vowed that they would not live under a government dominated by Bosniaks and boycotted the referendum. On April 6th 1992, the Serbs rebelled with support from the Republic of Serbia and thereby began the vicious civil war which lasted three and a half years, causing 250,000-300,000 deaths (many of them civilian) and creating over two million refugees and displaced people. The Dayton Peace Accords, signed 43 months later, retained Bosnia and Herzegovina's international boundaries and created a joint multi-ethnic and democratic government. The Accords also recognized two regional entities roughly equal in size: the Bosniak/Croat Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosnian Serb-led Republika Srpska (RS).

3.1.2. Education System

Immediately following the first multi-party elections in 1990, the Education authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina were keen to align the primary education system more closely with contemporary, progressive trends in Western Europe. The principal objective was for the system to contribute towards the creation of a new society and thereby to build Bosnia-Herzegovina as a modern European country. At the time, this was interpreted to mean acceptance of a common lifestyle and the development of creative and critical abilities of the young generation. It also meant teaching such values as individualism, tolerance, co-existence and respect for the right to be different. In February 1992, the education authorities published a document entitled: "Long-term Program of Development of Primary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1991 until 2010" which laid out the plans for this idealistic vision. However, the war intervened before any of the changes could be introduced.

From 1992 to 1995, during the period of heaviest fighting, many schools were demolished, students and teachers were killed, and virtually all school materials were destroyed or stolen. In an effort to keep the schools open, schedules were greatly reduced (up to 50%) compared to the peacetime allocation of hours and scope of content. Class hours were shortened, so that each period lasted only 30 to 35 minutes. In respect of the number of working weeks, the school term varied, depending on the intensity of war activities: for example, classes lasted for 20 to 25 weeks in 1992/92 and 30 to 32 weeks in 1994/95. At the beginning of 1994, more systematic measures began to be implemented with the aim of rebuilding a coherent Education system. Changes of curricula were carried out, and the military facilitated the printing and distribution of textbooks for primary and secondary education in some areas.

As previously noted, the Dayton Agreement of 14 December 1995 recognized the Federation of BiH and the Republika Srpska as two regional entities within one state. Republika Srpska has a central administration, but in the BiH Federation, there are ten cantons (small administrative country divisions), five of which have a majority of Bosniaks, three a majority of Croats and two of which are mixed. Concerning education, the Treaty took the option of decentralizing the system. Due to the consequences of the war and divisions among communities, the school system became entirely under regional administration and each community adopted its own curricula. Schools in Republika Srpska use textbooks from Serbia; Croatian areas prefer curriculum and textbooks from the Republic of Croatia. In Bosniak areas, a new curriculum was adopted in 1994 before the end of the war and textbooks were elaborated immediately thereafter.

For each political entity, the duration of primary school is eight years divided in two parts. The first four years have one single teacher who teaches all subjects. During the second four-year term, subjects are taught by different teachers. History teaching is a compulsory subject in primary schools beginning in 4th or 5th grade, generally with two hours per week devoted to national, regional and world history.

Secondary school, which serves the 15 to 19 year age group, is divided into upper secondary school¹⁰ or vocational school. In both primary and secondary school, the language of education is the language of the area; Serbian for the Republika Srpska, Croat for the Croatian area and Bosnian for the Bosnian area. However, as one respondent put it, *“there is little difference among the three major languages (98% of the words are the same!)*. In the area where an ethnic group is minority, children belonging to that group attend private schools; for example Catholic students in Sarajevo prefer to attend Catholic schools than go to Muslim Bosnian (Bosniak) schools. As with the second term of primary school, subjects are taught by different teachers. History teaching is a compulsory subject at secondary school and during the first one or two grades at vocational schools.

A comprehensive report was published in 1999 on the various curricula in use throughout the country (“The curricula of the national subjects in Bosnia and Herzegovina” by Lenhart,

¹⁰ When discussing secondary school, we will use “lower” or “upper” secondary school instead of college, gymnasium or lyceum, because those terms do not have the same meaning in different countries.

Kesidou and Stockmann, 1999). It provides a useful framework for analyzing human and social sciences curricula which were in place before 1998. The authors analyzed the adequacy of curricula by grouping units into four categories: (i) desirable, (ii) tolerable, (iii) non acceptable, (iv) neutral.

These four categories are described in the report as follows (p. 13):

(i) desirable: objectives and content promote civil rights for all citizens, democratic awareness, rule of law, civil society, peace building, multi-ethnic/multicultural cooperative living, openness towards Europe and an International Community dimension.

(ii) tolerable: objectives and content express a peaceful ethnocentrism that promotes ethnic or national pride without offending other ethnic groups.

(iii) not acceptable: objectives and content do not prevent the violation of human rights, are in favor of withholding of civil rights from people, approve of ethnic cleansing and a destruction of the overall framework of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and/or are openly or latently aggressive, offensive, or discriminating against members of other ethnic groups.

(iv) neutral: objectives and content have no politically socialising intentions or do have politically socialising intentions but can not be classified as “desirable”, “tolerable” or “non acceptable”.

In Bosnian areas, history teaching started at grade 5 in primary school. Allocated time was one hour per week in primary school and two hours per week in secondary school. From grades 5 to 8 in primary school and from grades 1 to 4 in secondary school, the curricula showed neutral and tolerable components. The units which took into consideration other nationalities within Bosnia and Herzegovina were desirable. Some objectives and content were non acceptable because they emphasised “active military training of school students and ... a view of history in which Muslim Bosnians are mainly seen as victims of aggression, genocide (and) ethnic cleansing in past and present” (p. 27). Those curricula implied that other ethnic groups of the country were aggressors and perpetrators, serving to divide students rather than opening the way for a reconciliation process.

In general, the curriculum was characterised as “closed” because it offered a very limited variety of methods, media and teaching activities, and contained no evaluation or testing methods. The curriculum was also noted to be “linear” and did not show any “horizontal elements” (p. 68). The authors recommended “to reduce content overload, [to provide] hints on teaching methods, and [to include] elements of curriculum organisation such as more openness, horizontal linkages and spiral elements.” (p. 70).

In Croat areas, the 1997/1998 history curricula in primary school was based on the curriculum of the Republic of Croatia. History teaching started at grade 5 in primary school and the curricula was identical between primary and secondary school. From grade 5 to 8 in primary school, and from grade 1 to 4 in secondary school, most of the units in Croatian history curricula were neutral.

The curricula contained 60% Croatian history and 40% world history. The history of Bosnia and Herzegovina was presented as a part of Croatian history in historical periods when Bosnia and Herzegovina was under Croatian rule. According to the authors, the Croatian curricula “neglects the history of BiH and its non - Croatian population” (p. 30), especially in secondary school. The curriculum was “linear” and “the time allocation and the overall practicability of the curriculum (were)... poor” (p. 74). In the 1997/1998 secondary school curricula, the syllabus was also considered poor. “There were no aims, objectives or operative tasks. There was no information about textbooks, teaching activities, selection of media or evaluation and testing methods. The curriculum had no horizontal elements and it was linear” (p. 74). Efforts were needed for the curricula to take into consideration other ethnic groups.

In Republika Srpska, during 1997/1998, history teaching in primary schools was based on the curriculum of Serbia, and therefore reflective of the history of the Serbian people or the region of Yugoslavia. History teaching started at grade 5 in primary school. In both primary and secondary school, the main aim was to teach about a “history society”. It did not promote a national angle but instead an international perspective. In primary school, one task was tolerable, one partially desirable and one to be partially rejected. Others were neutral. In secondary school, the majority of units were neutral, while one unit was desirable, one was tolerable, and another was tolerable but leaning towards being non acceptable. In general, history curricula emphasised the development of patriotism and national pride. Even though it is not official, the RS is seen as an entity in BiH and as described as one of the “Serbian countries” within the “Serbian geographical area” (p. 64).

According to the authors, “the content matter is presented in a systematic and standard way but the curriculum is undoubtedly overloaded, especially in the last two grades of primary school” (p. 81). It seems that the students received too much information for their age, the level of achievement demanded of them was too high, and inevitably it was not helpful for their learning. The other criticism for the primary school curricula was that when the curricula referred to the history of the world, it was limited to European history. In both primary and secondary school, the curriculum followed a chronological (linear) order and there was a lack of a thematic approach.

During the same years that the current review was underway, a major textbook revision process was launched for the purpose of promoting mutual understanding and reconciliation among different social groups. Respondents to the present survey stated that this and other reforms coordinated by international organizations have had positive effects. For example, *“more modern approaches are present now because of the work done by international organizations, which means that the teachers are not focused only on the history of their own nation, but on regional and European dimensions.”*

Textbooks, which tend to be written by anonymous authors or commissions, are approved by the ministries of regional entities before printing, and are widely available at a ratio of one textbook per student. Textbooks are also reviewed editorially by the education department of the Office for Security and Cooperation in Europe, supported by the Office of the High Representative (OHR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In May 1998, the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska signed an agreement on textbook review and the removal of offensive material. All textbooks used

in national primary and secondary public school systems were reviewed, with the exception of textbooks for math, science and technical/vocational courses. After the revision, the two parties signed an agreement where they agreed to remove objectionable material from textbooks to be used during the 1999-2000 school year. The Mostar Agreement, as it became known, was signed by the two parties in August 1999.

On 10 May 2000 in Sarajevo, the Federal Minister of Education, the Deputy Minister of Education and the Minister of Education of the Republika Srpska signed a declaration on their “commitment to the fundamental reform of the existing parallel education systems of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a matter of high priority, as requested by the Council of Europe within the process of accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as by the International Community as a whole.”¹¹

3.1.3. History Curricula and Textbooks

History teaching generally begins in the 5th or 6th grade of primary school. The complications and variations of history teaching at the secondary level is reflected in the following response:

Technical schools, medical schools and all others except gymnasiums have history classes only in the first and second year (some of them only in one year) at two hours per week. For gymnasiums in the first and second year- two hours; in third and fourth years- three hours (only for the general branch of gymnasiums, and that is only in the Canton of Sarajevo- because of cantonal curricula) while the other cities in FBiH, except the Croatian majority municipalities are using federal curricula- two hours per week per every year of gymnasium.

As with textbooks in other subjects, the production of history textbooks is coordinated by the Ministry of each regional entity, but other institutions and international organizations may also be involved (for example, the OSCE and OHR). In some areas, authors are anonymous, and commissions and/or international organizations may have editorial control, with the ministries responsible for final approval. As for new editions,

Ministries decide when new editions will be elaborated, sometimes in cooperation with international organizations (or even under their pressure!). The Office of the High Representative of the United Nations (OHR) is the highest authority for almost everything in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Teachers are free to choose from among the approved textbooks, and books are distributed through book stores. Access to them is problematic only in some rural areas. However, as parents often purchase textbooks, lack of adequate income can also be a real obstacle in all areas.

¹¹ Meeting of the Conference of Ministers of Education of Bosnia and Herzegovina, i. e. the Federal Minister, the Deputy Federal Minister of Education and the Minister of Education of the Republika Srpska, on 10 May 2000 at the Office of the High Representative, Sarajevo co-chaired by Ambassador Dr. Matei Hoffmann, Senior Deputy High Representative, and Mr Gabriele Mazza, Council of Europe, and in the presence of representatives of UNESCO and other international partner organizations. An agreement was reached on the modalities and time frame of a far-reaching harmonization of the present segregated, parallel Education systems. Full text of the agreement can be viewed at http://www.ffzg.hr/seetn/states/bih/textbook_revision_process.htm

History textbooks are published separately in the official language of each regional entity, and each has different approaches, processes and content guidelines. Under the decentralized system, it is not possible to attribute commonly recognized indicators of quality; in response to the question, “Are textbooks of equal quality available in all languages of instruction?” one respondent replied:

How to define equal quality? Technically -- all textbooks are pretty much on the same level, but the textbooks are still different (depending on entity, region, nation and language). It is hard to judge which has greater quality.

Another response indicates the continuing rift among the entities in their approaches to teaching ethnic and national history.

No, since the Croatian and Serb population with their representatives prefer textbooks from Croatia and Serbia which are not relevant to the facts about the thousand-year history of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These textbooks reflect the history of BiH.

On the other hand, respondents indicated that in general there is now more of a balance between ethnic, national, regional and world history, and – *more and more in the last five years* – multiple interpretations of past events are included in the textbooks and materials. *Priority is given to multiperspectivity, cultural and scientific progress, humanity etc.* Further, for primary and secondary schools, *in both cases there are strictly regulated rules that problematic issues must not be included in the textbooks. Minorities are not presented in a negative way. Of course, this is a result of work done by the international community during the last decade.*

Additional comments on history textbooks indicate that they are frequently updated and effort has been made to focus more on social and cultural history — *Well, on the cover of the books you will probably see some cultural achievement and not a military leader.* It is also noted that in some cantons and schools, teachers have the option of using alternative textbooks and additional teaching materials.

As previously mentioned, much of the reform in curricula and textbooks has been the result of focused efforts by the international community. UNESCO has been involved in a range of activities supporting curriculum reform; most notably, a capacity building project managed and implemented by the International Bureau of Education (IBE)¹². UNICEF has also been active in Bosnia and Herzegovina by introducing interactive teaching methods and the creation of “child-friendly” schools. Meanwhile the Council of Europe has played a leading role in the introduction of new methodologies and approaches to teaching. Its activities include encouraging the teaching of regional history from multiple perspectives, shifting class

12 A capacity building program for curriculum developers in Bosnia and Herzegovina was launched in 2003, under the auspices of UNESCO, with the professional assistance of IBE-UNESCO and the financial support of the Government of Japan through its Funds-in-Trust held by UNESCO. The project ‘Training of curriculum developers for primary and secondary education in Bosnia and Herzegovina’ was designed with a view to meeting the training needs of both ‘curriculum managers’ and ‘subject experts’. The Final Report of the Project was issued in February 2005. The project was implemented and had significant effects in terms of orienting education specialists and decision-makers in Bosnia and Herzegovina with regard to the directions and shape the curriculum reform should take.

focus to social and cultural history, and the further development of curricula and teaching materials. As a recent example, the Council of Europe in 1999 commenced a series of seminars aimed at introducing new approaches to history teaching. The report on the November 2003 seminar notes that parties agreed to develop a national Common Core Curriculum affecting all subjects, with a stream specifically devoted to international history¹³.

13 Seminar on “New Approaches to Teaching History,” Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2003, p. 7

3.2. Croatia

Borders: Slovenia, Hungary, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Adriatic Sea (5,835 km coastline)
Area: 56,542 sq km
Capital: Zagreb
Population (2006 est) 4,494,749
Ethnic Groups: Croat (89.6%), Serb (4.5%), other (5.9%) including Bosniak, Hungarian, Slovenian, Czech and Roma
Languages: Croatian (96.1%), Serbian (1%), other and undesignated (2.9%)
Religions: Roman Catholic (87.8%), Orthodox (4.4%) other Christian (0.4%), Muslim (1.3%)



3.2.1. Background

After declaring independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, Croatia became embroiled in the 43-month war in Bosnia, with some of its territory subject to sporadic but bitter fighting. Since the end of the war, Croatia has enjoyed rapid economic growth. Its form of government is a parliamentary democracy and in June 2004, Croatia obtained the status of candidate for the European Union and is on track to membership in 2007.

The Constitution of Croatia guarantees the rights of minorities to speak their own languages, to belong to their religious communities, to have their private schools, etc. Minorities also have access to media in their own languages, with television and radio stations being obliged to ensure equity of programming in the language of all ethnic groups represented. They must also take care not to “trigger racial, religious, and national hatred” (Klajner, *op. cit.*, p. 76). Each minority group can have one representative to the Lower House of Parliament and can have representatives at any level of administration following the Statute of Proportionality.

There is a significant Roma minority in Croatia, with numbers estimated at between 30 and 40 thousand (Hrvatic, p. 118). The Association of Croatian Roma has been instrumental in resolving various problems that Roma people face, such as housing, medical care, employment, respect for human and minority rights, and education. Furthermore, the Association designated April 8th as official Roma National Day. Since 1995, the Association publishes in Roma and Croatian a newspaper called “The Roma Courier”, and Roma issues are frequently discussed on Croatian Television. In 1996, the Roma Committee initiated an intercultural paper “New Path” to discuss Roma life-style, culture and art, language and education, human rights, interculturalism and the position of national minorities in Croatian society.

During the former socialist regime, political ideology specified that religion had to stay at the private sphere, and should not reach the public level (Jerolimov and Marinovic Uzelac, 1997).

The 1991 Croatian Constitution continues a separation between church and state, but allows freedom of confession, freedom of people to publicly manifest their religion and other beliefs, the creation of private schools, and equality of all religious communities according to the law.

3.2.2. Education System

The Education system in Croatia is highly centralized, with the responsibility for the coordination of primary and secondary education resting with the Ministry of Education and Sport. The education system comprises of 4 main levels: pre-primary, lower primary, upper primary and secondary. Education is compulsory through all primary levels.

In recent years, the system has adapted its programme to include minorities and minority languages. Throughout each of the 4 main levels of schooling, children are able to learn in their “mother tongues using their own script within special programmes adequately covering history, culture and sciences” (Klajner, 1997, p. 74). If the number of students is too small to make a class, students may have a teacher of their own nationality, subject to parental agreement.

In May 2000, the Republic of Croatia also adopted a law on education in languages and alphabets of national minorities in accordance with the requirements of its Constitution. The law reflects a policy of bilingual instruction, with children of minority groups also required to learn the Croatian language (art. 8) and Latin alphabet according to the school curricula. School documents and other official materials are written in both the Croatian language and the language of the minority (art. 11). Where both the Croatian language and another minority language are used, Croatians must learn the language of minority group (art. 9). School services teaching in the language of a minority can use textbooks from the country from where the language originates, subject to the agreement of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (art. 15). Textbooks can include information on the (other) country’s history, their culture or their technology. The rules reflect the constitutional law on the rights and the liberty of individuals, communities and national or ethnic minorities adopted on December 4, 1991 (art. 14).

One of the responses to the survey further elaborates current policy on the education of linguistic minorities as follows:

“There are three models of education for ethnic minorities:

- ◆ *Model A: Whole education is in the language of the ethnic minority, with obligatory learning of the Croatian language. There are usually special schools of that type.*
- ◆ *Model B: Bilingual education: some subjects like mathematics, physics etc. are taught in Croatian, while the so-called national group of subjects (history, geography, language and literature, music arts) is taught in the language of the ethnic minority.*
- ◆ *Model C: Special programme focused on nurturing of language and culture of the ethnic minority – 5 hours per week.”*

3.2.3. History Curricula and Textbooks

All schools in Croatia follow a programme of study devised by the Ministry of Education and Sport. Teaching history as a separate subject begins in 5th grade, but elements of history are included in earlier grades as part of an integrated subject, “Nature and Society”. Students in primary and secondary schools study history for two 45-minute periods per week. National and world history dominate the curriculum, as illustrated by the following detailed survey responses:

- (i) *In primary school children acquire basic knowledge about the world and Croatian history since the beginning of mankind up to the present, and in secondary schools this knowledge is further expanded (at least in high schools).*
- (ii) *Certain periods, e.g. prehistory, antiquity, the Middle Ages, the Early Modern Age, [the] 19th century, [the] 20th century, are taught for both world and national history in the same classes. There are separate units in both curricula and textbooks for world and national history, e.g. pupils first learn world history in the first half of the 19th century, and then Croatian history in the same period.”*
- (iii) *In history textbooks, national history is presented in separate chapters (consisting of 5-10 lesson units) that usually follow the chapters on world history in the same period. The problem is that a clear connection is not very often made between them.*
- (iv) *Regional history is hardly present.*

Until 1995, the state was the only producer of textbooks, and they were distributed free of charge (Tsakonias, 2002)¹⁴. After 1995 the average price (in US dollars) of textbooks ranged from about \$2.5 to \$5, but could be more expensive depending on the subject or the level. The annual textbook budget per student for parents could be a range between \$65 and \$105 for primary school and between \$145 and \$160 for secondary school. This budget is very high comparatively with a monthly salary of \$400.

History textbooks are written mainly by scholars, some of whom are also teachers. More recently, some textbooks have been written by teams consisting of historians (academics) and teachers. The books are produced by private publishers with in-house editors, but must go through an approval process before printing. Once approved by a Textbook Commission appointed by the Ministry, they become part of a resource pool from which teachers can select. The approval period is limited (2 or 5 years), and within that time publishers can change up to 30% of the content without special approval.

14 See also http://www.see-educoop.net/portal/id_cro.htm

A special list of approved textbooks is circulated among schools. The books are distributed via local authorities and/or bookstores and are available for purchase. Additional materials may be used by individual teachers and schools, but require approval from the Ministry.

Although a multiperspective approach to history is present in some of the officially approved textbooks, it is not officially encouraged. The interpretation of recent events are “especially problematic”; in one case, even though a special effort was made to prepare teaching materials promoting tolerance (in regard to the peaceful reintegration of the Danube region) and were approved by the Text Commission, the project had to be dropped because of “*strong attacks from the media and some historians on the basis of a hard nationalistic point of view.*” Therefore, “*this last attempt to promote multiperspectivity in history teaching in Croatia failed.*”

However, reforms have made their way into history classrooms in a more subtle and substantial way. Generally, according to another respondent, “*textbooks and publishers (not curricula or educational policy) have become the generator of the progress... These textbooks, although still written on the basis of the same curriculum, brought more substantial changes and were directed towards didactical innovations. They brought didactical modernization, inclusion of more non-narrative elements (sources, pictures), they are more student-oriented, interactive...*”

In 2004, the Croatian Ministry of Education started a reform of the National Curriculum and created new National Educational Standards and an experimental programme for primary schools. Respondents to the survey mention some ambitious goals but remain uncertain about the way that innovations will actually be applied in schools. There are also differences of opinion about the necessity for change among history teachers. Another current plan (pending approval by Parliament) concerning textbooks is to limit the number of books on the approved list and to shift the responsibility for choosing textbooks from individual teachers to schools. This, according to a survey respondent, would be a step backward in that it would “*make the entrance of new books much more difficult or even impossible.*” And, in the words of another, “*among those teachers who are for change, it is not exactly clear where they want to go and what is expected of the reform of history teaching.*”

3.3. Montenegro

Borders: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Albania
Adriatic Sea (199 km coastline)
Area: 14,026 sq km
Capital: Podgorica
Population (2006 est) 630,548
Ethnic Groups: Montenegrin (43%), Serbs (31%),
Bosniaks (7.8%), Albanians (5%), Slavic Muslims (3.9%),
Croats (1.1%), Roma .5%), other (.4%)
Languages: Serbian Ijekavian dialect (63.5%),
Montenegrin (22%), Albanian (5%), other (9.5%)
Religions: Orthodox (74%), Muslim (17.7 %),
other, including Roman Catholic (8.3%)



3.3.1. Background

For the half century following World War II, Montenegro was a constituent republic of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, after which the state agreed to a loose federation with Serbia as part of the new Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (in 1992). It then agreed to an even looser federation of Serbia and Montenegro created in 2003. During this period, Montenegro had established its own Education system and economic policies, adopting first the Deutsche Mark, and later the euro, as its currency.

Following a referendum held on May 21, 2006, The Republic of Montenegro formally declared independence on June 3. Serbia recognized it as an independent state on June 8. Other Southeast European countries, the United States, United Kingdom, and most of the European Union member states also recognized it shortly afterwards. Within two weeks of its independence, Montenegro became the 192nd member state of the United Nations.

The boundaries of ethnic identity are not as clearly defined in Montenegro as they are elsewhere, with approximately 43% of the population identifying themselves as Montenegrins, and 31% as Serbs. However, within each group, there are those who declare their identity differently, depending on who is asking and why, as well as those who declare themselves exclusively as one or the other. The official language of Montenegro is the Ijekavian standard dialect of Serbian, which differs only slightly from what is identified as the Montenegrin language spoken as mother tongue by 22% of the total population.

3.3.2. Education System

Long before its independence as a modern state, Montenegro had its own Ministry of Education and Sport and had adopted its own curriculum. According to the OECD (2001), the situation of education in Montenegro, like those of its neighbors, has suffered from a

decade of isolation resulting in a general decline of infrastructure and quality.¹⁵ Nevertheless, according to the same review, “the system is functioning reasonably well, considering its limited resources...the government has demonstrated a significant commitment to education, investing 30% of its overall budget, as compared with the OECD average of about 12%. The value placed on education is high...”¹⁶

Primary education begins at the age of seven and lasts for eight years, with compulsory education ending at the age of fifteen. For secondary level education, students attend either (pre-academic) grammar schools, secondary vocational schools, or art schools concentrating on courses in music, visual arts or ballet.

The main language of instruction is Montenegrin, with classes in grades 1-4 conducted in mother tongue (Albanian or Serbian near- common dialects, Bosniak, and Croatian). Foreign language instruction begins in the third grade, with the choice of second language depending on the locality.

Regarding language of instruction, a respondent reported:

In schools in which the majority of children are Montenegrins/Serbs /Bosniaks/ Muslims, history is taught in Montenegrin/Serbian/Bosniak (it's actually the same language but parents of pupils can choose what language will be their children's primary school certificates). In schools in which the majority of children are Albanians, history is taught in Albanian.

With reference to second language instruction for the Albanian community...

Albanian children have Montenegrin/Serbian/Bosniak/Croatian as (their) second language.

The national curriculum is centrally produced and administered by the Ministry of Education and Sport, with a number of changes having taken place in specific subject areas since 1991¹⁷. Textbooks are produced by the Department for Publication of Textbooks and Teaching Aids within the Ministry. As of 2001, the Department published books for primary schools in at least three languages; grammar and history textbooks for all other grades; an Italian language course for primary school grades 5-8; mother tongue and history books for secondary schools; and a number of teaching and learning materials¹⁸.

3.3.3. History Curricula and Textbooks

History teaching in Montenegro begins in grade 5 of primary school, with 1.5-2 hours per week devoted to the subject throughout the remaining grades. National, regional and world history are taught in parallel beginning in the 6th or 7th grade, and methods including group work and collaborative research are used to engage students in the learning experience.

15 Thematic Review of National Policies for Education: Montenegro, OECD, 2001: p. 5.

16 Ibid.

17 However, the OECD Review (2001) that little change was apparent at the level of curriculum conception and teaching/ learning practices.

18 Ibid, p. 21

Currently, as reported by one respondent to the survey, there is a reform taking place which affects the length of primary schools:

In Montenegro there is education reform ongoing. It began in 47 schools so far and it will be gradually introduced into all schools by 2009. In reformed schools primary school lasts 9 years (from the age of 6 until 15) and their pupils start learning history in 6th grade, and learn it also in 7th, 8th and 9th. The rest of primary schools last 8 years (from the age of 7 until 15) and history is taught in 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades.

There is a national policy and process for textbook production. The conceptualization and writing of history textbooks begins with a public tender issued by the Ministry. If no one applies, the Bureau for Publication of Textbooks and Teaching Aids engages [an] author team consisting of a historian and a history teacher. Editorial control of submitted manuscripts rests with a review commission consisting of a university professor, a senior history teacher, an education specialist, and the Bureau's editor for history. All history textbooks are also subject to approval before printing by the Council for General Education. Revision and updating of the textbooks is done when necessary, based on feedback by teachers and pupils. As a matter of general course, the textbooks are usually updated every 3-4 years, or when a radical novelty is introduced into the education system.

As with textbooks in all subject areas, history textbooks are printed by private companies on contract to the Bureau for Textbooks and Teaching Aids. They are sold in bookshops throughout the country, with no difficulties reported in terms of access.

They are available at all levels in Montenegrain / Serbian / Bosniak / Croatian and Albanian.

Authors focus on themes identified in the national curriculum, and according to respondents there is generally a balance between national, regional and world history. Universally shared values such as humanity, freedom and equality are promoted through guidelines embedded in the national curricula and in the textbooks and multiple perspectives on the past are encouraged to some extent. For example,

...presentation of different movements during the Second World War, which were traditionally presented as collaborators with Fascists, offers now two perspectives: that [which views people in this movement as] collaborators and that [which views people in it as] participants in a civil war.

Linguistic and cultural diversity is presented *through topics on different cultures and civilizations*, and positive images of 'the other' are present in the textbooks:

They present minority groups in a positive way (Djerdj Kastrioti Skender-beg, (Albanian hero), Husein Gradasevic (Bosniak hero), churches, mosques, covers of first books published in Albanian, etc.) There are no pictures or photos presenting minority groups in a negative way.

¹⁹ The respondent adds that this feedback is collected from interviews with pools of teachers and pupils. The books currently in use have been updated within the last year.

As only one history textbook is available for each grade level, teachers do not have a choice in which textbook to use, but do participate (along with headmasters, local government, parents and pupils) in the feedback process. Alternative textbooks are not used, with the exception of additional materials from Albania or Kosovo. These additional materials are used in schools that have a majority of Albanian students and where the language of instruction (and textbooks) is Albanian.

3.4. Serbia

Borders: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, FYR Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro,
Area: 88,361 sq km
Capital: Belgrade
Population (2006 est): 9,778,991
Ethnic Groups: Serb (66%), Albanian (17%)
Hungarian (3.5%), other (13.5%)
Languages: Serbian, Albanian, Romanian, Hungarian,
Croatian (% not available)
Religions: Serbian Orthodox, Muslim, Roman Catholic,
other (% not available)



3.4.1. Background

The area that makes up the present Republic of Serbia first seceded from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1992 and, together with the Republic of Montenegro, formed the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1992-2003). Although the area remained relatively peaceful during the Bosnian war, FRY forces were involved in a series of military campaigns in neighboring countries up until the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords. In 1998, clashes erupted in the province of Kosovo between Yugoslav security forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), an ethnic Albanian movement dedicated to the secession of Kosovo from the FRY. The escalation of the conflict in Kosovo precipitated an international response, including the NATO bombardment of Belgrade and the stationing of a NATO-led security force in Kosovo. In 2000, the European Union convinced the republics of Serbia and Montenegro to combine as a single state, an agreement which obliged the two entities to collaborate, primarily on security matters. The Constitution of February 4, 2003 stipulated that a referendum for the independence of each state should be organized in three years' time. On 21 May 2006, the referendum was held, resulting in the separation of Montenegro and its establishment as an independent state. The province of Kosovo exists as an autonomous region within the Republic of Serbia under the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), pending a decision by the international community of its future status.²⁰

3.4.2. Education System

The education system that evolved under the FYR and subsequent Federation of Serbia and Montenegro was highly centralized and authoritarian, with voices for reform only gathering momentum in recent years. During the 90's, the state dictated curricula and the content of textbooks to serve the purpose of "preparing students for life in an ideological, closed and monopolistic society." (Kovač-Cerović 2000, p. 2). The system was closed and resistant to

²⁰ For an overview of the education system in Kosovo, see Sommers, Marc and Peter Buckland (2004) *Parallel Worlds: Rebuilding the Education System in Kosovo*, Paris: UNESCO/IIEP. <http://www.unesco.org/iiep/PDF/pubs/kosovo.pdf>

innovations from outside, a factor which has seriously obstructed efforts to initiate curriculum reform or to introduce innovative methodologies and materials into the system.

Until the independence of Montenegro, the two republics had separate education ministries (The Republic of Serbia's Ministry of Education and Sport and the Republic of Montenegro's Ministry of Education and Science), with curricula and textbook content approved by the consent of the Education Councils of both Republics.

In Serbia, primary schooling lasts for eight years and is both compulsory and free. According to Trnavac & Hebib (2000, p. 228), "each child has to pass [a] medical test, psychological test, pedagogical test, physical test, intellectual and emotional maturity test, and readiness test to start school." Minorities have the right to education in their mother tongue and instruction in some areas is bilingual, but the language of instruction is predominantly Serbian.

After primary school, pupils must pass an exam to enter into secondary school. Secondary education is not compulsory after the age of 14. It is divided into various types of orientations and different durations.

Gymnasium consists of four years of general education, which prepares students for higher education. Entry to a gymnasium requires a successful grasp of the Serbian language and mathematics. The main subjects are science, mathematics, languages or social science.

Secondary professional schools last three or four years and qualify students to enter the work force or higher levels of education. The four-year diploma is a basic requirement for students to enter university. For students who prefer to work, one or two year courses for special jobs are organized. The secondary art schools (music, ballet, art, artistic design) last for four years and it is possible for graduates of these schools to continue at university.

Despite the difficulty in implementing systemic reforms, a great many projects in peace and civic education have been carried out in Serbia by the NGO sector. A recent survey concludes:

Ten years ago the field of peace and civic education in Yugoslavia was non-existent. Virtually nobody even knew about these terms. Now, despite the wars, the rigid educational system, and the multitude of other impediments a wide range of diverse projects, programs, summer-schools, seminars, workshops, camps, etc. are active, gathering hundreds of peace educators, thousands of trainees, tens of thousands of children, and providing the most meaningful and creative endeavour of a lifetime for many of us. This trend is irreversible, but it needs nurturing. (Kovač-Cerović 2000, p. 10)

Other observers have noted that considerable progress has been made through activities such as those described above, but that systemic solutions are needed to effect real change. There is, in the words of Trnavac & Hebib, a need for "legal deregulation of pedagogic matters" in order to give teachers the necessary training and space to take initiatives and become more creative in their approaches. Yet, in the field of history teaching, there are indications that some reforms beginning in 2000 have started to take hold.

3.4.3. History Curricula and Textbooks

As in other countries created from the former Yugoslavia, history teaching in Serbia begins in the 5th grade of primary school. National history is taught in parallel with regional and world history, beginning in grade 6. Because there are several different types of secondary schools, the curriculum is different with each orientation. The general academic curriculum in schools oriented toward social science includes of 2 hours of national, regional and world history per week during all 4 levels.

A detailed breakdown of the history teaching component of the national primary through to secondary curriculum was generously contributed by a respondent to the present survey:

Primary School:

Class Level	Hours Spent on History
V	1
VI	2
VII	2
VIII	2

(1 School hour = 45 minutes)

Secondary School: - Gymnasium

Class Level	Hours spent on History in social-linguistic course	Hours spent on History in general course	Hours spent on history in science and math course
I	2	2	2
II	3	2	2
III	3	2	2
IV	3	2	/

Secondary School: – 4-year Vocational School:

CLASS	HOUR
I	2
II	2
III	/
IV	/

Secondary School: – 3-year Vocational School

CLASS	HOUR
I	3
II	/
III	/

In terms of national/regional/world balance, the breakdown is as follows:

- ♦ *national history? In 6th class of primary, compulsory school.*
- ♦ *regional history? In the 5th class of primary, compulsory school. In that class students start to learn prehistory and ancient history. In the other classes students learn mixed national, regional and world history.*
- ♦ *world history? In the 5th class of primary, compulsory school. World history in this class means the ancient history of first states in the world, states appeared in the IV millennium B.C. near the big rivers in Asia, Africa, America and Europe.*

Textbook development and distribution in Serbia is still tightly controlled by the state. Under the present system, all textbooks must be accepted by the Ministry of Education on the recommendation of a board or reviewers using “scientific criteria,” and teachers do not have the right to choose among different editions or to use alternative materials.

However, as a respondent reports, the system is currently undergoing a major change:

At the moment, the new law on textbooks is being prepared. This is very important for the new generation of textbooks, because so far we only had used one textbook in teaching. This will make it possible for more than one publisher to write and publish textbooks.

In recent textbooks and history teaching, there has been a major effort toward modernization. According to one respondent: *teaching history is based on the newest results of historiography, which is especially important if we bear in mind ideological influences present in creating curriculum during the period after The Second World War until 2000* ²¹.

Regarding quality indicators, a respondent reports:

We use general standards for creating textbooks: stimulating, active and creative, academic and modern according to pedagogical standards, adjusted to students’ capabilities and their age, comprehensive, adjusted to curriculum, attractive, containing information on the connection between history and other subjects.

As part of the modernization process, recent initiatives to present events from more than one perspective are mentioned... *especially in the textbooks published after 2000. Many topics such as the War between Cetniks and Partisans from 1941 to 1945, or events after 1990 are shown in a way that students can perceive the events based on different historical sources.*

²⁰ The same respondent continues, in response to the question of whether the experiences of family members are shared as part of history lessons: It is important to emphasize that in this war we had members of the same family on different sides. For example, the father was in Partisans and his son in Cetniks. Students are encouraged to research and collect photographs and other written documents in possession of their families (but not attempt to collect oral histories, with the implication that this would re-open recent wounds).

No, there are no pictures or photos presenting minorities in a negative way. Further, the values of humanity, multi-ethnicity, freedom, equality and human rights are included in the materials. We have to add, continues the respondent, that not enough space is given to minorities in textbooks, which will be changed in a new generation of textbooks, based on a multicultural conception of society.

Overall, from the reports of earlier reforms and from responses to the current stocktaking report, positive changes are underway at several levels. Trends toward a more liberal education system with a less stringently nationalistic view of history are slowly being accepted by society at large. This is in contrast to an analysis made during the war in Bosnia, which concluded that “history and literature textbooks offer the dominant narrative of national identity (as being a heroic nation constantly surrounded by enemies, endangered by others’ assimilatory or hostile aspirations, suffering enormous losses, but enduring them with dignity...) without any alternative opinions” (Kovač-Cerovič 2000, p 3). The textbooks printed since 2000 increasingly show a shift in focus towards social history topics. They also show more balance between national, regional and world history (*about 30% of curriculum and textbooks is devoted to the history of neighboring countries*), and feedback for new revisions is given by both teachers and pupils.

According to respondents, universal values, namely *basic human rights, antiracism as a basis for mutual life in multicultural societies* are promoted across the curriculum.

Efforts to prepare teachers to use more learner-centered methodologies to actively engage students in learning history are underway, but lack of equipment, materials and teaching aids to support these in schools are noted:

One of the biggest problems is the fact that the internet is used in teaching history only with 32% of the students. Another problem is using only one textbook and one handbook in teaching history as well as the insufficient supply of didactical equipment (charts, overhead projector, etc.). It is also important to note that only 10% of students have visited archives and cultural institutions where the most important history documents are saved.

On a note of general optimism, in the words of another respondent *I expect that the situation will be better in the years to come...*

3.5. Slovenia

Borders: Italy, Austria, Hungary, Croatia,
Adriatic Sea (46.6km coastline)
Area: 20,273 sq km
Capital: Ljubljana
Population (2006 est) 2,010,347
Ethnic Groups: Slovene (83.1%), Serb (2%) Croat (1.8%),
Bosniak (1.1%), other or unspecified (12%)
Languages: Slovenian (91.1%), Serbo-Croatian (4.5%),
other or unspecified (4.4%)
Religions: Roman Catholic (57.8%), Orthodox (2.3%)
other Christian (9%), Muslim (2.4%),
other or unspecified (23%), none (10.1%)



3.5.1. Background

Following the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire after World War I, Slovene lands became part of a multinational state which eventually became Yugoslavia. On December 23, 1990, 88% of Slovenia's population voted for independence from Yugoslavia in a referendum, and on June 25, 1991, the Republic of Slovenia declared its independence. A nearly bloodless 10-day war with Yugoslavia followed (27 June 1991 – 6 July 1991). Since independence, Slovenia's strong economic growth and political stability have aided in its development as a modern state, which became a member of both the European Union and NATO in 2004.

3.5.2. Education System

Not surprisingly, Slovenia has made steady advances in developing a modern education system, beginning in the early 1990s. In 1992/1993, different proposals and concepts were brought together, and a group of experts worked on developing a national education strategy. Their report, "Education in the Republic of Slovenia" was published in 1995 and provided the roadmap for a number of officially sanctioned reforms.

Primary and lower secondary schooling in Slovenia are combined. Under the recently introduced system, schooling lasts for 9 years (3 x three-year "triadas"), with the introduction of a number of new subjects grades 7-9. The length of upper secondary school varies according to type (vocational, technical, or general), and lasts from 2.5- 4 years. Education is compulsory until and including age 14 and the adult literacy rate is 99.7%. The language of instruction throughout the national system is Slovenian; however in two regions of the country, instruction in Italian and Hungarian is offered at both the primary and secondary levels.

In 1997, new strategies for curricula reform were published under the title 'Curricular Changes'. One of the main concerns of the reform was the "autonomy" and "professional responsibility" of teachers (Svetlik & Barle Lakota, 2000, pp. 64-65).

3.5.3. History Curricula and Textbooks

History teaching in the Slovenian school system begins in the last year of the second triada, or grade 6, for one hour per week. During the third triada (grades 7-9), history is taught for two hours per week. In secondary and high schools (gymnasia), students receive history lessons for either two or three hours per week (three hours in the classical gymnasia), and in vocational schools, history is merged into a general social science subject, which also covers geography and citizenship. In technical secondary schools, history is taught for two hours per week in the first and second years. National, regional and world history are integrated into the curriculum from the 6th grade on, and the textbooks present all three in parallel.

History textbooks in Slovenia are published by two main competitive publishing houses, but the standards for acceptance are established by the Ministry of Education. All manuscripts are also reviewed by the National Education Institute, which further approves the final versions before printing and grants permission for their use in schools. In the words of a respondent to our survey:

The writers of our history textbooks are usually university professors, sometimes also teachers and advisors for history teaching. Publishing of all textbooks is regulated by special regulations ... which are accepted by the Ministry of Education. All textbooks are read by special reviewers, [and] advisors for history teaching give their opinion about conforming ... textbooks with history syllabuses...

Teachers are free to choose from among the textbooks approved for each grade level, but their decision is usually limited to 2 or 3 choices.

As in the other former socialist republics, access to textbooks is not considered a problem. In Slovenia, *we have special textbook funds in which our state participates or buys textbooks for all pupils. Parents can or must buy only new workbooks.* In secondary schools, the textbook funds also exist, but many students buy their own. This is, in fact encouraged through the organization of textbook fairs in which students can sell their old textbooks and buy second-hand ones.

As implied in the above description, the content of the history curriculum is closely aligned to the national curriculum. A sampling of learning objectives from a history syllabus for secondary/high schools indicates a healthy balance between building conceptual knowledge and skills:

- ◆ *knowledge of important events, phenomena and processes in world, European and Slovenian history;*
- ◆ *understanding of the influence of European and world events on Slovenian history;*
- ◆ *knowledge of life, work, thought and scientific achievements in various historical periods;*
- ◆ *knowledge of economic processes and social relations in various periods;*
- ◆ *ability to understand historical phenomena, processes and conflicts in the development of the modern world;*

- ◆ *ability to evaluate the cultural heritage in the general and national context;*
- ◆ *ability to conceive of chronological and spatial relations;*
- ◆ *ability to convey historical information (reading, understanding, explaining a historical text);*
- ◆ *ability to evaluate the cultural heritage in the general and national context;*
- ◆ *ability to distinguish reasons, causes and consequences and to determine the co-dependency as well as continuity and change in development*

According to respondents, encouraging multiple perspectives on history is still in its infancy, but is gradually gaining acceptance; as is the practice of including materials based on oral histories, interviews, etc. in history classrooms. For example:

We have collections of photographs which can be used in history lessons. We also prepared an educational documentary movie about the last living Slovene soldier from World War I, which can be used in history lessons. Now we are working on a DVD with six life stories about ordinary Slovene people or ordinary soldiers on different sides in World War II....

The history curriculum and textbooks make an effort to include understanding of, and respect for, various faiths, cultures and communities. They also attempt to incorporate education for peace and responsible citizenship. *Activities which promote these values are integrated into the textbooks, especially with fragments from different kinds of historical resources and from literature.* In addition, special emphasis is placed on learning the history and cultures of surrounding nations (Croats, Italians, Austrians and Hungarians) from a detailed and balanced point of view, and to this end there are a number of cooperative projects among schools in Slovenia and these four countries.

History textbooks of equal quality are available in Hungarian and Italian for those who choose to study in these languages. In addition, special teaching modules for pupils and students with special needs have been developed and are in use at both primary and secondary levels.

3.6. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Borders: Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Greece, Albania
Area: 25,333 sq km
Capital: Skopje
Population (2006 est) 2,050,554
Ethnic Groups: Macedonian (64.2%), Albanian (25.2%)
Turkish (3.9%), Roma (1.9%), Serb (1.8%) other (2.2%)
Languages: Macedonian (66.5%), Albanian (25.1%),
Turkish (3.5%), Serbian (1.2%), other (1.8 %)
Religions: Macedonian Orthodox (32.4%)
other Christian (.2%), Muslim (16.9%),
other or unspecified (50.5%), none (10.1%)



3.6.1. Background

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) was formed in 1991 from the areas making up the southernmost part of the former Yugoslavia. The FYROM is often referred to simply as *Macedonia*, but this can cause confusion with the Greek area of *Macedonia*. Greece contends that the name *Macedonia* should properly apply only to the area of the historical kingdom of Macedon, which is almost entirely contained within Greece. Thus, Greece uses the term Macedonia to refer to that specific part of its northern region, and hence the official complicated name of FYROM for its northern neighbor.

The FYROM gained its independence from Yugoslavia peacefully, but was affected by the war in Kosovo in 1999, when an estimated 360,000 ethnic Albanian refugees from Kosovo took refuge there. Even though they departed shortly afterwards, their presence served to destabilize the country by fueling a rebellion (March-June 2001) by the ethnic Albanian population in the FYROM, mostly in the northern and western areas of the country. The conflict ended with the intervention of a NATO ceasefire monitoring force and the signing of an agreement. Its terms required the government to give greater political power and cultural recognition to the Albanian minority, in exchange that the separatists disarm and recognize the institutions of the FYROM.

Macedonian is the official language, but as a matter of policy, in municipalities where at least 20% of the population is from ethnic minorities, their individual languages are used in local government. The languages of minorities may also be used in the national parliament and national ministries.

Since it became independent in 1991, the FYROM has been undergoing a process of complex economic and political reforms aimed at developing a contemporary democratic society with a market oriented economic system. The FYROM was officially recognized in 2005 as a candidate country to join European Union, and is on track (with Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Turkey) to become a member in 2007.

3.6.2. Education System

Primary schooling is compulsory until the age of 14 and lasts for 8 or 9 years. At the end of this time, students receive a Certificate for Completed Elementary Education. The secondary level begins at age 15, and students enter either high schools (gymnasium), technical and other vocational schools, or art schools.

The length of the gymnasium is 4 years, and in the second half of the fourth year, students must write a project (Maturaska Tema), defend it and pass a written examination in their mother tongue. They must also pass an oral examination in a given subject of the curriculum.

Technical/vocational education is either for 3 or 4 years, at the end of which students must pass written examinations. The certificates of the technical schools give access to the entrance examinations at the relevant faculties and colleges.

Art schools consist of a four-year programme that students can join upon passing an entrance examination. At the end of their studies, they take a final examination which enables them to enrol in universities.

For all students who do not follow the gymnasium, the International Baccalaureate gives access to the entrance examinations of all faculties and colleges. The languages of instruction are primarily Macedonian and Albanian. According to one respondent, *the Macedonians and Albanians learn all the subjects in their native language*. With reference to smaller minority languages, there were differing viewpoints:

- (i) *Albanians learn in their own language throughout all the time of education. Turks only in the primary school. The others learn in the majority language (Macedonian).*
- (ii) *An exemption is one Turkish unit in one of the central secondary schools in Skopje where the teaching is in the Turkish language and some subjects in the Macedonian language.*
- (iii) *All linguistic minorities learn in their own language.*

UNICEF's web site reports that the poor quality of education in impoverished Turkish and Roma communities "has led to high dropout rates, with boys going directly into the labour market and girls marrying as young as 15."²² However, it notes that a life skills curriculum has been adopted by several schools that have had "great success at improving the overall quality of education". It also outlines a programme providing basic literacy training to 900 girls and young women in poor Roma and rural Turkish and Albanian areas. While these and other ongoing programmes are undoubtedly yielding some positive results, access to quality education in these marginalized communities may continue to present a major challenge for some time.

²² www.unicef.org/infobycountry/TFYRMacedonia.html

3.6.3. History Curricula and Textbooks

Children in the FYROM begin to study history in the fourth or fifth grade, for two class periods or 90 minutes per week, and classes are continued through to the upper levels of secondary school. National, regional and world history are learned simultaneously at each grade level.

Curriculum development and textbook production in the FYROM are highly centralized. The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for the creation of the curricula, and the Bureau for Development of Education oversees the development and production of textbooks. In regard to the history curriculum, a committee of ten members constituting education specialists, university academics and specialists from the Institute of National History decide on the content. One respondent notes that *the current political establishment also has their experts in this group.*

Once the official curricula are announced, there is an open competition for authors in association with the publishing houses to produce and submit manuscripts anonymously. A commission appointed by the Ministry of Education and Science then selects the books to be used in schools from among the submissions. Two textbooks are selected for each grade. Books are reviewed and edited again before printing and distribution. They are published in Macedonian and Albanian, and to a lesser extent in Turkish. The publishing houses print and distribute texts and maintain a network of bookstores where students can purchase the books. There is equitable access to books throughout the country, with *poverty and unemployment of the parents being the only obstacle to not having the textbooks.*

Respondents from the FYROM agreed that universally shared values of freedom, human rights and ethnic tolerance are included in textbooks, and that the history of all minorities is present in the new (2005) curricula...not in a negative way. For example:

The Albanian minority is presented with the whole history of the Albanians in an extremely positive way, [while] the other minorities are presented through the histories of their countries ... For Vlachs and Romas their positive influence in the Macedonian history is incorporated in the lessons. So there are not negative presentations of the minorities in the textbooks, quite the contrary.

Teaching methods tend toward “old fashioned ex-cathedra communication” (where the authority is derived from one’s position), although training seminars conducted by NGOs and international organizations have had a limited impact in some classrooms. Multiple perspectives on past events are not included in the textbooks as such, but activities for discussion and project work are included in the new editions. Alternative textbooks are not used, but teachers may use supplementary materials with the approval of the Ministry. Mostly, the introduction of interactive methods, field trips, oral histories and the inclusion of supplementary materials (with the approval of the Ministry) have been at the initiative of individual teachers. However, a process has begun which is likely to gain momentum:

(i) *Having in mind that until 1990 the pupils [we]re only objects in the classroom... from 1991 ... the reform in the educational system and the new programs,[as well as] the presence of the foreign experts (let) the students start to work on projects, [and learn] how to deal with the documents, what is critical thinking, how to use museums in the process of learning, archaeological sites, oral history...*

(ii) *It depends on the imagination of the teachers...*

4. Other Countries of Southeast Europe

4.1. Albania

Borders: Serbia, Montenegro, FYR Macedonia, Greece, Ionian Sea, Adriatic Sea (362 km total coastline)
Area: 28,748 sq km
Capital: Tirana
Population (2006 est) 3,581,655
Ethnic Groups: Albanian (95%), Greek (3%) other, including Vlach, Roma, Serb, Macedon, Bulgarian (2%)
Languages: majority Albanian (derived from Toask dialect), Greek, Vlach, Romani (percentages not available)
Religions: Muslim (70%) Albanian Orthodox (20%), Roman Catholic (10%) – estimated percentages



4.1.1. Background

The modern state of Albania was established as a multiparty democracy in 1991, following 46 years of single party rule and almost total isolation, first from the West and later from other socialist countries. Among the events leading to the new government were the large-scale student demonstrations, strikes, and the exodus of thousands of Albanians to Italy and Greece. The victory of the Albanian Democratic Party on April 9, 1991 led to the creation of a new government, which made remarkable progress in restoring law and order, reforming the economy, and raising the population's standard of living.

In foreign policy, the biggest problem since the creation of the new government has been the status of the province of Kosovo in neighboring Serbia and Montenegro. In September 1991, when Kosovo's underground parliament proclaimed this enclave with its large majority of Albanians a "sovereign and independent state," Albania was the only country to officially recognize that independence, causing increased tension with Serbia. In April 1993, Albania recognized its neighbor to the east, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The major reason for this was its concern for the human rights of the Albanian minority in Macedonia, estimated to amount to between a fifth and a third of the population.

The other matter of concern for Albania, at the diplomatic level, has been its relations with Greece. Tensions between the two countries have stemmed primarily from the perceived treatment of the Greek minority in Albania and the influx of hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants from Albania to Greece. To resolve those problems, the Albanian government agreed to authorize schools in the Greek language for the Greek minority and to set up a consulate in the south of the country. In return, Greece agreed to repatriate 200,000 Albanians and to strengthen political and economical relations.

In recent years, Albania has played a helpful role in managing interethnic tensions in Southeast Europe, and is a member of the Council of Europe with aspirations to join NATO and the European Union.

The great majority (95%) of the population of 3,581,655 (2006 est.) is made up of two major linguistic groups, the Gëgs and the Tosks. Most of the Gëgs live in the north of the Shkumbin River, and most of the Tosks live on the opposite side. The Gëg dialect is spoken by about two-thirds of population and the Tosk is used by a third. The Greeks, who live in the Southeast of the country, make up approximately 3 % of the population. Smaller groups such as Bulgarians, Jews, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Romans, Serbs, and Vlachs, are disseminated throughout the country. Those minorities have their own dialects but the official language is Albanian.

Significantly, a huge number of Albanians live outside the country. For geographical and historical reasons, most of them live in countries that share borders with Albania, but also, for political or economic reasons, a large number have immigrated to the United States.

4.1.2. Education system

As a result of the economic and political crisis in Albania in the early 1990s, the school system fell into chaos and many schools were vandalized and ransacked. As of September 1991, when the new government came to power, overcrowding of classrooms, and lack of adequate textbooks and other school materials for primary and secondary levels were serious problems. Many teachers, along with the general population, migrated from rural to urban areas. Other teachers fled the country. Following this chaotic period, the new government acted quickly to rebuild schools and revise the curriculum. As one of the first steps, political messages of the former regime were removed all school curricula and textbooks, and more emphasis was put on mathematics, natural sciences, humanities, and computer courses.

A new system was introduced in 1992. Pre-school starts from ages 1-4, and is followed by the first level of elementary school, which lasts for 4 years. Until the 2004 reforms (discussed below), the second level (lower secondary) lasted for another 4 years, until the end of 8th grade. Curricula are elaborated by the Ministry of Education and Science. Most subjects are compulsory (mathematics, physics, biology, mother tongue language, one foreign language, history, geography, music, art, citizenship education, physical education, technical education) and some are optional, such as learning a second foreign language, which can be taught from grade 3 to grade 8 for two hours per week. All subjects show the content for each grade and discipline, and the number of lessons per week, per semester and per year. They also provide teaching objectives and methodology. Both the school board and the municipality make decisions on optional subjects and foreign languages that will be taught. Students must successfully pass examinations at the end of the grade 8.

At the secondary level, students go either to upper secondary school (lasting 4 years), or vocational schools. Students must successfully pass graduation exams at the end of grade 12. Vocational schools last from 2-5 years, depending on the subject.

Under the 2004 reform, the education system in Albania stipulates 9 years (increased from 8 years) of compulsory basic elementary education and three years of secondary schooling. In addition, major curriculum changes for the first nine years are underway and are expected to be in place by 2008.²³ The new, more flexible system will allow more freedom for students to choose classes which interest them, in addition to the compulsory subjects.

²³ *Southeast European Times, Tirana September 6, 2004.*

Three minority groups are officially recognized in Albania as national minorities—Greeks, Macedonians and Montenegrins. However, official data regarding the numbers which make up these populations is not currently available.

The following information is reported on the website of Minority Groups International:

Smaller groups, namely Roma and Vlachs/Aromanians are recognized as linguistic (sometimes called cultural) minorities. Both linguistic and national minorities have protection under the FCNM in Albania (Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities). Egyptians are not recognized as either a national or linguistic minority, and some members of this group, which faces poverty and marginalization, would like to be recognized as a national minority. Laws regarding minority rights are in place in Albania, yet much remains to be done in practice.²⁴

Although the Albanian Constitution establishes the fundamental principle of equality before the law and guarantees freedom from discrimination on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, language, social status or ancestry, there is little evidence that instruction in languages other than Albanian is officially promoted. A respondent to the survey reported that minorities do learn in their own language (*90% in their own language and 10% in Albanian at the primary level, and 60% in their own language and 40% in Albanian at second[ary] level*), but that textbooks in languages other than Albanian are not available. This suggests that the country may still be in the process of establishing its policy in bilingual education, and that choice of language may be a matter of local preference and established practice. It also suggests that teachers may well be conducting classes in both languages and interpreting written texts and materials as needs arise, particularly at the primary level.

There is additional evidence that Albania is taking steps to infuse the curriculum with concepts of democratic citizenship and human rights education at all levels. According to the December 2004 stocktaking report on Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC), there is only one approved national curriculum, developed by curriculum department within the Ministry of Education and Science in co-operation with its partner, the Institute of Pedagogical Studies. Further, “the national curriculum on EDC is supplemented by teachers’ manuals and teaching materials... Teachers’ manuals have been prepared, 250 trainers are certified throughout the country, 2700 teachers of social studies have trained in interactive methods for teaching democracy in schools throughout the country... [and] satisfactory synergies and networks have been set up amongst the actors in the field of democratic education” (p. 18).

In addition to these measures, a current UNESCO project, ‘Promoting Quality Education for All: Human Rights and Democracy Education in Albania’ is assisting the Ministry of Education and Science and the Institute of Pedagogical Studies to improve the school curriculum across all subject areas, by introducing human rights and democracy education into the system. During the first phase of this project, a curriculum for in-service teacher training on human rights education was developed, and a set of nationally-developed training materials were produced. In the second phase, 2000 inspectors, trainers, teachers and school principals are being trained in the use of the curriculum and related materials. Ultimately, the project aims to promote a climate of respect for human rights and the practice of democracy in all educational establishments.

²⁴ www.minorityrights.org

4.1.3. History Curricula and Textbooks

In the 1990s, authorities were focused mainly on removing Marxist-Leninist philosophy from all school textbooks and transitioning to an entirely new curriculum. The new history curriculum put emphasis on “the Albanian role and contribution to Balkan and European history, culture and civilization” (Duka, 2001, p. 50). According to the same author, the history of other peoples was taught. But what is called the “World History” seems to be limited to European history. The author gave examples such as Greek and Roman Antiquity, European Humanism and Renaissance, Byzantine and Ottoman Empire, etc.

However, according to Pajo (2002), the author of a review of Albanian textbooks initially commissioned by the World Bank in 1999,²⁵ Albanian textbooks are not manifestly nationalistic. Instead, they “present elements of awareness of being Albanian, but of a kind untypical [sic] for nationalism in the sense of a political movement or even sentiment.” (p. 455)

Today, as a result of a series of reforms and influences from other countries, there appears to be more balance in the curriculum strands for national, regional and world history. According to a respondent to the current stocktaking survey, national history is still the major focus, but regional and world history each receive attention in textbooks, especially at the secondary level. Samples of methods used to actively engage students in their history lessons include: *working groups, brainstorming, role play, discussions to set up the issue, and research work.*

Since 2003, the textbook production process appears to have become more tangibly in the hands of private publishing houses, with the Ministry of Education choosing the best textbook for each level by means of a “competition.” Authors are mainly professors of history, history teachers, and other specialists in the field. There is an official approval process before the books are printed and distributed.²⁶ A respondent to the present survey provided the following figures on production in the year 2005:

Grade	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
#of copies	58,000	53,600	65,000	75,000	35,000	35,000	10,000	10,000	4,000

The textbooks are distributed through a network of private bookstores, and access is not reported to be a problem. Teachers in Albania must follow the national syllabus, but they are free to choose supplementary materials without approval from the Ministry.

25 Pajo, Erind . “Albanian Schoolbooks in the Context of Societal Transformation: Review Notes “ in *Clio in the Balkans: The Politics of History Education*. Thessaloniki, Greece. Center for Democracy and Reconciliation, pp. 445-461.

26 In the same review, the process of book production (in 1998) is described as follows:

“A formal procedure has been difficult to track down. An Albanian specialist explained to me that a number of formal rules do govern the process, but they allow for fairly unconstrained practices. The directive for replacing an existing book with a new one formally comes from the Ministry of Education through the Institute for Pedagogical Studies. Specialists in the respective field then write the text, but there are no formal rules for hiring these authors. Instead, the board that initiates the program of the subject and the team of text authors often overlap, making it difficult to establish a line of causality in the process of schoolbook production” (p. 447)

4.2. Bulgaria

Borders: Turkey, Greece, FYR Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Romania, Black Sea (354 km coastline)

Area: 110,910 sq km

Capital: Sofia

Population (2006 est) 7,385,367

Ethnic Groups: Bulgarian (84.5%), Turk (9.4%), Roma (4.7%), other (2%) including Macedonian, Armenian, Tatar, Circassian)

Languages: Bulgarian (84.5%), Turkish (9.6%), Roma 4.1%, Other 1.8%)

Religions: Bulgarian Orthodox (84.5%), Muslim (12.2%), other Christian (1.2%) other (4%)



4.2.1. Background

The peaceful transition of Bulgaria to a parliamentary democracy and market economy began in 1990, when the first multiparty election since the end of World War II was held. Since then, the country has made steady progress despite serious obstacles, mainly in inflation and unemployment. Economic problems have caused many Bulgarians to emigrate, and since 1950 the country has experienced a decreasing rate of population growth.

In recent years, Bulgaria has taken significant steps to improve the situation of refugees and ethnic minorities. For example, in 2001, representatives of the ethnic Turkish community, which makes up 9.4 % of the population, were invited to participate in the national coalition government. In addition to its Turkish minority, Bulgaria has a sizable population of Roma people (4.7%) and smaller communities including Armenians, Macedonians, Vlachs and Crimean Tatars. Bulgarian is the mother tongue of 84.8% of the population and is the official language. Most Bulgarians are Orthodox Christians, with 12.2 % of the population naming Islam as their faith.

Bulgaria has also signed the Geneva Convention on the status of refugees and allows applications for the granting of refugee status to foreigners escaping persecution in their countries of origin.

Bulgaria is a candidate country on track to join the European Union in 2007.

4.2.2. Education System

Pupils enter the school system at age 7 and leave at the age of 18 or 19. Education is compulsory until age 16. School children who have successfully completed the first stage of basic education (lasting 4 years) are awarded a Form IV Leaving Certificate.

Lower secondary school lasts for a further 4 years, from grade 5 to grade 8, upon completion of which, students receive a Basic Education Completion Certificate. Upper secondary education lasts for four or five years after completion of the basic education course and is provided in three types of schools:

- i) Comprehensive (general secondary) schools (lasting 4 years). Students receive a Diploma of Completed Secondary Education.
- ii) Profile-oriented schools (lasting 5 years).
- iii) Vocational (technical and vocational-technical) schools (lasting 4-6 years).

The following current information on vocational schools was provided by a respondent to the present survey:

Vocational education and training is carried out in vocational schools, vocational secondary schools, vocational colleges and schools of art according to Article 18 of the Vocational Education and Training Act.

According to Article 19 of the Vocational Education and Training Act, the training in vocational schools has a duration of four years; in vocational secondary schools it is with a duration of five or six years; schools of art four years of duration, and colleges two years in duration after completion of secondary education.

Secondary studies lead to the award of a Diploma of Completed Secondary Education or to a certificate of professional qualification awarded by professional schools.

The language of instruction at all levels is Bulgarian, but an unspecified percentage of schools also provide mother tongue instruction for children of minority groups. More specifically, in the words of one respondent, “[minority children] have the right to learn in their mother tongue(s) in the classes of compulsory elective schooling.”

Textbook publication and distribution in Bulgaria is operated by private publishing houses. However, there is a central system of evaluation and approval of textbooks and teaching tools (Ordinance No. 5 of the Ministry of Education and Science), which includes requirements related to the content, graphical design and layout of the books.

The following descriptions provide glimpses of the general process:

- (i) *The projects are created by authors’ teams established according to the content and graphic design. In the authors’ teams, working out the conception of the textbooks’ content... [involves] teachers, experts and professors in higher schools, who work in the respective scientific field.*
- (i) *The authors’ teams conclude contracts conceding the right over publishing, printing and distribution to publishing houses for a fixed period.*
- (ii) *The projects of textbooks need to be accepted by Ministry of Education ...before printing.*

In terms of distribution, the following details were provided:

- (i) *In the state and municipal schools, sets of textbooks and teaching tools for the pupils from I to IV grades are provided for free use.²⁷*
- (ii) *A set of textbooks and teaching tools for the corresponding grade is provided for each child or pupil.*
- (iii) *The resources for buying the textbooks and tools are guaranteed from the state budget through the budget of the Ministry of Education and Science.*
- (iv) *The textbooks and teaching tools are distributed to schools or Regional Education Inspectorates through delivery assigned by the Ministry of Education and Science, under the conditions and according to the Public Procurement Act.*
- (v) *The textbooks for the pupils from V to XII grades are distributed free through the network of shops, and parents and tutors buy them on market prices.*

Teachers may choose from among the textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education and Science.

In the 1994/95 school year, the International Center for the Problems of Minority Studies and Multicultural Integration initiated the project «To Bring the Children Back to School». The programme targeted 14 schools from various regions of the country, where children were educated in ethnically heterogeneous classes. Further, in September 1998, the Ministry of Education and Science initiated the project “A School for Everyone”, to: (1) develop practical models supporting work with dropout students in the various parts of the country; (2) build a reliable information system and database for the country concerning the problem of dropout students; and (3) support the efforts of the MES for developing effective national policy in the field (Antova, Atanasov, Drakeva, 2000, p. 16).

At the national level, it is expected that the implemented integrated approach would place the challenge of educating minority children within the larger European context, which reflects the present strategy for acceptance in the EU. At the local level the expected results include the development of new teaching materials and specialized programmes, increased support and resources for teachers, improved school management, better networking and collaboration with teacher training colleges and other social institutions. At the school level, pilot school groups have been established for co-ordination with the teachers, parents, pedagogical advisors, employers, NGOs, municipalities, etc.

In the school year of 1999/2000, a new school curriculum was developed and implemented at the secondary education level in grade 9. At the same time, civic education, education for peace, human rights, conflict prevention, and teaching history was given priority in the curriculum development process.

²⁷ The provision of free textbooks and teaching tools for the pupils of III and IV grades started in 2005 as a result of a Decision of Parliament of the Republic of Bulgaria (25/02/05) as part of the adoption of a National Programme and Plan to increase enrolment at compulsory school age. Before this pupils bought them with their own resources.

4.2.3. History Curricula and Textbooks

Bulgarian children begin to study history in the 3rd grade and continue through secondary school, with 2 hours per week devoted to history. National history is emphasized at the early primary level, with a shift in focus to regional and world history in the 7th grade. Concepts and practices of civic education are stressed throughout the curriculum, and in the modern learning experience [it] is required more and more to perfect the methods used to acquire and develop skills and habits for attaining proficiency and evaluating historical knowledge.

Bipartite meetings of history experts from the Balkan countries were made from 1990 until 1995 (Bulgaria-Romania) to exchange ideas on “reading history.” Antova, Atanasov and Radosveta (2000) report that during these meetings, attempts were made to find ways to overcome negative stereotypes in the teaching curriculum and textbooks. The goal was to present recommendations for curriculum reform and to work out the new teaching programmes before March–April 2000.

According to Kalionski and Kolev (2002), changes in Bulgaria since 1990 have had a visible impact on the way history textbooks are written, authorized and distributed. During recent years, there has been “a drive toward de-ideologization and modernization. This is achieved mainly by considerable enlargement of the volume of cultural and economic history and integration of some ‘new’ issues such as religion, historical demography, everyday life, etc.” (p. 118)

Regional history is studied in the context of international and world history. *For many years neighboring groups were not presented in history textbooks. Today, the government is paying attention to those minorities, which are more and more represented in an objective manner. Sometimes, those groups are presented through pictures or through literary texts.*

The history textbooks currently in use were most recently updated in 2002. Decisions on elaborating new editions of history textbooks in Bulgaria are made by the Ministry of Education and Science in collaboration with professors from the universities.

The content of history textbooks must correspond to the curriculum. Books must *be well illustrated...have exercises...and tests to evaluate knowledge*. Teachers and inspectors may decide which books are to be used, so long as the books conform to national standards. Supplementary materials and alternative textbooks, including history notebooks with exercises and collections of historical texts, are available and may be used in schools so long as they have been approved by the Ministry of Education and Science.

4.3. Greece

Borders: Albania, FYR Macedonia, Bulgaria, Turkey
Aegean Sea, Ionian Sea, Mediterranean Sea (13,676 km coastline)
Area: land: 130,800 sq. km (including approximately 3,000 islands) water: 1,140 sq. km.
Capital: Athens
Population (2006 est) 10,688,058
Ethnic Groups: Greek (98%), other 2%
Religions: Greek Orthodox (98%), Muslim (1.3%), other (0.7%)



4.3.1. Background

Regarded by many as the cradle of Western civilization and the birthplace of democracy, Greece has an ancient and rich history which has proven especially influential in Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. As with neighboring countries and peoples in the Balkans, Greece was part of the vast Ottoman Empire, from which it gained independence in 1829. In the following years, it gradually acquired additional islands and territories with Greek-speaking populations and established its current national borders.

Although Greece was never part of the Soviet bloc, its recent history has been strongly influenced by events precipitated by the rise and fall of communism in Southeast Europe. Following the end of World War II, the country endured a long and bloody civil war between Marxist rebel groups and loyalists to the king. In the period following the civil war, a military dictatorship rose to power, ending the monarchy and sending the king into exile. The dictatorship ended in 1974, when democratic elections were held and a parliamentary republic was created.

As a result of the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the creation of new states in the Balkans, relations between Greece and its bordering countries have sometimes been strained, particularly in the dispute over the name of FYR of Macedonia and issues arising from the treatment of ethnic minorities. In 1995, Greece signed an agreement with its neighbors and negotiations on the official name could begin. More recently, relations between Greece and its neighbours to the north have improved; borders with FYROM and Albania have opened and people are now free to travel among the three countries.

Greece has been a member of the European Union since 1981.

4.3.2. Education System

The first education reform of 1976 established 9 years of compulsory education, comprising of six years of primary school and three years of lower secondary school. A further educational reform was introduced by the Socialist Party in 1981. Between 1982 and 1985, the democratization of educational institutions and pedagogical principles was introduced, and new textbooks were elaborated in accordance with these themes. 3.58% of the national GNP is currently invested in education.

Today, education is compulsory from primary school through to the end of lower secondary school, from 6 to 15 years of age. The length of primary school is six years (ages 6 to 12) and lower secondary school (Gymnasio) lasts for a further three years (ages 12-15). Upon completion of lower secondary school, students proceed either to technical and vocational studies or enter an upper secondary school (Lyceum) for three years.

For the most part, private schools are divided into the same levels as public schools, with the great majority of children enrolled in the public school system.

The production, printing and distribution (to the schools) of the textbooks are financed by the Ministry of Education. The language of instruction is Greek²⁸, although English, German and French are taught as foreign languages. All instructional materials are also written in Greek, and textbook development is coordinated by the Hellenic Pedagogical Institute in Athens under the authority of the Ministry of Education. The books are printed by private companies and distribution is managed by a public publishing institution (OEAB: Organization of Publishing Textbooks). All students have access free of charge at the ratio of one textbook per student. Students enrolled in private schools have access at low cost.

4.3.3. History Curricula and Textbooks

Changes in history teaching that were part of the first reform were principally related to the revision of content and approach. The publication of two textbooks for second and third grades of upper secondary school was considered “an educational event” (Koulouri, Giannakopoulos, Sakka, Syriatou, 2002, p. 96) for the country. In accordance with the context and background of historians at that time, “the textbooks were written by a group of historians of Marxist orientation who took a materialistic approach to history implying economic interest for every aspect of life they were to interpret” (op. cit., p. 96). The authors add that “for the first time, the issue of the civil war in Greece and the Second World War appeared ... in school textbooks” (op. cit., p. 97). The new history textbooks were welcomed by teachers, and school reform became popular because they were seen as ‘daring’, ‘attractive’ and ‘innovative’. However, even though they were ethnocentric, an extreme view criticized them for being not Greek enough.

After 1974, the content of history textbooks became a subject of public debate, and strong criticism led to three history textbooks being banned from schools.

²⁸ The provision of free textbooks and teaching tools for the pupils of III and IV grades started in 2005 as a result of a Decision of Parliament of the Republic of Bulgaria (25/02/05) as part of the adoption of a National Programme and Plan to increase enrolment at compulsory school age. Before this pupils bought them with their own resources.

Today, the Hellenic Pedagogical Institute produces the history curriculum under the authority of the Ministry of Education. Guidelines and teaching modules for all lessons are produced and distributed to teachers. The curriculum consists essentially of (i) pedagogical aims and objectives (ii) contents (iii) methodological instructions (iv) evaluation. Authors of history textbooks have to be thoroughly familiar with the curriculum in order to produce acceptable manuscripts.

If “history is the subject par excellence which is usually taught very closely to the school textbooks” (op. cit. p. 104), we could understand why it is a sensitive matter and why there are no alternative history textbooks. Extra-curricular activities such as visiting museums, archeological sites, workshops, and cooperative learning projects are recommended. But some teachers (for a variety of reasons) do not follow through with those activities, so students are in a sense confined to learning history from the official textbooks.

According to Koulouri, Giannakopoulos, Sakka and Syriatou (2002, p. 101), new history textbooks were introduced in the 2000-2001 school year for grade 1 of upper secondary schools, and in the 2001-2002 school year for grade 2 of upper secondary schools. Grade 3 levels received new textbooks for the 2002-2003 school year. Despite the arrival of the new textbooks, it was reported that some teachers continued paradoxically to use the old textbooks in parallel with the new ones.

At the secondary level, some history textbooks are updated almost every year. Others have not been updated so recently. Currently, the Ministry of Education is in the process of updating new history textbooks for primary and lower secondary education, which will be introduced during 2006-2007 and 2007-2008²⁹. A new history textbook for the 3rd class of upper secondary education is also being produced.

The current history teaching curriculum is summarized in one response as follows:

Students begin their study of history in the 3rd or 4th grade, with ancient Greek and subsequently regional history taking precedence initially, followed by modern and world history beginning in 6th grade. At the primary [school level] and through most of the [other] levels, pupils study history for two hours a week. At the third level of lower secondary education, the number of hours per week increases to three.

There is also a balanced and sequenced approach to history themes, as the following response reflects:

In primary education, national history is dominant. In lower secondary education (gymnasion) there is a balance between national, regional and international history. In upper secondary education (lykeion) and in technical vocational education, international history is dominant.

²⁹ Information provided by the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, 14 November 2005.

According to the same source, the main themes that authors focus on are:

- ◆ *Ancient Greek history, especially the Persian Wars, the Athenian Golden Age, the Peloponnesian War and the history of Alexander the Great.*
- ◆ *The history of Byzantium from Constantine the Great to the fall of Constantinople in 1453.*
- ◆ *The discovery of the new world, the religious Reformation, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the history of the French revolution (1789), the American revolution (1776), the industrial revolution, the Green revolution (1821) the 1st World War and the Balkan Wars, the 2nd World War, Occupation and the Greek Resistance, Metapoliteusis (i.e. the years of the 3rd Greek Democracy after 1974).*

Regarding the stylistic approach to history teaching, responses varied somewhat. *The narrative model is the norm, but also mentioned are interpretation of primary and secondary sources (texts, pictures, maps, videos, and ICTs). Multiple perspectives are encouraged, especially in upper secondary education. Both textbooks and the teachers provide students with sources that approach or interpret the historical events from different and sometimes even contradictory points of view.*

From the point of view of another respondent, this approach could take on a sharper edge: *In some cases ... different sources [are used], but in a supportive way to give more information about the historical events. In our history textbooks, controversial perspectives are not presented.*

At primary level, positive images of “the other” are presented *in a rather sentimental way, through extracts from poems and other pieces of literature.* At secondary level, *there are positive images given mostly by extracts of historians of by information about the contribution of “the other” to world civilization.*

Regarding the presentation of neighboring groups and nations, there were indirectly conflicting responses. On the one hand, it was noted by one respondent that, in some cases and particularly in the older editions,

(i)... neighboring groups or nations were presented in the history textbooks mostly as hostile and dangerous³⁰.

From the point of view of another respondent...

(ii) Conversely or perhaps in parallel, the writing of history textbooks is based on the principles set by UNESCO and the Council of Europe. Some information about the culture and national history of the neighbours is also provided³¹.

30 The response continues, in many cases neighboring groups are presented only if they have the same religion or they had been in alliance with Greece or have experienced grosso modo the same problems (wars, occupation) or events (resistance).

31 One explanation for the divergent views on the presentation of neighboring peoples and nations could be that comments were based on different editions or entirely different texts, i.e. older editions still in use vs. later editions and those slated for introduction into the schools during the current year.

Increasingly, methods such as *visits to museums and historical places, study of (primary) sources and participation in role-plays and games are used to actively engage students in learning history. Moreover, the personal experiences of family members are shared through the study of local history, which is organized on the basis of projects referring to the search...[for] issues of local interest.*

Universal values are promoted through history textbooks, with priority given to *democracy, human rights, acceptance of otherness and respect of diversity, social cohesion, peace and cooperation among people, and European citizenship* and in the words of another respondent *priority is given to freedom, democracy, peace and civilization at all levels.* These values are integrated into the design of the textbooks through guidelines developed by The Hellenic Pedagogical Institute, which also has the responsibility of ensuring that they have been followed.

Indicators for assessing the quality of history textbooks include (in the words of one respondent) *historical accuracy of content, the scientific character, the form, the sources, the agreement of content with the official ideology.* According to another respondent, *quality is determined by (the book's) compliance with the targets of the curriculum, the historical accuracy of the content, (its) attractiveness to the pupils and the correct use of language.*

Revision of the content and approach of history textbooks is based on recommendations made by the Hellenic Pedagogical Institute. These in turn are based on regular assessments by teachers and pupils of a large number of schools.

However, not all textbooks are obligatory, as indicated in the following list supplied by the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs (2005).

- ◆ 1 history textbook (plus one for local history projects for the 3d class) in lower secondary
- ◆ 2 history textbooks for the 1st class of upper secondary (1 obligatory, 1 optional)
- ◆ 2 history textbooks for the 2nd class of upper secondary (1 obligatory, 1 optional)
- ◆ 3 history textbooks for the 2nd class of upper secondary (1 obligatory, 2 optional)
- ◆ 2 history textbooks for the 3rd class of upper secondary (1 obligatory for all, 1 obligatory for those who want to attend humanistic or social studies in tertiary education)

One respondent takes the view that *studying from the same set of materials gives all students an equal opportunity to succeed on (the tertiary entrance) examination (e.g. to provide the correct answer according to the textbook.)* Accordingly, teachers are not given the option to choose among different textbooks in preparation for tertiary entrance exams.

Alternative textbooks are not mentioned as such, but supplementary materials including CD-ROMs, videos, slides and historical maps are used on a regular basis. All such materials need to be approved by the Ministry of Education and support the national curriculum.

4.4. Romania

Borders: Hungary, Ukraine, Moldova, Bulgaria, Serbia, Black Sea (225 km coastline)
Area: 237,000 sq km
Capital: Bucharest
Population (July 2006 est) 22,303,552
Ethnic Groups: Romanian (89.5%), Hungarian (6.6%), Roma (2.5%) Ukrainian (0.3%), German (0.3%), Russian (0.2%), Turkish (0.2%), Other (0.4%)
Languages: Romanian, Hungarian, German
Religions: Eastern Orthodox (86.8%), Protestant (7.5%), Roman Catholic (4.7%), other (mostly Muslim) and unspecified (0.9%), none (0.1%)



4.4.1. Background

The victory of the Romanian revolution of December 22, 1989 opened the way for the re-establishment of democracy, the pluralist political system and the return to a market economy. Presidential and parliamentary elections were held on May 20, 1990. The National Salvation Front (NSF) gained two-thirds of the seats in Parliament, and named a university professor, Petre Roman, as Prime Minister. The new government began by establishing cautious free market reforms, such as opening the economy to consumer imports and establishing the independence of the National Bank.

Parliament drafted a new democratic constitution, which was approved by popular referendum in December 1991. During the turbulent years which followed, the NSF underwent a period of breakup and reshaping into parties with new names and often unclear agendas. This period also witnessed several economic reforms³², spurred mainly by the country's bid to join the European Union.

In the presidential and parliamentary elections that took place in 2004, no single political party was able to secure a viable parliamentary majority. The result was the election of Traian Băsescu as president and a coalition government including a diverse array of political parties³³.

The official language is Romanian, with Hungarian as the second most widely spoken language. Foreign language study is broadly encouraged, and many Romanians speak English and/or French as a second language. In terms of ethnicity, the largest minority groups living in Romania are Hungarians (6.6%) and Roma (2.5%). In towns and villages where ethnic minorities make up more than 30% of the population, local council meetings can be held in the minority language³⁴.

32 Especially in the late 1990's, when the economy was transformed into one of relative stability, high growth, and low unemployment. Romania's economy is currently one of the fastest-growing in Europe.

33 The President was supported during the elections by a coalition known as the Justice and Truth Alliance, formed from the Democratic Party and the National-Liberal Party. The larger coalition government includes the Romanian Humanist Party and the ethnic Hungarian party, among others.

34 However, it is required that translation into Romanian be provided and that official minutes be kept in Romanian.

4.4.2. Education System

As with many of its neighbors, Romania achieved a strong and efficient Education system and accomplished near-universal literacy under the socialist system. In the years following the Revolution of 1989, the system entered a period of transition and experienced a decline in enrollment numbers, especially in primary and secondary schools. However, following this period of “reduction of ... participation” in education (Badescu, Capita, Jigau, Herseni, 2000, p. 145), improvements began to be recorded in 1994-1995, with the authors noting an increase in preschool education enrollments from 55.2% to 64.2% in the following four years.

The proportion of Gross National Product (GNP) devoted to education has fluctuated over the past decade, with the following chart being provided by one respondent:

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
% GNP	3.2	3.1	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.8	4.2

In 1994, the World Bank launched a programme on curriculum, textbooks, teacher training, management and financing, and comprehensive evaluation programme, under which new curricula was designed for primary and secondary schools. Since 1998, the Ministry of Education has accelerated reforms, emphasizing technical and technological orientation.

Another major curriculum reform process begun in 1999, which aimed to improve the quality and diversity of compulsory education. It initiated new curricula for grades 1-5, and specifically new history curricula for grades 6-9 and 10-12. The reform established new compulsory aspects of national education; guidelines, methodological norms, and support materials. The latter described ways in which to apply for and monitor the curricular process, as well as provisions relating to alternative textbooks. The current structure (since 2002) of the education system in Romania is as follows:

• preschool education		3-6 years
• primary (grades 1-4)	COMPULSORY	7-10 years
• lower secondary (grades 5-9)		11-15 years
• upper secondary education (grades 10-12/13)	}	16+ years
• vocational schools (2-4 years)		
• apprentice schools (2-3 years)		

Overall, the average number of pupils per class is 20.

Since the 1998/1999 school year, students must pass an examination in order to complete lower secondary school, whereupon they receive a certificate of ability. Results on that exam are the criteria for continuing to upper secondary school, which lasts for 3 or 4 years and is concluded with a national baccalaureate exam, usually taken at 18 or 19 years of age. The length of vocational schools is 2 or 4 years, depending on the subject. Apprentice school, which is shorter than the vocational track, lasts between 2 and 3 years, also depending on the subject.

The Ministry of Education has made serious efforts to improve education for linguistic and cultural minority children by (1) elaborating school handbooks on the history and cultural traditions of minority groups in Romania, (2) ensuring proper representation among school leaders of specialists belonging to minority groups, (3) continuous training of teaching staff employed in education in minorities languages, and (4) translation of school handbooks from Romanian to minority languages.

In the words of a respondent to the survey:

Yes, the main minorities (Hungarians, Germans) have the chance to learn in mother tongue from kindergarten to university level. The rest of the so called "small minorities" (Greeks, Bulgarians, Turks, Ukrainians, Russians, Czech, Serbs, Roma, etc.) have only kindergartens, primary and secondary schools in mother tongue.

The 1999 reform of the school system addressed principal needs, including several issues connected to the present survey, namely: (1) the openness of the education system to children, young people and adults in order to prevent the resurgence of absolute and relative illiteracy, (2) the compatibility of the national education system with the other European systems, and (3) the focus on values throughout the system. According to respondents:

- (i) Values are included in the National Curriculum for all grades. The most important promoted values are tolerance, understanding and accepting of diversity, civic participation, and peace, everything under the umbrella of democracy.
- (ii) All universally (shared) values are promoted equally.
- (iii) Patriotism and freedom (are promoted) in historical readings (for example).

Under the national policy for textbook production, books are published by private or public houses and approved by the Ministry of Education and Research in coordination with the National Council for Textbook Evaluation and Distribution. The acceptance process is described as follows:

Textbooks are pre-selected ... based on the evaluation on a requested sample – 50% [of the book is presented with its proper] layout and the rest of the textbook only by presenting the content and the illustrations) ... the short-listed textbooks ... [then must] pass a final evaluation before printing.

Unlike the case in many neighboring countries, authorship of school textbooks is increasingly the responsibility of “mixed teams,” consisting of teachers, educationalists and university professors (content area specialists).

Quality indicators are clearly delineated, reflecting the mix of methodological, content-based, and value-based concerns in the approval process. They include:

- ◆ *compliance with the curriculum (eliminary criteria);*
- ◆ *lack of ethnical, religious, cultural, sexual biases (eliminary criteria);*
- ◆ *quality of the content (correctness, logical sequence, adapted to the age of the students, specific adequate concepts, cross curricular approach);*
- ◆ *quality of layout and illustrations (adequacy to the content, layout supporting learning, lack of spelling errors, clarity of illustration, chromatic harmony, illustrations supporting learning, balance between text and illustration);*
- ◆ *quality of the learning approach (encourage active learning, work groups, stimulating communication, quality of proposed applications, quality of schemes, drawings, quality of the proposed evaluation exercises, adequacy to the national assessment standards).*

Printing is the responsibility of the publishing houses, and the distribution process is described as follows:

- ◆ *publishing houses print a promotional print-run;*
- ◆ *textbooks exhibitions are organised at the county level; all variants are exhibited;*
- ◆ *teachers visit the exhibition, decide on certain textbooks;*
- ◆ *county school inspectorates gather orders from schools and send them to publishing houses;*
- ◆ *publishing houses print the main print-run and distribute the books to the county level;*
- ◆ *schools take over the textbooks according to their initial orders.*

Access to textbooks is not identified as a problem in Romania, as one book per pupil is the norm. Textbooks for compulsory education are financed directly by the Ministry of Education and provided free of charge (on loan) to students until the end of 10th grade. There is a clear indication that this process is slated to undergo a significant change:

In the near future, as a consequence of the decentralization process, the allocation system will be changed. The funds will be allocated per student, directly to schools. The schools will have the freedom to decide on the quality of the textbooks according to its own educational offer.

4.4.3. History Curricula and Textbooks

Romanian pupils begin their study of history in 4th grade, with one or two hours allocated to the subject in the earlier grades, increasing to two hours per week in upper primary and

secondary schools. *National history is presented parallel (integrated) with regional and world history (grades V-VII and IX-XI). In grades IV, VIII, and XII national history is presented separately.*³⁶

In terms of major themes in the current history curriculum and hence in textbooks, *national and world history focus on the ethno geneses, evolution of the medieval society, modern times (1848 revolution, foundation of the modern Romanian national state, independence, and the First World War), contemporary times (1918, economical, political, social and cultural evolution of the society between the two World Wars, the Second World War, political regimes after the war, United Nations, the Cold War, 1989 and after, peace process).*

The general approach to teaching history in Romania is also reported to be in the process of radical change:

Traditionally, history teaching was very much related to memorising information (dates, events, rulers etc.). The curricula included compulsory topics, most of them related to political events. Topics regarding culture, society or day-to-day life were neglected.

Currently, after the deep changes/reforms implemented at the end of '90s, the teaching approach focus[es] on developing competences – specific or cross curricular, values and attitudes. The Council of Europe concept of Education for Democratic Citizenship is more and more present in the Romanian schools, history teaching targeting more and more[the] development of critical thinking, problem solving etc. The students are also supposed to be able to use history concepts in contemporary contexts, to understand the evolution of different concepts along history (e.g. democracy, tolerance etc.).

Multiple perspectives on historical events are encouraged through teachers' use of different sources which express different points of view. To stimulate critical thinking, students are invited to *compare, analyze, share their own points of view, and evaluate the reliability of different sources.*

Further, the national history curriculum includes guidelines, methodological suggestions on how a certain topic can be approached and how attitudes and civic behaviours can be developed.

According to the same respondent, the textbooks themselves also serve to support and integrate methodological approaches and conceptual knowledge: *the textbooks layout and design includes images and written historical sources [that] try to support the learning process, namely to contribute to the achievement of the curriculum goals. In this respect the textbook layout and design contribute to the democratisation of the education.*

³⁶ The respondent notes that these provisions are currently under discussion; a new curriculum framework canceling these provisions and introducing an integrated history for all grades is being considered.

The presentation of ethnic minorities is described as “neutral” and “not negative” by respondents. These images are presented in the context of their relation to different local and national events (including conflicts, migrations and cultural events):

The history textbooks present the contribution of minority groups to the national history, but not systematically. Neighbouring groups are presented only related to those events where they are very visible. The images presenting neighbouring groups' specificity are only accidentally included.

The decision to update and produce new history textbooks rests with the Ministry of Education on advice from the National Council for Textbook Evaluation and Distribution. *Such a decision follows serious changes of history curriculum for a period of more than 4 years of use in schools. However, since not all textbooks are approved at the same time, and because the grade 4 textbooks are four years old (approved in 2001, used for the first time in the school year 2001-2002), the Ministry of Education is organising a new tender for textbooks to be use in the school year 2006-2007.*

Teachers in Romanian schools are free to choose among different approved history textbooks listed in the catalogues produced by the Ministry of Education. Textbook exhibitions are also organized periodically by publishing houses and school inspectorates. Supplementary materials are not subject to Ministry approval, and methods to actively engage students in the learning process are strongly encouraged.

- (i) *Active learning methods [include]... learning through cooperation [and] group activity; students are encouraged to develop cross curricular skills like critical thinking, communication, problem solving, etc.*
- (ii) *The new history teaching approach asks for the inclusion of lived experiences in class activity. As a consequence, these kind of teaching methods have been included in ... most part[s] of teacher training programs and in professional literature as well. Class observation/inspection proved that at least a part of teachers started to use lived experiences in their day-to-day activity. Interviews, photos, video and audio documents [and] ICT sources are used to introduce new topics, to understand diversity and multiperspectivity, but also to assess the students learning progress. At this stage it is difficult to decide how many history teachers use such methods (no relevant evidence...[exists] at the national level).*
- (iii) *People hurt during the wars or who survived certain historical events and revolutions are invited to our classes.*

5. Selected List of Conferences, Projects and Publications related to History Curricula and Textbooks in Southeast Europe

5.1. “Disarming History”, International Conference on Combating Stereotypes and Prejudice in History Textbooks of Southeast Europe, Visby, Gotland (Sweden), 23-25 September 1999

The overall objective of this project, coordinated by UNESCO in cooperation with the Council of Europe and the European Commission, was to “facilitate the building of sustainable peace between the countries of the sub-region and their immediate neighbors, as well as in the wider European Space. The activities planned at the initial conference in Visby included comparative textbook research, guidance to authors, editors and publishers of textbooks, and follow-up expert meetings aimed at analysis and revision of history textbooks. Implementation involved National Commissions for UNESCO, field offices in Southeast Europe, the UNESCO network of Associated Schools, the George Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, NGOs, and professional institutions with relevant experience.

5.2. “Educational Co-operation for Peace, Stability and Democracy”, Sofia (Bulgaria), November, 1999.

This conference, organized by The Council of Europe in cooperation with EUROCLIO brought together history experts from within and outside of the region to develop a set of recommendations with regard to the most important issues and urgent needs in the reform history education in Southeast Europe. These included:

- ◆ Implementing a framework for action, building on and complementing existing expertise and ongoing programmes and initiatives.
- ◆ Developing a range of cross-border and multilateral initiatives in history education aimed at encouraging greater mutual and comparative understanding of the history of the region. Initiatives were to be developed from a range of perspectives and using a multi-dimensional approach to history teaching (emphasising political, social, cultural and economic aspects of history). They also focused on developing the skills and values necessary for the development of civil society, e.g. critical thinking, tolerance and respect for diversity.
- ◆ Facilitating the creation of expert networks and networks for other key stakeholders in history and history teaching, enabling the cross-fertilisation of ideas and experience.

In addition, four priority areas for future activities were identified:

- ◆ Training history teachers in new methodologies (e.g. comparative approaches to teaching the history of the region, teaching approaches designed to help students to analyse critically and interpret evidence; handling controversial and sensitive historical issues in the classroom; using out of school resources which incorporate a multiplicity of historical perspectives; drawing on social, cultural, political and economic approaches to history)

- ◆ Developing teaching resources, supporting the above mentioned approaches
- ◆ History and history teaching in higher education
- ◆ History teaching in non-formal education

5.3. “Quick Start Projects on History Teaching”

Launched in March 2000 by the Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, these projects focused on teacher training, development of teaching resources and history teaching in higher education. These projects involved a wide range of activities and produced concrete results, such as in-service teacher training, creating additional teaching materials on social and cultural history in the languages of the region, training textbook authors and teachers/teacher trainers in new methodologies, bringing together experts from neighbouring countries in order to analyze and discuss sensitive and conflictual issues of their joint history, and establishing regional networks of young historians. One major valuable outcome was that the Working Group on History and History Teaching served as a platform for the exchange of information and expertise. These projects included, for example:

- ◆ Teacher Training
 - Conference on the Training of History Teachers in SEE, Athens, September 2000, implemented by the Council of Europe;
 - Comparative Study: Teaching and Learning about the History of Europe in the 20th Century, implemented by the Council of Europe;
 - National/Regional History Teacher Training Seminars, implemented by the Council of Europe and EUROCLIO;
 - South Eastern European History Teachers’ Education Project, Phase 2: Teacher Training Workshops, implemented by the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in SEE.
- ◆ Development of Teaching Resources
 - Development of Teaching Materials and Teacher Training for History Teaching in Albania, Bulgaria, and FYR of Macedonia, implemented by EUROCLIO;
 - Co-ordination of Textbook Research, Textbook Development and Comparison in History in SEE, implemented by the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research;
 - Creating Additional Materials for Teaching SEE History, implemented by the Center for the Study of the Balkan Society (CSBSC) Graz, Society for Social History, Belgrade and the Balkanistic Seminar at the University of Blagoevgrad;
 - Publication of a multi-author textbook of 20th century SEE history, implemented by Open Society Archives/Center for Publishing Development Budapest;
 - Translation and publication of key studies of recent regional history into local languages of SEE, implemented by Open Society Archives/Center for Publishing Development Budapest.
- ◆ History Teaching in Higher Education
 - Board of Eminent Historians, implemented by the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in SEE;

- Shared History Project: Deconstruction of National Hate Narratives, implemented by the Sabanci University Istanbul, the Panteion University, Greece, and the Columbia University, USA.
- ◆ History Curriculum Development
 - Development of History Curricula for Pre-university Education in Albania, implemented by the Council of Europe.

5.4. “Textbook Research, Development and Textbook Comparison in Southeast Europe”

Planned and implemented by the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, Braunschweig, Germany in the framework of the Stability Pact, this project aimed to support diverse processes of educational reforms at a local level in primary and secondary education. It also sought to promote the incorporation and integration of Southeast Europe in the context of a wider European educational agenda. Further, the project aimed to strengthen and facilitate cross-border communication and exchange between different countries in Southeast Europe. Finally, the project aimed to enhance the transfer of new didactical and pedagogical know-how and skills in the fields of history, geography and civics.

The GEI has conducted the following activities in connection with this initiative:

- ◆ Workshop (April 2001): History Education and Textbook Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- ◆ International Summer School in Braunschweig (September 2001): “The Balkans in Europe”;
- ◆ Workshop (May 2002): “Minorities in the Educational Systems of South Eastern Europe”
- ◆ Seminar (November 2002): Evaluation of Recent Teaching Materials in Serbia
- ◆ Conference (September 2003): “History Curricula in South East Europe”;
- ◆ Workshop (September/October 2003): “Conceptualizing Bosnian History”;
- ◆ Conference (November 2003): “Teaching War? Alternative Historical Sources to the Understanding of War in Ex-Yugoslavia”;

International Summer School (September 2004): “Mindmapping in Textbooks and Curricula: Borders and Border Regions in the Southeastern and Greater European Area”.

5.5. “Teaching Materials: Controversial and Sensitive Issues, Multiperspectivity,” Regional Teacher Training Seminar, Ohrid, (FYR of Macedonia) 6-8 May 2001

This seminar was organized by the Council of Europe in cooperation with the Ministry of Education FYR of Macedonia and EUROCLIO (European Standing Conference of History Teachers’ Associations) and was one of a series of activities approved by the Stability Pact

(with financing from Austria and Switzerland). Participants from ten countries participated in working groups on textbooks and teaching practice focusing on the main theme of sensitive issues in history teaching. Sharing of ideas and best practices was also encouraged at the seminar, which concluded with the general awareness that technical seminars such as this one involving history teachers, authors and historians from countries throughout the region could lead to concrete reforms within the education systems of each country.

5.6. “Improvement of Balkan History Textbooks Project”

Jointly coordinated by UNESCO, the The Heinrich Böll Foundation and Consulate General of the Netherlands, this project began with a planning meeting in Istanbul on June 17th-18th, 2001. This initial meeting was followed by a workshop in Pamporovo (September 8th-9th, 2001) and a conference in Istanbul (November 30th-December 2nd, 2001), with the participation of teams from Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Romania and Turkey. The project goals were: (a) to bring together academics and history teachers from the Balkan countries; (b) to review primary and – particularly - secondary level history textbooks currently in use; and (c) to propose alternative ways of reflecting the political, social and cultural history of these countries. The main objective of the project was to prepare a final report on the history textbooks and teaching of history in five Balkan countries. Since history education is in a ‘transition period’ in each of the Balkan countries, this final report of the project should be considered a ‘snap shot’ of the current state of the history education in the Balkans.

5.7. “History textbooks and Teaching Resources in South East Europe: a Future? Sinaia (Romania), 6-8 June 2002

This conference, also within the framework of the Stability Pact, was organized by the Council of Europe, the Ministry of Education and Research of Romania, EUROCLIO and the George Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research (with financing from the UK). The aims of the conference was to review the state of preparation and publication of history textbooks since the seminar on “The preparation and publication of new history textbooks in European countries in democratic transition” in Warsaw, November 1996, identify recent trends in educational policy as regards history textbooks, look at the function of textbooks in history teaching and the ways in which they can assist learning in the classroom, and discuss the use of history textbooks in supporting skills-based approaches to teaching and learning. A series of informative presentations touched on a range of issues and concerns related to history textbooks such as conceptualization, design, graphics, overall quality, financing distribution and use. The three working groups identified further issues, questions, and general recommendations for revision and reform.

5.8. Regional Workshop on “Developing New History Textbooks” and National Seminar on “Textbooks and Teaching Materials: Development and use in the Classroom,” Belgrade (Serbia, 4-5 and 6-7 November 2003.

The regional workshop and national seminar, held sequentially, were organized by the Council of Europe and the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Republic of Serbia, financed

mainly by Sweden within the framework of the Stability Pact. The logic of these two meetings was to shift focus from regional (former Yugoslavia) to the situation in Serbia. The aims of the regional workshop were to share experiences on the state of the art of history textbook development, identify common problems and difficulties, compare different approaches and to work out ideas for future forms of cooperation. The national seminar focused on questions and challenges of history education in Serbia, primarily the production of high quality textbooks with limited budgets, minority education as an issue of intercultural learning for all students, and opportunities for applying multiperspective approaches in future history textbooks.

5.9. OECD Reviews

The OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) conducted a comprehensive study resulting in the publication of *Reviews of National Policies for Education in Southeast Europe* (2003). The study is divided into two volumes. Volume One relates national policies for education in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Kosovo. Volume Two concerns the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia. For each country, the report reviews teachers, curriculum, governance, and early childhood education and care. It also discusses the issues and barriers to reform for each country, and makes recommendations which can be used by policy-makers or international organizations to initiate or revitalize reforms in those countries.

5.10. Project on “The European Dimension in History Teaching: Symposium on 1912-1913 - The Impact of Historical Events upon the Changing Lives of Ordinary Citizens,” Council of Europe

During the course of this three-year project (2003-2005) implemented by the Council of Europe and focusing on key dates and key events in European History and involving participants from member states throughout Europe, a symposium was held in May 2005 in Athens, Greece focusing on methods and materials for teaching the history of the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913. The symposium was hosted jointly by the CoE and the Greek Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs. Participants were mainly historians, teachers, inspectors and textbook authors with expertise in different areas of Balkan history, each contributing toward the aim of exploring ways of approaching the history of key events from multiple perspectives. The main outcome of the project is the collaborative production of a DVD resource for educators throughout Europe containing a wealth of activities and materials, contributed mainly by participants in each of the symposia, to support this type of approach.

5.11. Education, Conflict and Social Change

This publication, edited by Sobhi Tawil and Alexandra Harley (UNESCO/IBE³⁷ 2004) investigates the role of education in social and civic reconstruction, particularly in societies emerging from violent internal conflict.

³⁷ International Bureau of Education, Geneva, Switzerland

In the context of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Stabback (2004) investigates the country's recent curriculum policy, including an analysis of the management of education administration, the structure of the school system and educational/curricular traditions in the region. International activities in the area are also investigated.

The author concludes that there are a number of weaknesses in the education system and curriculum of Bosnia-Herzegovina. These include curriculum which is out-of-date and "overloaded" (not enough time for each subject); and which focuses too much on memorization at detriment to learning skills, values and attitudes. The curriculum development process is also politicized, and there are differences in opinion about whether and how recent history should be taught.

The author suggests three "rationales" to guide future curriculum design in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The first is to ensure flexibility within the system, recognizing the individual strengths and weaknesses of educational players (students, teachers) as well as reflecting varied learning styles and local conditions. The second is to ensure the relevance of the curriculum, on a global, societal and economic level. The third is to contribute to the elimination of cultural prejudices which continue to exist in the country.

5.12. Teaching Modern Southeast European History Series

In 2005, The Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE) in Thessaloniki, Greece published four alternative educational materials under the coordination of the Chief Editor Christina Koulouri. The workbooks are intended for use in classes by students in Southeast Europe, and are freely available to each country. They are the result of collaboration between history teaching experts from the region, who initiated the project through identifying various factors which were perceived to be a handicap to teaching relevant history.

The factors identified were as follows:

- The different curricula and ethnocentric bias of history teaching, which is common in all countries;
- The fact that changes in history textbooks in most countries of Southeast Europe are governed by ministries of education, which exercise tight control over the content of school curricula and books;
- The desire of educators to renew their pedagogical practices with easily accessible teaching aids;
- The view that it is not possible to compile a uniform, homogenized history of Southeast Europe in a single textbook, which could be used in all countries.

The first workbook, jointly edited by Halil Berktaş and Bodgan Murgescu, discusses the common history of the peoples of South East Europe during the Ottoman Empire. However, the authors do not present this common past as a "golden era" of peace for people in the region, but rather define it as having "both crash and coexistence" (Berktaş & Murgescu, 2005, p. 14). The book begins with a view of the Ottoman Empire in the 14th century. It ends in the early 19th century with the beginning of the nationalistic movements, which brought forth the formation of the Balkan states in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The second workbook (eds. Murgescu and Koulouri) addresses the general topic of nations and states in Southeast Europe. It emphasizes nationalistic movements against the Ottoman Empire and progresses to the wars in former Yugoslavia. The book demonstrates the evolution of the definition of a nation; the geographic and chronological span of nationalist movements and differences among them; and the different phases in the formation of nation-states. The greatest contribution of this book is that it views the concept of 'nation' as a function of its history, clearing it from unhistorical images of continuity and unity. At the same time, it incorporates the history of Southeast Europe into European and world history.

The third workbook (ed. Kolev and Koulouri) concerns the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, which have had long-term significant consequences on the 20th century history of Southeast Europe. The treatment of the history of this conflict reveals the political and military events as well as the relative significance of religion in nationalist conflicts.

The fourth workbook (ed. Erdelja) presents a multi-layered history of Second World War, presenting learners with the additional and often neglected view of the impact of war on everyday life, literature, and the arts. The book also incorporates the regional history of Southeast Europe into a global context.

6. Conclusion: Common Problems of History Teaching in Southeast Europe

Throughout the process of collecting, analyzing and reporting the information from respondents in ten countries contributing to this report, the long-reaching effects of projects launched at national and international levels to reform history teaching in Southeast Europe over the past fifteen years are clearly perceptible, but progress has been scattered and inconsistent. Since views of history and history teaching have been among the major factors which have contributed to the deep divisions among the peoples and nations in the region, it is crucial that the momentum gained thus far in constructing new approaches be supported, advocated and strengthened. Respondents to the current stocktaking exercises have identified several problem areas (see Annex I: Common Problems of History Teaching in Southeast Europe) where the need for action is most urgent: (1) teacher preparation and training (2) supplementary material (3) content (of curriculum and textbooks), and (3) pedagogical methods. As this report is concerned primarily with curriculum and textbook analysis and revision, the following conclusions can be offered in connection with these processes.

Between 1990 and 2005, curricula and history textbooks in most of Southeast European countries have been revised at least once, and, in some cases, several times. Through the various initiatives mentioned in this report, teachers, historians and researchers, have been invited to contribute to the debate on new approaches to development of textbooks and other materials for teaching. regional and world history. Participants at conferences, workshops and seminars on history teaching representing the various ethnicities, religions and language groups in the region have agreed to acknowledge their differences, yet at the same time to reflect on their common past in the interest of building a more peaceful future.

The processes of curriculum reform and textbook revision in most participating countries have incorporated efforts to replace negative stereotypes of minorities and neighboring groups with more positive views. Further, attempts to introduce multiperspective approaches and interactive pedagogies have received enthusiastic support and had a clear impact in some areas. For example, alternative teaching materials in support of these initiatives were introduced in some countries during the 1996-1997 school year.

As for state-approved textbooks, new processes were introduced through which private publishers had the authorization to elaborate the books, often employing teams of historians and educators to author the manuscripts. Reforms such as these were the result of political changes allowing for the creation of more liberal policies adopted by Ministries of Education, often with strong encouragement from international organizations. In some cases, more than one textbook for a certain level was approved, reflecting a gradual shift toward a more decentralized policy allowing for publication in multiple languages and reflecting diverse points of view.

New versions of textbooks were introduced 2000 in most of the countries of Southeast Europe, bringing positive changes in the way history is taught. Moreover, new fields of history were introduced such as gender history, women's history and cultural history. Those ambitious goals and processes should continue and be supported at the political high level. However, few of these efforts have been without setback, and in some cases progress toward agreed-upon goals has been slow, insubstantial or even nonexistent. Some efforts were reported to have failed simply because actions did not follow words – others because the proposed

lines of action reverted in practice to pre-reform, hierarchical systems. For instance, even though private publishers had opportunities to produce textbooks, they were given very little flexibility in interpreting or supplementing the curricula designed by ministries of education. As reported by many of the respondents in this report, the contents of the manuscripts must go through a strict authorization process before they are sent to the printing house. Also, in many countries, the curriculum remains openly ethnocentric, with tendencies toward nationalistic views and interpretations.

There is also a conspicuous gap between national and international initiatives in curriculum reform, textbook development and what actually goes on in classrooms. In general, teachers do not have the capacity to adapt to radically different materials or to adapt their teaching styles to innovative pedagogies without training and continued support. Moreover, new approaches often involve the use of teaching aids, equipment or resources to which teachers do not have easy access. Thus, respondents reported that in spite of the ongoing initiatives and activities, history teaching in practice remains mostly very traditional, oriented toward memorizing events and facts, with textbooks containing too much information and written in a heavy, burdensome style that does not actively engage the students. Questions on the text are mainly factual, and few activities are integrated to encourage critical and independent thinking.

Overall, national policies for producing textbooks and learning materials in minority languages have improved, although some countries have made only marginal progress in this area. In others, the problem of “two schools under the same roof” arises at local level, resulting in issues of segregation and double quality standards, even though the legislation process at the national level may have tried to avoid this dilemma.

Regarding the way “the image of the other” is presented in textbooks, it may be said that this depends largely on who “the other” is. In many cases, neighboring groups are presented only if they have the same religion or have formed alliances. Representation of minority groups within national curricula remains problematic – for the most part, national history is mostly defined as the history of majority. While considerable progress has been made in some cases to include the history of minorities, it is usually from the perspective of the majority or national narrative and not systematically presented as significant. Textbook illustrations, whether photographs or drawings, representing minority and neighboring groups are not reported to evoke negative stereotypes, but, according to respondents, are relatively rare.

The cost of textbooks is problematic in some countries. In some cases textbooks are free for children from families who are officially recognized as economically disadvantaged, other pupils have to purchase textbooks. Even among parents who have enough money; there is widespread opinion that textbooks are too expensive.

Each of these obstacles to a quality history education for all during the process of reconciliation among peoples and states need to be realistically addressed if present and future generations are to gain the skills and perspectives necessary to sustain long term political and economic stability and prevent further conflict.

Based on the current preliminary stocktaking, the following recommendations should be taken into consideration in the planning of activities for the immediate future.

7. Recommendations

Christina Koulouri (2001, p. 23) poses the main question for all concerned with history education to ponder: “Why do we learn and teach history?” In her answer, she reminds us that patriotism and nationalism in history can lead to division and narcissism. She argues that teaching history should put more emphasis “on the development of critical thinking, of comprehensive understanding of the past and of tolerance to the others” (p. 23).

Students need to understand their past and heritage. They must discover themselves through history teaching. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to take into consideration the content and methods of teaching. The “readiness of history teachers” is also a vital consideration, because the “development of new skills, abilities, and applied knowledge” (Koulouri, 2001, p. 21) are required for real change and innovation in this area.

It may not be feasible to eliminate subjective and harmful perspectives on history, but it is possible to reduce their number. It is not enough to ask what kind of political, economical, social or cultural history of the country or others need to be taught. Good authors are also required to present history with desirable or tolerable objectives. In addition, trained teachers with pedagogical skills and a sound methodological point of view are essential to achieving such goals.

Recommendation 1

For the peaceful co-existence and cooperation in Southeast Europe to endure, it is vital for students learning history to gain a pluralistic perception of societies and culture, a democratic country, an open frontier, and economic as well as cultural partnership. For this reason, it is imperative to fight against nationalistic ideologies limited on ethnic, religious or linguistic views.

Recommendation 2

It is important for younger generations to learn about the history of neighboring countries. Thus, the history of neighboring countries should be included in history textbooks. Promoting a universal approach to history teaching, an awareness of the multiplicity of possible points of view, and a multiperspective approach is relevant for students in integrating their “image” of others.

Furthermore, it should be known that each country is unique and has its own problems. For example, in Croatia, there are internal problems related to the existence of Serb minority, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is a major problem concerning the former existence of the Ottoman Empire. In the Balkans, each cultural group is important and must be respected in the context of any geographical entity within which it is located.

Recommendation 3

Teaching history should not be limited to perspectives respecting the geographical borders for each country, but should be integrated throughout Southeast Europe. This can help promote understanding between people of different religious or linguistic groups.

One way in which to do this could be through initiating co-operation between and among countries in Southeast Europe through history textbooks. This idea has been successfully realized in other countries. For example, in 2005, former French President, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing made a proposition that France and Germany could work together on designing (elaborating) the history textbooks for both regions. It is a work currently in process, and France and Germany intend to jointly publish three history textbooks for the "Lycée" (upper secondary school, 15-19 year olds) between 2006 and 2008. The objective is to "make official and perpetuate our reconciliation", declared Jean-Louis Nembrini, General Inspector of History in France (Lefebvre & Bonnivard, 2005, p. 21). Through projects such as these, students in both countries are enabled to discover each other's perspectives as well as their shared history.

In parallel, could it be possible to imagine that students in Southeast European countries or countries from the former Yugoslavia may in future use the same history textbooks? Since those countries were formerly under the same school system, it could well be beneficial for them, politically and economically, to collaborate in history teaching.

Professor Koulouri and her team at the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE) state that they have been "active in the field of history education since 1998, as part of its overall goal to bring reconciliation and consolidate new democracies, by raising awareness of stereotypes, and increasing understanding of the perspective of the neighboring 'other'." Their project primarily targets "history teachers in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, FYR of Macedonia, Romania, Serbia & Montenegro (including Kosovo), Slovenia, and Turkey who participate in teacher training workshops to practice multi-perspective teaching methods" (p. 1). The team has published four alternative history textbooks for Southeast Europe. Published in English, some countries such as Serbia are ready to translate them in local language. This collaboration should continue in all countries in Southeast Europe.

Recommendation 4

The past should be historically distanced and lucidly treated by placing events in their contexts. Differences in the recounting of history should be explained and historicized as part of the past when different principles were prevailing, different requirements existed, and different thought processes were used. History textbooks should propose comparative studies and a global vision of events and facts from different historians. Cultural history should be incorporated where similarities and inter-influences are visible. Current differences should be accepted and respected and human rights should be recognized. Peace should be valued; collaboration should be learned and new perspectives should be taught.

Recommendation 5

History teaching is most relevant for students where the curriculum promotes students' faculties of critical thinking and analysis, creative thinking, decision-making and problem solving, rather than learning history through rote learning and memorization.

Recommendation 6

Teaching approaches may benefit from consideration of local initiatives and resources, expertise and NGOs. Projects should be initiated at both the top level (top-down) and individual level. In the course of doing so, it is essential to create national institutions in charge of history teaching, which are capable of providing education in a non-discriminatory way, and which prepare younger generations for democratic and economical development.

Recommendation 7

The African concept of UBUNTU with reference to human beings states that “a person is human precisely in being enveloped in the community of other human beings, in being caught up in the bundle of life. To be is to participate. The *summum bonum* here is not independence but sharing, interdependence. And what is true of the human person is surely true of human aggregations” (Archbishop Tutu quoted by Battle, 1996, p. 105). Starting from that concept, teaching history should be accompanied by teaching citizenship, human rights (conflict prevention and resolution), liberty and democracy (mutual understanding and tolerance, respect of minorities, democracy and tolerance building projects), and through teaching the history of different religions in schools.

Recommendation 8

The review and revision of textbooks does not ensure education for peaceful co-existence, even where good efforts have been made (Koulouri, 2001, 2002). If we design a perfect curriculum and elaborate good textbooks with tolerant content, efforts must be made to ensure that teachers are trained to implement those materials and interpret the content of textbooks. For this reason, teacher training is an essential complement to textbook and curriculum review, and efforts must be made to improve the capabilities of teachers at every opportunity.

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Annex I

Problems of History Teaching in Southeast Europe (Compiled Responses Grouped by Theme)

Teacher Preparation/Training:

- Lack of teacher training. Some teachers do not have enough qualifications in the subject; others prefer not to change much the way they teach for years;
- Weak pre-service and in-service teacher training system requirements;
- Weak pre-service and in-service teacher training system

Supplementary Material:

- Lack of adequate material in class or insufficient supply of didactical, for example historic maps, overhead projector, additional literature, audio-visual aids computers and access to internet in the schools;
- Teaching aids not answering the curriculum requirement;
- The lack of different and numerous materials for teaching

Content:

- Some countries have alternative contents for history teaching, others do not have;
- Mostly one perspective; in some cases are used different sources but in a supportive way to give more information about the historical events. Sometimes history textbooks controversial perspective is not presented;
- Lessons compose on events and facts, students learn the facts and events;
- Content written in a scientific style which is difficult for children to understand (academic style of educational content);
- The dependence of history curricula and textbooks, generally the contents of learning, from the government and the ideology of the state;
- In some countries, the content of the history textbooks is too much for the pupils to study. History syllabuses in primary and secondary (gymnasiums) schools have encyclopaedically structure – that means too many topics and not enough hours, especially if teachers want out use actively teaching methods;
- Neighbouring groups or nations are presented in the history textbooks mostly as hostile and dangerous. In many cases neighbouring groups are presented only if they have the same religion or they had done an alliance or have been supported grosso modo the same problems (wars, occupation) or events (resistance);
- In Former Yugoslav countries, some teachers are also uncertain how to teach sensitive topics from modern history from world war two and from first decade after world war two – with mass killing of Home Guard soldiers and other “enemies” – political and so called class enemy;
- In most the countries, image of others is not always presented in positive way

Pedagogical methods:

- The main problem in teaching history is education of the teachers with the new methods in teaching history, using critical thinking. A gap between the new curriculum built on competences and the old fashion type of teaching focusing on memorizing information;
- Over-prescriptive, over-burdened and outdated curricula, pedagogical tradition directed towards memorization of facts (skills are neglected);
- Predominantly authoritative narration;
- Teachers are not able to work with assessment methods and techniques like portfolio, continuous observation of students' behaviour, etc.
- The students are not actively engage on lessons. Also, the most of teacher did not use the active methods in history teaching. Lack of critical thinking;
- Teaching is still not sufficiently interactive;
- The system of individual interrogation as the only form of learning assessment was also adding to the frustration and majority of the students deeply disliked history

Annex II

Recommendations of the International Conference on Combating Stereotypes and Prejudice in History Textbooks of South-East Europe (Visby, Sweden, 1999)

Recommendations to the Director-General of UNESCO, in co-operation with the European Union (Stability Pact and Royaumont process) and the Council of Europe:

- i. Develop further the perspectives on history teaching, as they are outlined in UNESCO's Medium Term Strategy, into a coherent strategy for inter-agency and institutional cooperation with NGOs;
- ii. Update existing ways for dissemination of experiences, ideas and proposals for networking, making full use of the new information technologies and including the dissemination of results of relevant research such as the "Youth and History" project;
- iii. Identify a number of best practices in history teaching;
- iv. Promote research and evaluation in this field;
- v. Elaborate a specific plan of action for the South-East Europe subregion, aiming at, inter alia, fostering the process of establishing and further developing partnerships between governmental and intergovernmental institutions; innovation in teacher training; involving UNESCO's Associated Schools Network in the development of new materials and methods of history teaching; recognizing best practices in history teaching which can contribute to the transformation of negative feelings into reconciliation; adaptation and large-scale implementation of such examples of best practice; encouraging innovation in history teaching through a number of pilot projects; encouraging experiments with bi-or even multilateral co-production of supplementary educational materials and certain modules of history textbooks; facilitating access to innovative materials and methods through the Internet; providing support to initiatives which its Member States of South-East Europe may wish to take in carrying out a bilateral or multi-lateral revision of school textbooks so as to remove any prejudices or stereotypes they might contain vis-à-vis other nations or groups.

