

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

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An Evaluation  
of the First Year,  
2001-2002, and  
Recommendations

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**Civic Education in Primary and  
Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia**  
An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

## CONTENTS

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>1. The International Context</b>	<b>14</b>
1.1 The UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004)	14
1.2 Civic Education in a European Context	16
1.3 The IEA International Study on Civic Education	19
<b>2. Background to the Development of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia</b>	<b>23</b>
2.1 The current process of educational reform in the Republic of Serbia	23
2.2 The work of the Expert Group on Democratisation of Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship	24
2.3 The influence of NGO projects on the Civic Education curriculum	25
<b>3. Commentary on the Civic Education Curriculum</b>	<b>30</b>
3.1 The primary curriculum for Civic Education	30
3.2 The secondary curriculum for Civic Education	39
<b>4. Evaluation methodology</b>	<b>46</b>
4.1 Co-operation and partnerships	46
4.2 Evaluation design	46
4.3 Research instruments	49
4.4 Sampling procedure	51
4.5 Research	54
4.6 Analysis	55
4.7 Findings and conclusions	56
<b>5. Main findings</b>	<b>57</b>
5.1 Participants in Civic Education	57
5.2 Choices and policy issues	60
5.3 Timetabling	64
5.4 Curriculum content	64
5.5 Teaching and learning methods	76
5.6 Assessment	77
5.7 Training and support for teachers	78
5.8 Stakeholder reactions and perceived impact	81
<b>6. Conclusions</b>	<b>89</b>
6.1 Participants in Civic Education	89
6.2 Choices and policy issues	89
6.3 Timetabling	90
6.4 Curriculum content	90
6.5 Teaching and learning methods	91
6.6 Assessment	92

**Civic Education in Primary and  
Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia**  
**An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations**

6.7 Training and support for teachers	92
6.8 Stakeholder reactions and perceived impact	93
<b>7. Recommendations</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>102</b>
Appendix 1 : List of documents	102
Appendix 2 : Summaries of case studies	105

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The evaluation process included field visits, a national survey, case studies, interviews and a study of existing Education for Democratic Citizenship programmes implemented by NGOs in schools and communities. Funding was provided by the four institutions that undertook this evaluation.

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# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

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# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report is an evaluation of the introduction of Civic Education (CE) to the school curriculum in the Republic of Serbia. In November 2001, Civic Education was offered as an optional subject to pupils in the first grade of primary school (7-8 year-olds) and first year of secondary school (14-15 year-olds). Classes operated outside the normal timetable and the syllabi for Civic Education were developed from existing NGO programmes. Teachers of Civic Education were selected from existing staff within schools, and received extensive training through workshops provided by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES).

2. The evaluation took place between January and July 2002 and involved collaboration between UNESCO, UNICEF, and the Open Society Institute in consultation with the Ministry of Education and Sport. A team of international consultants led the evaluation and a Belgrade-based research agency, Strategic Marketing and Media Research Institute (SMMRI) was contracted to carry out data collection through a national survey. The evaluation also included an analysis of documentation and syllabi for Civic Education; interviews with academics and course designers; and case studies of the introduction of Civic Education to schools in six different parts of the Republic of Serbia.

3. **The International Context.** Section 1 of the evaluation locates the emergence of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia within an international context that includes the UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004); recent developments in civic education within a European Context; and an international study on civic education by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). These provide reference points for international norms that are emerging for civic education and provide evidence of a resurgence of interest in civic education, based on human rights and active participation through democratic processes, rather than the simple transmission of civic knowledge.

4. **The Local Context.** Section 2 identifies some of the specific developments leading up to the introduction of Civic Education to schools in the Republic of Serbia. These include the production of a strategy and action plan by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES); the establishment of an Expert Working Group on Democratisation of Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship; and a Local Consultation Process on education reforms. The recommended syllabi for Civic Education draw heavily on existing NGO programmes supported by organisations such as The Fund for an Open Society-Serbia, Save the Children UK, Save the Children Norway and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); brief descriptions of these programmes are provided.

5. **Commentary on the Curriculum.** Section 3 of the evaluation provides a critical commentary on the Civic Education programmes for primary and secondary schools based on an analysis of available documents (Ministry regulations, syllabi, teacher manuals and learning resources). There are Guidebooks for Teachers that provide detailed descriptions of each workshop at primary and secondary level.

- The syllabus for first grade of the primary school is called "Civic Education - Knowledge of Oneself and Others", and is made up of 36 lessons of 45 minutes each. The lessons are grouped into seven main topics. Internationally, there is lack of agreement on what might be age-appropriate concepts and competencies in civic education for primary school children. The Republic of Serbia syllabus for primary school is based on a well-articulated set of workshops and there is a strong commitment to active learning. Suggestions for future development include a developmental

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

focus on specific themes in each grade of primary school; the inclusion of more 'civic content' and work related to group identity; and a review of the current emphasis on psychosocial topics.

- The syllabus for the first grade of secondary school is made up of 35 lessons (45 minutes each). The lessons are grouped together into three units of study: Individual and Society (14 lessons); Rights and Responsibilities (12 lessons); and School as a Community (8 lessons). There is a strong commitment to active learning based on workshops previously developed by NGO programmes and a significant strength is an emphasis on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Suggestions for future development include a review of the time allocated to various themes; the inclusion of civic knowledge and understanding, economic dimensions of civic life, the law, and the role of the media in democratic societies. It is suggested that gaps in content are addressed and that the CE programme be spread over three years of secondary school, taking account of progression and linkages between grade levels.
- The syllabi provide the basis for training of primary and secondary teachers. In the case of primary schools 1,249 teachers were trained through two (6-day and 4-day) workshops. In the case of secondary schools 419 teachers were trained through two (5-day) workshops. At secondary level there are manuals for each training workshop. These are of a high standard and provide detailed and helpful guidance.
- There is a need to make syllabi, manuals, learning resources and other relevant documents available in different languages.
- Many of the issues raised through the CE curriculum (for example, concerning democratic processes as part of the school culture, pupil action projects, issues related to child protection and children's rights) have implications for the development of whole-school policies affecting all teachers.

### 6. **Methodology.** The main sources of data for the evaluation were:

- A national sample of 238 primary and 66 secondary schools offering Civic Education. Pupils, teachers and parents of children taking Civic Education completed questionnaires in each school. A local consultant appointed by UNICEF also designed a special research instrument for primary school children. Detailed analysis of data is provided in a separate Technical Report.
- Case studies of Civic Education in primary and secondary schools in six areas (Belgrade, Draginje-Koceljjeva, Preševo, Niš, Novi Pazar and Subotica). Each case study involved interviews with pupils, teachers, parents who have chosen Civic Education; pupils, teachers, parents who have not chosen Civic Education; principals and members of the wider community. Summaries of the case studies are provided in Appendix 2 and full details are contained in a separate report.
- Interviews with academics and members of the Expert Working Group involved in designing the Civic Education syllabi.

### 7. **Main recommendations.** The evaluation report provides full details of the main findings and conclusions. The main recommendations that arise from these are:



# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

## **7.1 Do not introduce a compulsory choice between Civic Education and Religious Education.**

- It is recommended that an urgent priority is to dispel the perception among certain stakeholder groups that Civic Education is an alternative to Religious Education. Pupils should not be forced to make a choice between Civic Education and Religious Education.
- If the MoES proceeds with the current decision to require a 'compulsory choice' between Civic Education and Religious Education within the normal timetable in the 2002-2003 school year, schools should be instructed to avoid timetabling Civic Education opposite Religious Education.
- The Ministry should also consider the different implications of introducing a forced choice in different regions of the country, depending on the demography. In regions where the commitment to Civic Education was high in the first year, this support could be undermined if Civic Education must compete with a strong commitment to Religious Education.
- The Ministry should provide guidance and support for resolving timetabling issues related to the introduction of the two new subjects. This should include responding to teacher and pupil concerns that CE may require double periods and that creative timetabling solutions may also be necessary.
- The MoES also needs to consider its long-term goal for Civic Education. One set of arguments suggests that CE should remain a voluntary option for pupils in the short term. A longer-term goal would be to secure support for the introduction of Civic Education as an integral part of the compulsory curriculum for all pupils in the first three grades of secondary school. This would be consistent with international norms. A sequential introduction of Civic Education in the eight years of primary school, perhaps adding one grade per year, would exceed international norms, but could be undertaken with a developmentally-appropriate focus on content, skills, and attitudes.

## **7.2 Maintain and extend the quality of the Civic Education curriculum.**

- A broad-based Civic Education curriculum working group should be established, drawing on expertise from a range of backgrounds and tasked with the development of the next phases of the curriculum, with a more balanced content in line with the curricula of Civic Education in other European countries.
- The emphasis on the use of active learning methods in the current Civic Education curriculum is essential and should be strongly supported throughout any processes of modification to the content.
- Children's rights/human rights issues seem to be the least well-received topic in the current Civic Education curriculum, by both teachers and pupils. A review of this section of the curriculum should be conducted by the CE authors and trainers, with the intention of revising both the curriculum and the training on rights issues. A survey of age appropriate methodologies for introducing children's rights with young children could also be useful.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- The name Civic Education should be retained, but as the curriculum is developed, a specific focus for each grade level can be added.

### **7.3 Improve information and outreach to all stakeholder groups.**

- Better dissemination of information to raise awareness about the aims and purposes of Civic Education should be carried out prior to the start of the 2002-2003 school year, particularly if all pupils will be required to choose between Civic Education and Religious Education.
- The Ministry might wish to develop a clear and simple statement defining Civic Education, to enable parents and pupils to make informed choices. In addition to information brochures produced by the MoES, alternative ways of disseminating information about Civic Education should be considered. Information meetings about the subject were positively received by parents in the first year, and should be held by schools wherever possible. Participation of current Civic Education teachers, pupils and parents should be encouraged, so that they can share their experiences of the subject with prospective parents and pupils.

### **7.4 Ensure that participation in Civic Education is possible for all students, particularly those who are members of minority language groups.**

- Ensure that all Civic Education materials – information brochures, syllabi, teacher’s manuals, pupil instruction materials – are translated into minority languages, so that language minority groups are not excluded from participation.

### **7.5 Maintain and extend the current quality of teacher training in Civic Education.**

- The Ministry should strive to retain the high quality levels in Civic Education teacher training that have been achieved so far. It is to be anticipated that a greatly increased number of Civic Education teachers will need to be trained as a result of the ‘compulsory choice’ legislation (estimates suggest that the number of teachers needed at the primary level may increase by a factor of three, and by a factor of 10 at the secondary level).
- It is recommended that the MoES not rely on weaker cascade models (in which trained teachers are expected to return to their schools and train other teachers), as this is likely to diminish the quality of the training experience.
- The MoES should consider shorter and more frequent Civic Education training formats, as opposed to the intensive five-day model used in the first year.
- The Ministry should demonstrate the value placed on Civic Education training by ensuring that training allowances and expenses are paid to participants promptly and efficiently.
- The sections of the teacher training on Children’s Rights should be given particular attention and revised if necessary, to ensure that appropriate methodology and relevance to real life issues are integral features.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### **7.6 Put into place effective and systematic mechanisms for assessing the outcomes of Civic Education.**

- Attendance at Civic Education classes should be recorded officially and records kept in a consistent place, such as the school diary.
- Assessment of pupils' participation in Civic Education should be included in the official school report.
- Descriptive grading is the most suitable way of assessing Civic Education at this time, as the subject deals largely with the development of skills and attitudes that are difficult to assess quantitatively.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### INTRODUCTION

In November 2001, Civic Education became an optional subject in the education system of the Republic of Serbia for the first time. Civic Education was offered to pupils in the first grade of primary school (7-8 year-olds) and first year of secondary school (14-15 year-olds). Classes operated outside the normal timetable. The syllabi for Civic Education were developed from related NGO programmes that have been in operation for several years and have been previously evaluated. Teachers of Civic Education were selected from within their schools, and received extensive training through workshops provided by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES).

In December 2001, the MoES requested the collaboration of UNESCO, UNICEF, and the Open Society Institute in carrying out an evaluation of the first year (September 2001 – July 2002) of the Civic Education programme. This report documents the evaluation context, process, findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

#### **Purpose and objectives of the evaluation**

The purpose of the evaluation was to conduct an in-depth analysis in order to assess both the contents and the teaching process of Civic Education during the first year of implementation.

The objectives of the evaluation were:

- to assess the content of the curriculum for Civic Education;
- to assess the training provided to teachers;
- to assess the teaching methods and materials used;
- to determine the perceptions of Civic Education by key stakeholders (pupils, teachers, parents, and principals) and the degree of satisfaction on the part of each of these stakeholders;
- to determine the impact of Civic Education, based on the perceptions of the key stakeholders and local communities.

The evaluation was also designed to provide recommendations to the MoES, with a view toward developing a strategy for incorporating Civic Education into the formal curriculum of the Republic of Serbia, including:

- how to improve arrangements for the teaching of Civic Education in the future;
- whether Civic Education should be voluntary or compulsory;
- whether Civic Education should be a separate subject and/or integrated into other subjects or areas of the curriculum;
- whether the curricula and textbooks are appropriate or need revision;
- any other significant issues that need to be addressed in future planning and implementation.

Additionally, the evaluation was to provide information to the international community on various aspects related to the incorporation of Civic Education into the formal education system.

#### **Key issues**

The evaluation collected data related to the following three key areas:

- *Conceptual issues* related to Civic Education – why the subject was introduced; its purpose, core concepts and values; whether it should be optional or compulsory.
- *How the programme is working out in practice* – what content/knowledge is covered; what issues pupils study; what skills pupils develop; what learning outcomes have been

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

identified; how learning is monitored or assessed; what impact the programme has had on pupils and the school.

- *Training and support for teachers* – which teachers were tasked with introducing these changes; how they volunteered, were appointed, or conscripted; their background, motivation, readiness and capacity for the task; the knowledge and skills required; preparation, orientation, training and support received; their place within overall school staffing structures; lines of reporting, accountability, inspection.

### Structure of the Evaluation Report

The evaluation report is divided into the following sections:

**Section 1** examines the international context against which Civic Education has developed in the Republic of Serbia.

**Section 2** explores the background of educational reform in the Republic of Serbia since October 2000 and the NGO projects that contributed both to education for democratic citizenship in the country as a whole, as well as to the pilot Civic Education curriculum.

**Section 3** presents an analysis of the Civic Education curricula for primary and secondary schools.

**Section 4** describes in detail the methodology of the evaluation study, the various instruments developed, and the process of case study research.

**Section 5** summarises the main findings of the evaluation study.

**Section 6** presents conclusions drawn from the findings.

**Section 7** describes the recommendations of the evaluation team for the future of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia.

# 1 THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

It is important to situate the emergence of a new Civic Education (CE) curriculum in the Republic of Serbia within the broader context of international developments. This section identifies three important international reference points and considers their implications for the development of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia. These are:

- The UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004).
- Civic Education in a European Context.
- The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) International Study on Civic Education.

## 1.1 The UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004)

The World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in 1993 reaffirmed the importance of promoting respect for human rights through education and recommended a framework for action<sup>1</sup>. In 1994 the UN General Assembly officially proclaimed 1995-2004 the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education and produced a Plan of Action for the Decade<sup>2</sup>. According to the Plan of Action, human rights education is about the imparting of knowledge, skills and attitudes directed to:

- a) The strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- b) The full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity;
- c) The promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups;
- d) The enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free society;
- e) The furtherance of the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights was requested to co-ordinate the implementation of the Plan of Action, in co-operation with UNESCO and all Member States. A key part of the Plan of Action is that, '*Governments should play an active role in the implementation of the programme of the Decade through the development of national plans of action for human rights education*'.<sup>3</sup>

Subsequently, Guidelines for National Plans of Action for Human Rights Education<sup>4</sup> were developed, and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Director-General of UNESCO addressed a joint letter to all Heads of State encouraging the establishment and implementation of these national plans. More recently the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has compiled a compendium of national plans that have already been developed as a means of sharing information among countries<sup>5</sup>. The compendium includes examples of national plans for human rights education from Croatia, France, Japan, the Philippines, Portugal and Turkey, as well as excerpts from overall national plans for human rights from Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Indonesia, Latvia, Malawi, Mexico, Norway and Venezuela.

Most national plans emphasise the importance of an integrated approach to human rights education: that is, through school-based programmes and through youth and community programmes outside school. The role of the media in human rights education is also a common feature. There are some examples of specific human rights programmes being included in the curriculum. However, it is more common to advocate multiple actions in a number of

1 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, paragraph 33, part I.

2 UN Doc. A/51/506/Add.1.

3 Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004, paragraph 11.

4 UN Doc. A/52/467/Add.1.

5 OHCHR, Compendium of National Plans of Action for Human Rights Education, Geneva, February 2001.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

areas, so that human rights education is integrated into other teaching subjects and modeled through the values and practices that operate within the classroom and the school.

In many countries, education programmes make special reference to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). This is consistent with the fact that governments have an obligation to make children aware of their rights and that most articles in the Convention have direct significance for children. Article 28 and Article 29 are particularly relevant for civic education<sup>6</sup>.

## Box 1.1: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

### Article 29: Aims of education

1. Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:
  - (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
  - (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
  - (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilisations different from his or her own;
  - (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;
  - (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.
2. No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.

A significant challenge in all countries is to make the language and concepts of human rights accessible, relevant and applied to real life situations, especially for younger children.

Apart from dedicated programmes, human rights education may find expression in the curriculum in many ways, for example through:

- **Skills-based programmes** involving workshops in communication, life skills and interpersonal relations. An important question is whether the development of *interpersonal* skills has any impact on the dynamics of *inter-group* relations within wider society.
- **Peace education programmes** that often share many of the characteristics of skills-based programmes, but with the defining characteristic of particular attention being given to issues related to 'violence' and 'conflict resolution'. The rationale for directing the programme toward specific groups (children, adolescents, adults, politicians, security forces, combatants, bereaved) is an important question.

<sup>6</sup> Other articles include Article 19 concerning measures to protect children against all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse; Article 22 concerning the rights of refugee children; Article 23 about the rights of children with disabilities; Article 24 about health; Article 30 about the rights of minorities; Article 34 about sexual abuse; Article 37 about the treatment of children by the justice system; and Article 38 concerning children in armed conflict.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- **Multicultural** and **intercultural education** programmes that emphasise learning about diversity and concepts such as tolerance and mutual understanding. However, it may be simplistic to think that conflict arises simply because of lack of understanding of other cultures and traditions. Such approaches lack impact if they ignore the crucial issues of inequality and differences in power relations between groups in society.
- **International education** aimed at understanding global issues and the interdependence of individuals, nations and cultures. An important question is the extent to which global security has become linked to the role of international development aid, the eradication of poverty and social justice issues in an increasingly unequal world.

During the 1990s there has also been a resurgence of interest in Civic and Citizenship Education as the number of formal democracies in the world has increased from 76 (46.1%) to 117 (61.3%). This has been described as the 'third wave of democracy' related to significant world events such as the ending of apartheid in South Africa, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the democratisation of former communist states in Eastern Europe and the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

Civic education programmes have become an increasingly important means for countries to educate citizens about their rights and responsibilities. Increasing pluralism within states has encouraged the development of civic education programmes that go beyond simple 'patriotic' models of citizenship requiring uncritical loyalty to the nation state. By defining 'citizenship' in terms of human rights and civic responsibilities, civic education programmes attempt to avoid the definition of nationality in terms of ethnic, religious or cultural identity. The belief is that concepts of citizenship based on human rights and responsibilities may make it more difficult to mobilise political conflict around identity issues. It has therefore become the norm for modern civic education programmes to have a strong human rights values base, to make specific reference to children's rights and address issues related to diversity and the rights of minorities within society.

## 1.2 Civic Education in a European Context

Alongside increasing pluralism within states, the modern world is witnessing increasing mobility and economic activity between states, accompanied by increased contact and interaction between diverse ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural groups. In a complex world it has become the norm for people to have multiple identities and loyalties. An additional challenge is the emergence of political structures beyond the level of the nation state. One example of this is the emergence of the European Union, which provides the context for the development of citizenship and civic education in post-war Europe.

### 1.2.1 The Council of Europe Programme on Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC)

Partly in response to political changes in a European context, the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe initiated a project on Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC).<sup>7</sup> The first phase of the project operated between 1997-2000 and its main aims were to:

- Explore concepts and practices of 'education for democratic citizenship'
- Understand learning methods appropriate to 'education for democratic citizenship'
- Identify and support examples of 'sites of citizenship'.

<sup>7</sup> Council of Europe, Education for Democratic Citizenship, Strasbourg, 2000. <http://culture.coe.fr/citizenship>



# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

During this first phase the project produced a number of documents that identify basic concepts and core competencies<sup>8</sup> and strategies for learning democratic citizenship<sup>9</sup>. The documentation suggests that education for democratic citizenship has four main dimensions:

- The **political and legal dimension** relates to a citizen's rights and duties with respect to the political system and the law;
- The **social dimension** refers to relations between individuals within society and how these operate within a framework of social and civic institutions;
- The **economic dimension** concerns an understanding of the world of work and issues to do with the production and consumption of goods and services and how the economy functions;
- The **cultural dimension** refers to collective representations and expressions of shared values and traditions within and between groups in society, including an appreciation of their historical basis.

This suggests that a broad and balanced programme of civic education will have some reference to each of these and provide pupils with age-appropriate opportunities to explore these dimensions through examples from their own society.

The Council of Europe documentation on strategies for learning suggests that education for democratic citizenship involves:

- **Cognitive learning** by acquiring knowledge, ideas and concepts and promoting critical thinking;
- **Social learning** by developing the skills to practice democracy in all areas and phases of life in childhood, adolescence and adult life – in school, the workplace and voluntary associations;
- **Affective learning** by stimulating an awareness of rights and responsibilities; norms of behaviour and values, ethical and moral issues within the community.

An emphasis is also placed on the importance of the following characteristics:

- Education for democratic citizenship is not only theoretical and should provide opportunities for young people to develop and practise the skills of citizenship through "school life, i.e. all aspects of school as a living, social environment with its collective rules, interpersonal conflicts, times and opportunities for co-operation; the lessons themselves; and through opportunities for spontaneous initiatives by the pupils outside the actual teaching activities".
- Education for democratic citizenship should encourage participation and provide young people with opportunities to explore the practice of citizenship through 'real-life' issues and projects. In some countries this is achieved by including action projects as part of the curriculum<sup>10</sup>.
- Controversial and emotional issues will inevitably arise and should not be avoided, whilst recognising that teachers require training and support to deal with controversial issues sensitively.

8 Audigier, F., Basic Concepts and Core Competences for Education for Democratic Citizenship, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2000 DGIV/EDU/CIT (2000) 23.

9 Duerr, K., Spajic-Vrkas, V. and Ferreire Martins, I., Strategies for Learning Democratic Citizenship, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2000 DECS/EDU/CIT (2000) 16.

10 Birzúa, C., Education for Democratic Citizenship: A Lifelong Learning Perspective, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2000 DGIV/EDU/CIT (2000) 21.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- Strategies for learning democratic citizenship should promote inclusion and co-operation.
- Education for democratic citizenship is a lifelong process<sup>11</sup>.

Since the final conference of the first phase of the EDC project<sup>12</sup> a number of follow-up activities have taken place in the areas of educational policy development for EDC. These include: networking (in particular of EDC co-ordinators) and bilateral co-operation and assistance initiatives in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and South East Europe (SEE)<sup>13</sup>.

### 1.2.2 The Enhanced Graz Process

More recently, as part of the Stability Pact for South East Europe, a Task Force on 'Education and Youth' has been established (also known as the Enhanced Graz Process<sup>14</sup>). As part of the Task Force, the Council of Europe co-ordinates the Working Group on Education for Citizenship and Management of Diversity. The Working Group has been instrumental in developing shared understandings and strategies for promoting and strengthening EDC and the management of diversity, both in SEE regionally and on a country basis. One of the Working Group's reference documents is the stock-taking research on policies for EDC and the management of diversity in SEE, which analyses achievements and weaknesses of educational systems and of EDC provisions specifically in the region<sup>15</sup>.

Through the membership of this group, there has been increasing co-operation between the Council of Europe and UNESCO to support initiatives and plans from the countries of Southeast Europe for fuller integration into European co-operation and structures. Following a joint UNESCO/Council of Europe fact-finding mission in July 2001, a national seminar on Education for Democratic Citizenship was organised jointly with the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) of the Republic of Serbia. The seminar was held in Belgrade (12-15 December 2001), and considered a strategy for the introduction of Education for Democratic Citizenship and human rights education to the formal education system in the Republic of Serbia<sup>16</sup>.

The Council of Europe has also organised the Second Informal Conference of Ministers of Education from Southeast Europe (November 2001). In their declaration, the Ministers underlined their interest in continuing, inter alia, "to develop the implementation of co-operation measures in the region in line with and in response to the priorities established at the first informal conference, particularly in the fields of legislative and structural reforms, history teaching, education for democratic citizenship and language teaching."

A meeting of Ministers and senior officials from 10 South East European Countries organised by UNESCO in Paris (4-5 April 2002) also affirmed that Education for Democratic Citizenship is identified as a priority area for regional co-operation.

These developments demonstrate a high level of commitment to the introduction of Education for Democratic Citizenship in the Republic of Serbia as one aspect of broader reforms to democratise the education system. Co-operation with the Council of Europe is evident in Ministry of Education documents concerning educational reform<sup>17</sup> and in specific proposals for Education for Democratic Citizenship<sup>18</sup>. It is to be expected, therefore, that the new curriculum for Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia should share some of the characteristics of Education for Democratic Citizenship proposed by the Council of Europe.

11 Carey, L. and Forrester, K., Sites of Citizenship: Empowerment, Participation and Partnerships, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2000 DECS/EDU/CIT (99) 62 def 2.

12 Forrester, K., Project on Education for Democratic Citizenship, Final Conference, Strasbourg, 14-16 September 2000 DGIV/EDU/CIT (2000) 41.

13 For more detailed information, see the website of the CoE EDC activities at <http://coe.culture.int/citizenship>

14 For more detailed information, see the website of the Task Force at [www.see-educoop.net](http://www.see-educoop.net)

15 The stocktaking research can be found on the website of the Task Force [www.see-educoop.net](http://www.see-educoop.net)

16 A further conference on educational reform in the Republic of Serbia took place in January 2002. This evaluation supports the reform process in the area of Education for Democratic Citizenship.

17 Ministry of Education and Sports, Quality Education For All: Education Reform in Serbia, Strategy and Action Plan, Belgrade, 2001.

18 Ministry of Education and Sports, Democratisation of Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship, Report of the Expert Team, Belgrade, 2001.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

## 1.3 The IEA International Study on Civic Education

The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) was founded in 1959 for the “purpose of conducting comparative studies focusing on educational policies and practices in various countries and educational systems around the world”. It has 54 member countries and a secretariat based in Amsterdam. The IEA conducted its first study of Civic Education in 1971 involving surveys of students, teachers and principals in 10 countries. Approximately 30,000 ten and fourteen year-olds completed instruments measuring knowledge and attitudes. However, only Western industrialised countries chose to take part and no country stood out as consistently successful at transmitting civic values<sup>19</sup>.

In 1994 the IEA initiated a new international study on Civic Education. The study was carried out between 1995 and 2001 and the results published in two parts:

### 1.3.1 Qualitative case studies of civic education across 24 countries<sup>20</sup>

The case study approach meant “definitions of and approaches to Civic Education could be understood best by considering them within the contexts in which they are found”. It also provided the opportunity for sharing and exchange of information between countries, as it was accepted that there is no single best approach to Civic Education in different democracies. Each national case study was developed in response to 18 framing questions. The following summaries draw directly from the IEA case studies of civic education in a selected number of countries:

**Bulgaria**<sup>21</sup>. In gymnasias, Civic Education is mainly integrated into compulsory subjects, although some schools have specialised modules. In vocational schools, Civic Education is connected to future professional roles. Current concepts of citizenship education place more emphasis on personal freedom and social justice. Civic Education is also seen as a means of teaching about human rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Three main approaches are being pursued – a non-governmental approach; development of Civic Education through existing subject areas; and attempts to develop a national system of school-based Civic Education. The core of Civic Education is organised around four topics (democracy, authority and institutions; rights and obligations of the citizen; national identity; and social cohesion and social diversity). More interactive learning methods are advocated. Knowledge is assessed as part of other subject areas but there is no formal grading of Civic Education.

**Czech Republic**<sup>22</sup>. In 1993 Czechoslovakia split into two independent states (the Czech Republic and Slovakia) and the concept of national identity has changed significantly. The population of 10 million is 95% Czech with minorities of Slovaks (315,000) and Roma (170,000). Education is compulsory from age 6 to 14 and there are three types of secondary school: gymnasias, technical and vocational. A central Ministry determines curriculum content expressed as The Standard of Basic Education. Civic Education is a separate subject with a minimal time allocation (1-2 hours per week depending on the curriculum being followed) and “the curriculum is formulated around a set of key words and expressions” but there is “no clear statement about expected outcomes”.

**Germany**<sup>23</sup>. Most of the current generation of school children have grown up within a unified Germany. The secondary school system is tripartite, made up of the gymnasium (academic), realschule (intermediate) and hauptschule (lower secondary). The federal states of the FRG

19 Torney-Purta, J. and Schwille, J. (1986) 'Civic values learned in school: policy and practice in industrialized countries', *Comparative Education Review*, 30, 30-49.

20 Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999) *Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*, IEA, Amsterdam. ISBN 90 5166 671 3

21 Balkansky, P., Zahariev, Z., Stoyanov, S. and Stoyanova, N., 'Challenges in Developing a New System of Civic Education in Conditions of Social Change: Bulgaria' in Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999) *Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*, Amsterdam, IEA.

22 Válková, J. and Kalous, J., 'The Changing Face of Civic Education in the Czech Republic' in Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999) *Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*, Amsterdam, IEA.

23 Haendle, C., Oesterreich, D. and Trommer, L., 'Concepts of Civic Education in Germany based on a Survey of Expert Opinion' in Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999) *Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*, Amsterdam, IEA.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

have autonomy in education, and this means there are variations in provision for Civic Education. In general specific classes in Civic Education do not begin until Grade 7, when one hour per week is the norm. Topics include social relationships, democracy, politics, the law, the media, economic systems, international relations and peacekeeping.

**Greece**<sup>24</sup>. Primary school (demotico) runs from Grades 1 to 6. Lower secondary school (gymnasio) is compulsory up to Grade 9. Upper secondary school (lykeion) runs to Grade 12. The curriculum is the responsibility of the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs. Citizenship education is rather diffused, but it appears in the timetable as a specific subject – ‘social and political education’ in primary school at Grades 5 and 6 and ‘elements of democratic government’ in lower secondary school. In general, about 1 hour per week is devoted to this area of the curriculum.

**Hungary**<sup>25</sup>. Civics previously helped maintain the ideological underpinnings of the one party system. In curriculum terms, a transitional period has followed the Education Act of 1993. In general, students learn about the current issues of Civic Education in a separate subject after the chronological study of history. A significant number of programmes and teaching materials are available. Three alternative programmes in Civic Education exist – a CIVITAS programme; an Amnesty-Soros programme; and a textbook<sup>26</sup>. Plans for the National Core Curriculum are to introduce three teaching units (social studies, civics and economics).

**Poland**<sup>27</sup>. By the late 1980s ‘civic education’ for 15 year-olds in the final year of primary school and a compulsory subject called ‘knowledge of society’ in secondary school were not taken very seriously. Debates concerning the reform of Civic Education involve tension between the Catholic Church (which believes that Civic Education in public schools should be based on Christian values) and those who regard human rights as the foundation. Issues have also arisen concerning minorities and Polish identity, and the extent to which national identity is threatened by European citizenship. The education authorities identify the main objectives for Civic Education in a core curriculum, but teachers have considerable discretion to create individual programmes. The Polish-American project, ‘Education for Citizenship in a Democratic Society’, has been influential in developing new civics curriculum materials.

**Romania**<sup>28</sup>. Romania is member of the Council of Europe and a candidate for membership of the European Union. Previously, Civic Education was an important subject with ideological content. In February 1990, Civic Education classes were replaced by classes in ‘democratic culture’. New legislation was introduced in 1995 and Civic Education is now taught as a subject in the curriculum (1 hour per week) for children aged 9-10 years and 13-14 years. In general terms, there is an emphasis on topics concerning the nature of the state, democracy and identity.

**Switzerland**<sup>29</sup>. The Swiss Confederation is based on federalism, direct democracy and perpetual neutrality. Due to the federalist structure, there is no national curriculum. Civic Education is not well-defined within the Swiss education system and there is loose coordination between different regions. Most cantons address matters related to the functioning of the state through the History curriculum, and discussion of civic and moral issues arise through other subject areas.

24 Makrinioti, D. and Solomon, J., ‘The Discourse of Citizenship Education in Greece: National Identity and Social Diversity’ in Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999) *Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*, Amsterdam, IEA.

25 Matrai, Z., ‘In Transit: Civic Education in Hungary’ in Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999) *Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*, Amsterdam, IEA.

26 Fehér, G. (1994) *Társadalomismeret*, Budapest, SZEG.

27 Janowski, A., ‘The Specific Nature and Objectives of Civic Education in Poland: Some Reflections’ in Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999) *Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*, Amsterdam, IEA.

28 Bunesco, G., Stan, E., Albu, G., Badea, D. and Oprica, O., ‘Cohesion and Diversity in National Identity: Civic Education in Romania’ in Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999) *Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*, Amsterdam, IEA.

29 Reichenbach, R., ‘Abandoning the Myth of Exceptionality: On Civic Education in Switzerland’ in Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999) *Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*, Amsterdam, IEA.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

**United Kingdom**<sup>30</sup>. In England, legislation has introduced Citizenship as a required part of the curriculum and a working group has identified three main strands for Citizenship Education – ‘social and moral responsibility’, ‘community involvement’ and ‘political literacy’. In Northern Ireland the introduction of Citizenship Education is seen as one way to underpin the move away from political violence towards democratic politics as part of a peace process. The proposed programme focuses on core areas of diversity, human rights and democracy.

**United States of America**<sup>31</sup>. There is considerable diversity in curriculum provision for Civic Education among the 50 states and more than 15,000 school districts. Since the 1980s, a school subject called ‘social studies’ has been an important means of Civic Education. In most states there is a requirement for pupils to receive such courses between Grades 6 and 12. In general, there is an emphasis on teaching about democracy, and the starting point in most cases is the United States Constitution. Many and varied resources are available but there is no official textbook. The case study suggests that there is more emphasis in texts on individual rights than on citizens’ responsibilities. There is a concern to model democracy, an emphasis on extra-curricular activities, and involvement in ‘service learning’. There is no national examination but the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) periodically assesses the civic knowledge of students through surveys in sample schools.

### 1.3.2 An assessment of civic knowledge, skills and values amongst 14 year-olds in 28 countries<sup>32</sup>

The second part of the IEA study involved the completion of a cognitive test and a survey of attitudinal and behavioural items by a representative sample of approximately 3,000 young people (aged 14 years old) in each of the 28 participating countries (almost 90,000 in total).

Phase 1 of the study had indicated that knowledge of domestic political institutions and traditions is an accepted focus for Civic Education in participating countries. The four major domains of Civic Education content were identified as:

- Democracy and democratic institutions
- National identity
- International and regional organisations
- Social cohesion and diversity

There were test items related to each of these domains. The test items distinguished between students’ *knowledge* of civic content and their *skills* in interpreting civic-related material, including their ability to distinguish between facts and opinions. Some of the findings taken directly from the IEA study are:

- Differences in civic knowledge across countries were not large<sup>33</sup>. Countries with civic knowledge significantly higher than the international mean include post-communist countries (Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia), two Nordic countries (Finland and Norway), Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Hong Kong and the United States. In the group of countries significantly below the international mean were two Western European (Belgium and Portugal), two Latin American (Chile and Colombia), three Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) and Bulgaria<sup>34</sup>.
- Fourteen-year-olds across countries believe that free elections and the availability of organisations for people to join strengthen democracy. They believe democracy is weakened when wealthy people have undue influence on government, when politicians influence the courts, and when people are forbidden to express ideas critical of government<sup>35</sup>.

30 Kerr, D., ‘Re-examining Citizenship Education in England’ in Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999) Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project, Amsterdam, IEA.

31 Hahn, D.L., ‘Challenges to Civic Education in the United States’ in Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999) Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project, Amsterdam, IEA.

32 Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Oswald, H. and Schulz, W. (2001) Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries. Civic Knowledge and Engagement at Age Fourteen, Amsterdam, IEA. ISBN 90 5166 834 1.

33 *ibid.* p.44 and p.176.

34 *ibid.* p.54.

35 *ibid.* p.70.

## Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

### An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- The highest level of trust in government-related institutions was found in Denmark, Norway and Switzerland. The lowest trust scores were found in Bulgaria, the Russian Federation and Slovenia<sup>36</sup>.
- Fourteen-year-olds are only moderately interested in politics in most countries. Television is an important source of political information. Only a minority of students believe that they are likely to engage in protest activities<sup>37</sup>.
- About one-quarter of students say that they are often encouraged to voice their opinions during discussions in their classrooms, but equal proportion say this rarely or never occurs<sup>38</sup>.

Taken together, the evidence from the two parts of the IEA Civic Education study suggest that:

- Civic Education is deeply embedded within the political and historical context unique to each country. "Review and rethinking of civic education is taking place not only in post-communist countries and those with a recent history of democracy, but also in well-developed and long-standing democracies"<sup>39</sup>.
- There are high expectations in emerging democracies, but it is not appropriate to simply import Civic Education programmes from other countries. "The older generation holds onto many memories retained from the past and a decade is a short period in which to expect real change in political culture or personal belief structure"<sup>40</sup>.
- "Movement towards membership of supranational organisations such as the European Union is both welcomed as creating a normalised situation and faced with anxiety because of the possibility of weakened national identity in some countries"<sup>41</sup>.
- The school adapts slowly to transitions – with respect to change in teaching content and teaching methods, but also in the context of larger reform processes such as decentralisation of control and authority<sup>42</sup>.
- "Civic education should be cross-disciplinary, participative, interactive, related to life, conducted in a non-authoritarian environment, cognisant of the challenges of societal diversity and co-constructed with parents and the community (and non-government organisations) as well as the school"<sup>43</sup>.
- There are gaps between aspiration and what actually happens at classroom level. The vision of Civic Education often emphasises the development of critical thinking or education about values, but the reality is often about knowledge transmission<sup>44</sup>.

The evaluation of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia needs to be understood in light of these broader international findings. The next section focuses on the background to the development of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia.

36 *ibid.* p.95.

37 *ibid.* p.114.

38 *ibid.* p.130.

39 Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J. and Amadeo, J. (1999) *Civic Education Across Countries: Twenty-four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*, Amsterdam, IEA, p.30.

40 *ibid.* p.31.

41 *ibid.* p.31.

42 *ibid.* p.31.

43 *ibid.* p.30.

44 *ibid.* p.34.

# 2 BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIC EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

Prior to the introduction of Civic Education in November 2001, there was no subject in the curriculum of the Republic of Serbia that attempted to develop civic knowledge, skills and attitudes. The existing 'Constitution and Civil Law' course in the fourth year of secondary school tends to focus strictly on knowledge of constitutional law, rather than issues pertaining to democracy and human rights, and the skills and attitudes needed for their practice. In order to understand the nature of the Civic Education programme in its first year, it is necessary to consider the larger processes of educational reform in the Republic of Serbia, as well as the origins of the projects that were used as the basis of the pilot curriculum.

## 2.1 The current process of educational reform in the Republic of Serbia

The change of government in the Republic of Serbia in October 2000 paved the way for the initiation of wide-ranging educational reform. The education sector had suffered heavily during the 1990s as the result of war, sanctions and economic hardship. Impacts on the education system included an influx of refugees and internally displaced persons, shortages of school materials, poor school maintenance, demoralised and underpaid teachers, and outdated curricula and teaching methods. The poor quality of education resulted in a decline in student achievement, and rising early dropout rates<sup>45</sup>, both of which have been linked to increases in juvenile delinquency and violence. In July 2001, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) produced a strategy and action plan<sup>46</sup> that established a comprehensive framework for educational reform. This framework drew upon the recommendations of various international bodies:

- A large-scale analysis by UNICEF Belgrade<sup>47</sup> identified a number of areas for potential educational development, including improving the quality of the current rigid curriculum, changing traditional teaching methods, making assessment strategies more appropriate, democratising the internal structure of the school, and strengthening pre-service and in-service teacher training. The analysis specifically recommended that proposals for curricular innovations such as "educating for active participation of citizens in democracy" be reviewed for potential inclusion in a re-designed educational system.
- A study by the OECD<sup>48</sup> supported many of these findings. It noted that curricula are fact-based and out-dated, offering little possibility for the development of critical thinking or life skills. The narrow subject-based syllabi discourage the use of cross-curricular approaches. Teachers rely on lecturing; debate, problem-solving, group work, or other forms of interaction are rarely used. The study recommended a more participatory process of curriculum development, a range of student learning activities, and the inclusion of "wider humanistic fields such as citizenship, values, culture, economy, and ecology". It also stated that the educational system should deliver outcomes such as personal and social growth, and the appropriate conduct of citizens toward each other.
- A World Bank report<sup>49</sup> similarly emphasised the need for improving educational efficiency, decentralising the education system, and reviving the quality of programmes. New input to curriculum, teaching methods, materials, assessment strategies, and teacher

45 See UNICEF Belgrade, *Comprehensive Analysis of Primary Education in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia*, 2001.

46 See Ministry of Education and Sports, *Education changes in Serbia*, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, July 2001. See also Ministry of Education and Sports, *Quality Education For All. A Way Toward a Developed Society: Education Reform in the Republic of Serbia, Strategy and Action Plan*, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, July 2001.

47 See UNICEF Belgrade, *Comprehensive Analysis of Primary Education in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia*, 2001.

48 See OECD, *Thematic Review of National Policies for Education*, OECD Centre for Co-operation with Non-members, CCNM/DELSA/ED, 11, 2001.

49 See The World Bank, *Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Breaking with the past – the path to stability and growth*, World Bank Report, 2001.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

training are needed, as well as renewed efforts to include marginalised groups. Specific recommendations involved training principals for more democratic school management, promoting tolerance through textbook analysis, and teacher training in participatory methods, co-operative learning, and critical thinking.

In its strategy and action plan, the MoES stated that modernising and reorganising the schooling system should contribute towards three aims: economic revival, democratic development, and integration of the country into Europe.

The number of Expert Groups that were established during 2001 to address the first wave of reform processes (2001-2004) indicates the comprehensive nature of the educational reform undertaken by the MoES. These included groups on Democratisation of Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship, Decentralisation, Teacher Education, Quality Assurance (Assessment and Evaluation), Vocational Education and Training, Adult Learning and Lifelong Learning, Pre-school Education, Higher Education Reform, and Youth Policy Development.

In addition to the establishment of the Expert Groups, the MoES carried out a Local Consultation Process (LCP) on four major reform issues: democratisation, curricula reform, teacher education and evaluation. The LCP took the form of roundtable discussions, held at over 65 locations around the Republic of Serbia during 2001, with over 9000 participants. These discussions brought together parents, pupils, teachers, school directors, psychologists and pedagogues, and school board members. For many participants this was a unique first experience with democratic decision-making in the school context, and one that produced a high level of satisfaction. The results of the LCP's were communicated to the Expert Groups, to be taken into consideration in developing their respective strategies.

Suggestions for the Democratisation of Education that arose from the LCP<sup>50</sup> included (among others):

- Schools should focus on educational, rather than political issues;
- Better relationships should be created between teachers and students, and mechanisms created to foster co-operation and mutual appreciation among all members of the school community;
- Parents and students should have more ability to make decisions on school issues;
- Democratic, participatory teaching methods should be used; education for democratic citizenship should be taught; and constructive communication and appreciation of diversity practised.

## 2.2 The work of the Expert Group on Democratisation of Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship

The Expert Group on Democratisation of Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) produced a report<sup>51</sup> affirming that democracy implies respect for basic values (freedom, responsibility, equality, solidarity, personal dignity, respect for diversity), and the observance of basic principles and procedures (participation, tolerance, dialogue, debate, negotiation, peaceful resolution of conflicts). It also states that democracy in education is based on equality (equal rights for all) and participation (freedom of expression, choice, participation in decision-making).

50 See Ministry of Education and Sports, Quality Education For All. A Way Toward a Developed Society: Education Reform in the Republic of Serbia, Strategy and Action Plan, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, 2002.

51 See Ministry of Education and Sports, Democratisation of Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship, Report of the Expert Team, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, 2001, page 4. Available on Ministry of Education and Sports website, [www.min.edu.yu](http://www.min.edu.yu)



# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

The Expert Group sees EDC as encompassing issues dealt with not only in Civic Education, but in education for human rights, multi- and inter-cultural education, education for peace and development, and global education. These issues extend beyond the formal schooling system to informal educational contexts such as NGOs, the local community, the family and the workplace.

Based on this broad view of EDC, the Expert Group initially established three main tasks for itself:

- to develop syllabi for the new subject, Civic Education, as well as teacher training plans and manuals for the subject;
- to consider the wider issues connected to introducing EDC to schools and training institutions, in the form of separate subjects, cross-curricular approaches, and extra-curricular activities;
- to consider more global issues related to democratising the education system, and to develop a strategy for modernising and reorganising the schooling system in accordance with democratic values and procedures.

Work on the planned introduction of Education for Democratic Citizenship into the curriculum developed a sudden urgency in July 2001, when the government initiated the re-introduction of Religious Education (RE) into the schools, after an absence of some 50 years. It was quickly decided that an 'alternative subject', based on the values common to all citizens in a democratic, civil society, should also be introduced. Both subjects were to be voluntary; that is, parents and pupils could choose one, both, or neither. The 'alternative' subject was named Civic Education (CE), but because there was a period of time during which it was referred to simply as the 'alternative' subject, many could have gained the perception that CE was somehow in opposition to RE.

With limited time to develop a Civic Education curriculum before the start of school in September 2001, the Expert Group relied for the first year on adapting existing extracurricular programmes that addressed civics, multiculturalism, constructive conflict resolution and non-violent communication. These had been developed in the previous eight years by local experts and disseminated in the education system through NGOs and expert institutions, supported by international organisations, in a non-formal education framework.

## 2.3 The influence of NGO projects on the Civic Education curriculum

During the 1990s, a number of NGOs were formed, many of them with the purpose of enabling citizens to respond to the war and the resulting economic and social conditions. The Fund for an Open Society-Serbia (FOS) supported a number of these NGOs that influenced the development of civil society. During this period, opportunities for educational innovation were limited. However, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was able to support NGO projects with an educational focus, three of which were ultimately used as the basis for the Civic Education curriculum. The Yugoslav Child Rights Centre (YuCRC), an NGO supported by Save the Children UK and Save the Children Norway, also developed an educational programme that was incorporated into the Civic Education curriculum.

### *Fund for an Open Society-supported projects*

Fund for an Open Society-Serbia (FOS) was established in 1991. Its education projects aim to promote the values of a democratic society, as well as to reform and modernise education.

## Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

### An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

The education programme has been realised in close collaboration with other FOS programmes: the Media Programme (educating journalists, informing the public on reforms); Law Programme (developing legal regulations in education); Women's, Roma and Ethnic Relations programmes (curricula and textbook analysis, introducing principles such as the elimination of nationalism, sexism, and prejudices toward others); Youth Initiatives (actively involving pupils/students in reform processes); and the Publishing Programme (lobbying for de-monopolisation of textbook writing and printing, translating and publishing essential professional reference literature). Co-operation with Open Society Institute Network programmes, the International HESP (Higher Education Support Programme) and Open Society Education Programmes for South Eastern Europe strengthens the realisation of the national strategy, as well as the development of joint initiatives in the region.

While the FOS programmes did not directly provide curriculum content for the first year of Civic Education, FOS support for the development of NGOs contributed to an emerging vision of civil society in the Republic of Serbia. This can be seen as an example of education for democratic citizenship taking place mainly in the non-formal sector<sup>52</sup>. FOS programmes are likely to continue to influence the educational reform process, and may contribute to the future development of the Civic Education curriculum.

Examples of FOS programmes<sup>53</sup> include:

- *Educational System Transformation*: Started in 1999 to promote the use of modern teaching methodologies, this project has focused on raising awareness among the pedagogic public of the need for reform, through supporting their participation in situation analyses, textbook analysis, drafting concepts for curriculum reform, and goal setting. In 2000, when the MoES defined the main directions for educational reform in the Republic of Serbia, FOS supported the work of the Expert Groups in addressing the first wave of reform processes (2001-2004). FOS also published the MoES strategy document 'Quality Education for All'. Believing in decentralisation of the educational system and the importance of the consultative processes involving all stakeholders, FOS supported the Local Consultation Process (LCP) initiated by the MoES on four major reform issues in 2001. The focus of the FOS Education System Transformation in 2002-2006 is curriculum and textbook reform.
- *The Third Millennium Project*: Started in 1996 as a way to infuse information technology into the curriculum, the project promotes child-centred and democratic models of teaching, and introduces new topics such as communication and violence prevention. Of the 40 schools where the Project has been implemented since 2001, five have successfully become Regional Teacher Training Centres.
- *Debate Programme*: Begun in 1994, this project develops the abilities of secondary school pupils to listen to others, solve problems, use various sources of information, present their ideas, think critically and creatively, and cultivate tolerance for others' beliefs. Most of the Debate Clubs are in secondary schools, with both teachers and pupils participating. Debate Clubs are an extracurricular activity, and have been used to introduce many Civic Education-related topics to participants.
- *Minority Education Programme*: This project aims to create a favourable climate in both majority and minority neighbourhoods for mother-tongue teaching. It campaigns for more minority language classrooms, and publishes materials in minority languages. It includes pre-school and compensatory programmes for Roma children.

52 See Fund for an Open Society-Yugoslavia, *The Last Decade: Serbian Citizens and the Struggle for Democracy and An Open Society 1991-2001*, FOS-Yu, Belgrade, 2001.

53 See Fund for an Open Society-Yugoslavia, *The Fund for an Open Society: Educational Programmes*, FOS-Yu, Belgrade, 2001.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- *Anti-Bias Training for Children and Adults:* This new project aims to raise awareness among children and adults of discrimination issues, to change attitudes (particularly toward the Roma), to develop strategies for fighting prejudice, and to improve co-operation and understanding among diverse people.
- *Open Clubs Network:* The first Open Clubs<sup>54</sup> began in 1996. Originally launched to assist the psychological and social integration of refugee children into local communities, they have evolved into workshop centres for theatre, painting, film, and literary groups, with a focus on ideas of tolerance, non-violence, and democracy.

## UNICEF-supported projects

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has supported educational projects in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia since 1993. Because UNICEF was seen as a politically neutral organisation, it was able to support NGO projects that could enter the formal school sector and work directly with teachers and children. Most of these programmes are still operating. They are oriented toward the development of child-friendly and academically effective schools that teach social, emotional and life skills; promote children's rights; and support participation in the school, family and community. UNICEF assistance includes financial support, capacity building, programme development, evaluation, and advocacy. UNICEF-supported programmes<sup>55</sup> that directly influenced the current Civic Education curriculum include:

- *Smile Keepers: Programme for the Support and Promotion of Child Development in a War-Affected Social Context:* This programme started in 1993 with the aim of providing psychosocial assistance within the school context to children and adolescents affected by war. Specific objectives of the project were to reduce the negative psychological impact of the war, to prevent stress-related disturbances in children exposed to trauma, to facilitate the adjustment of refugee children to new environments, and to support and increase the professional competence of pre-school and school psychologists, pedagogues and teachers. The programme uses an interactive workshop model, with topics on self-identity and continuity, memories, worries, communication and co-operation, conflicts, anger, fears, grief, dreams, love, rights, wishes, and future aims. Among the findings of the programme evaluation were that children became less afraid to express their emotions, less fearful, more confident and sociable. The programme reached approximately 8,000 adults and 100,000 children. The programme was developed by the Centre for Non-Violent Communication and implemented by the Institute for Psychology under the Psychology Department, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. *Smile Keepers* was chosen by the Expert Group as the basis for the first half of the primary school Civic Education curriculum.
- *Words are Windows or They are Walls (Giraffe Language): Education for Non-Violent Communication (NVC):* Implementation of this project started in 1995. Its objective is to train both adults working with children and children themselves to apply non-violent emphatic communication, and constructive conflict resolution. It is based on a model of education that involves the child in an active role, promoting autonomous motivation, self-discipline, and respect and co-operation between children and adults. Evaluation results include improved communication skills, reduction of school violence, and increased teacher competence. By the end of 2001, over 1,500 teachers and 40,000 children 5 to 16 years of age had been involved in the NVC programmes. The programme was developed by the Centre for Non-Violent Communication and implemented by the Institute for Psychology at the University of Belgrade. *Words are Windows or They are*

54 See Fund for an Open Society-Yugoslavia, Open Clubs' Network in Yugoslavia, FOS-Yu, Belgrade, 2002.

55 See UNICEF Belgrade, UNICEF-supported Programmes Promoting Education for Democratic Citizenship, 2002.

## Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

### An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

*Walls* was chosen by the Expert Group as the basis for the second half of the primary school Civic Education curriculum.

- *Goodwill Classroom (GWC): School Programme for Constructive Conflict Resolution:* Implementation of the *Goodwill Classroom* project began in 1994 and is ongoing, with updates and modifications introduced in 2001. Its aims are to develop the knowledge and skills needed for tolerant, constructive and responsible social behaviour and peaceful conflict resolution. The project has produced a series of 12-15 workshops each for lower primary, upper primary and secondary schools. Evaluation results have included reduced tension and conflict in participating classrooms, more positive feelings about school, and high levels of satisfaction with the project. Over 2,000 educational professionals and 50,000 students have benefited from the programme. The programme was developed by the Centre for Non-Violent Action, Belgrade and implemented by the NGO Most Belgrade. *Goodwill Classroom* was chosen by the Expert Group as the basis for the first section of the secondary school Civic Education curriculum.

The fact that these programmes had developed detailed teachers manuals and training models, as well as the fact that they had been positively evaluated for their impact on children and teachers, may have been factors leading to their selection for inclusion in the Civic Education curriculum. Other UNICEF-supported projects that have been influential, and may impact the future development of Civic Education include:

- *Primer of Children's Rights:* This project, started in 1994, trains teachers, NGO associates and parents on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and advocacy for children's rights. It helps adults and children carry out local activities aimed at improving children's social and physical environment. The project teaches a range of social and life skills, and educates children about the social institutions and structures through which those skills can be practised.
- *Parents and Kindergarten Teachers in Action:* This project, derived from the *Primer of Children's Rights*, aims to raise awareness of the Convention on the Rights of the Child among parents and teachers of pre-school children, and mobilise adults to work together on behalf of young children. Project participants learn about their role in implementing the CRC, identify children's needs, and initiate joint actions aimed at improving the child's position in the family, institution and community. Over 500 teachers have been trained, and more than 100 local activities aimed at the improvement of social and physical conditions for early child development have been initiated. As a result of the project, a number of parent-teacher associations have also been formed.
- *Children's Rights in the Media:* This project uses the power of the local media to promote children's rights and initiate media campaigns on rights that are endangered in a particular community. It targets local reporters, encouraging them to focus in greater depth on topics related to children's rights. It prepares young people to create their own media programmes on rights issues.
- *Active Learning Project (ALP):* Begun in 1994, this large-scale project aims to create new models of interactive teaching and learning in order to improve the quality and relevance of knowledge and skills that pupils acquire in school, to change the child's position in school, and to develop the personality and individuality of every child.
- *Support to Roma Education: Community Education Centres – preparatory and compensatory classes for children:* This group of projects analyses the broader social environment of Roma children, identifies obstacles (financial, psychological and social),

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

creates and implements preparatory and compensatory programmes for Roma pupils, and raises awareness of the importance of education among Roma parents.

- *Enhancement of Self-Esteem through Development of Communication Skills:* This project for pre-school children and parents aims to enhance children's cognitive and emotional development, and co-operative communication in children and their parents.

## *Yugoslav Child Rights Centre*

The Yugoslav Child Rights Centre (YuCRC) was founded in 1997. It has received support from Save the Children UK and Save the Children Norway, with some support from UNICEF and other international and local donors for specific projects. YuCRC works in three areas: child rights policy development, research and education, and information. One of their manuals is currently a part of the Civic Education curriculum:

- *How Can We Do It Together?* This manual was produced for teachers working with adolescents on children's rights issues. It includes simulation games that help young people understand why rights and rules are necessary, interactive activities on specific rights, and role-play activities on rights and responsibilities. It also covers the issues of conflicts between rights, and prejudices and stereotypes. *How Can We Do It Together* was selected by the Expert Group as the basis for the second and third sections of the secondary school Civic Education curriculum.

The next section of this report looks in more detail at the nature of the primary and secondary Civic Education curricula.

## 3

**COMMENTARY ON THE CIVIC EDUCATION  
CURRICULUM**

When contrasting Civic Education (CE) in the Republic of Serbia with international norms and standards, it is important to remember that the programme has emerged within the distinctive context of a violent conflict in the region and subsequent recent changes in political leadership. The new government has moved quickly to initiate educational reforms directed at democratisation of the education system. Given the short timeframe in which the first year of Civic Education was introduced, it was necessary to build upon existing projects rather than design a completely new curriculum. Much has been accomplished within a remarkably short period of time.

This section provides a commentary on the characteristics of the CE curriculum in the Republic of Serbia, based on available documents (Ministry regulations, syllabi, teacher manuals and learning resources).

**3.1 The Primary Curriculum for Civic Education**

The Primary Curriculum for Civic Education has been developed for pupils in the first grade of primary school (7-8 year-olds) and has been piloted on a voluntary basis during the 2001-2002 school year by an estimated 18,824 pupils (21%) in 746<sup>56</sup> primary schools.

**3.1.1 Regulations for Civic Education in Primary School**

The Ministry of Education and Sport (MoES) Regulation No. 110-00-77/02001-08 (dated 06 September 2001)<sup>57</sup> on the Syllabus for the subject Civic Education in the first grade of primary school, states that CE is taught as an optional subject and that there should be one standard lesson (45 minutes) per week, and 36 lessons per school year. Article 4 indicates that the subject can be taught by:

- a person who is a certified teacher for a certain subject holding at least a bachelor's degree;
- a lower-grades primary school teacher with a bachelor's degree;
- a lower-grades primary school teacher with teachers' college certificate;
- a teacher of pedagogy (B.A.) who has finished studies at the teachers' college;
- a teacher of pedagogy (B.A.);
- a holder of a bachelors' degree in education – general or school education;
- a school psychologist – pedagogue;
- a teacher of psychology (B.A.);
- a school pedagogue – psychologist.

The Regulation indicates that those eligible to teach CE in the primary school must successfully complete the training programme, 'Knowledge about Self and Others', organised by the MoES, with priority given to those already trained in the following programmes: *Interactive Training/team work; Neither Black nor White; The Art of Growing Up; The Art of Communication; Active Teaching/learning; Education for Non-violence - Words are Windows or They are Walls; Smile Keepers; Goodwill Classroom; A Culture of Critical Thinking; A Primer of Children's Rights; Debate Club; Safe Child; Child Neglect and Abuse; Hi Neighbour; Parents and Teachers in Action; Training of the Trainers in the area of Child's Rights.*

<sup>56</sup> An estimate of the 'real' rather than 'planned' number of secondary schools.

<sup>57</sup> Reproduced in EDUCATION OFFICIAL JOURNAL, Number 5, dated 20 October 2001.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

Article 5 of the Regulation stipulates that, 'Pupils' performance in the subject Civic Education will be assessed in a descriptive manner without numerical marks', and the criteria for assessment will be "regular attending of classes, interest and active involvement in the teaching/learning process".

### 3.1.2 Goal and Objectives for Civic Education in the First Grade of Primary School

The goal of Civic Education for the first grade of primary school, defined in the MoES Regulation is:

- "To promote the development of personality and the social awareness of first grade primary school pupils. The programme should provide children with opportunities to become active participants in the education process, to build knowledge, acquire skills, capabilities and values necessary for the development of autonomous, competent, responsible and creative personality open to agreement and co-operation, respecting the self and others".

The Regulation lists the following objectives for Civic Education in first grade of primary school:

- to make the process of adaptation to the school environment easier and to encourage social integration – establishing and developing co-operative and friendly relationships with peers and adults;
- to stimulate the development of knowledge about oneself, one's own feelings and needs; awareness of the personal identity and uniqueness; to develop self-esteem and self-confidence;
- to build capacities and skills for solving individual problems; to enable the learning of techniques for dealing with unpleasant emotions and forms of self-actualisation without aggression and with respect for others;
- to promote social learning, understanding and acceptance of individual differences;
- to promote group work, dialogue and co-operation;
- to develop communication capacities, skills for non-violent communication and constructive conflict resolution with peers and adults; peer mediation skills;
- to develop creative expression;
- to promote active participation in the life of the school and get pupils to participate from intrinsic, positive motivations, not out of obligation and obedience based on fear;
- to develop basic human values.

### 3.1.3 Civic Education in the First Grade of Primary School

The content of the primary curriculum is based on two previously-developed, UNICEF-supported projects. The first is *Smile Keepers: Programme for the Support and Promotion of Child Development in a War-Affected Social Context*, developed by the Centre for Non-Violent Communication in Belgrade and implemented by the Institute for Psychology of the Psychology Department, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. The second is *Words are Windows or They are Walls I (Giraffe Language): Education for Non-Violent Communication (NVC)*, also developed by the Centre for Non-Violent Communication in Belgrade and implemented by the Institute for Psychology at the University of Belgrade.

**Manuals for teachers** of Civic Education in primary schools include *Smile-keepers I*<sup>58</sup> (the first 20 lessons of the Civic Education curriculum are taken from workshops 1-20 in this manual) and *Words are Windows or They Are Walls*<sup>59</sup> (nine lessons from this manual are used in the Civic Education curriculum). A third document, *Civic Education: realisations about*

58 N. Ignjatović-Savić, Institute for Psychology, 1993.

59 N. Ignjatović-Savić, Z. Trikić, D. Koruga, D. Jerković, UNICEF, 1996.

60 N. Ignjatovic-Savic, 2001.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

*the self and others: Grade 1 of elementary school*<sup>60</sup> describes six additional lessons for Civic Education that are not part of the two pre-existing programmes. A final lesson deals with evaluation.

The theoretical foundation of the manuals reflects a Vygotskian, social constructivist approach, in which the child is an active participant in creating her/his understanding of the social world through peer interaction. *Words are Windows...* is further influenced by the work of Marshall Rosenberg on non-violent communication. Workshop experiences are designed to promote progression through stages of social development, with reflection on those experiences mediated by adults. The emphasis is on the learning process (play, discovery learning) over learning outcomes. Teaching guidelines recommend clear articulation of goals to pupils, circular seating arrangements, and a variety of activities. The ideal group size is 10-15 pupils. Teachers are instructed in a simple format for enabling children to evaluate each lesson, and in keeping a journal on their experiences with each lesson.

The lesson descriptions are well written, providing clear guidance for teachers in carrying out the workshop activities. Every lesson features active learning methodologies, so that young children are always highly engaged in each topic. Most lessons start with some sort of 'ice-breaker' to encourage everyone to participate; the sequence of activities that follows usually contains a balance of individual, pair, and small group work. Most also address a full range of learning styles using a mix of discussion, reflection, drawing, physical movement, and role-play. In most cases the lesson plans are followed by excellent processing questions, enabling teachers to maximise the learning potential of each activity.

**Recommended literature for pupils** includes *Something personal 1– Me, about myself*<sup>61</sup>; *Something personal 2– Me and others*<sup>62</sup>; *Something personal 3–My feelings: Anger, Fear, Grief, Joy and Love*<sup>63</sup>. Translations of these materials were not available for review.

**The training programme for teachers** is described in *Civic education for the Grade 1 of Primary School: Programme of Education for Teachers*<sup>64</sup>. The document describes in outline format the initial six-day training, and the subsequent four-day training. While the level of detail provided in this document does not allow for in-depth analysis of the training model, it is clear that the approach is highly experiential, allowing teachers to explore first-hand the themes and topics that they will cover with children. Topics covered in the first training include an overview of the theoretical bases of the programme. These include: self esteem, the ability to be proactive, coping with stress, reflection on childhood experience and resulting values, communication skills, compassionate listening, dealing with anger, conflict resolution, dealing with fear and sadness, alternative approaches to discipline and evaluating children's behaviour. Topics covered in the second training include assessment, impact of CE on children, discipline issues, and working with parents and the school community.

The experiential training format appears to be an effective one for introducing approaches to developing children's social attitudes and skills, as few teachers are adequately prepared to facilitate this type of interactive learning in initial teacher training. The emphasis in training on teachers learning to internalise and apply the skills they will be teaching children, is consistent with the emphasis in the curriculum on psycho-social skills. If the curriculum is expanded to include more civic education content in the future, the training format may need to be modified accordingly.

**The syllabus** for first grade of the primary school is called 'Civic Education – Knowledge of Oneself and Others', and is made up of 36 lessons of 45 minutes each. The lessons are grouped into seven main topics, which are described below.

61 J. Ivković, Z. Trikić, Institute for textbooks and teaching aids, 1994.

62 J. Ivković, Z. Trikić, Institute for textbooks and teaching aids, 1992.

63 N. Ignjatović-Savić, Z. Trikić, J. Ivković, Institute for textbooks and teaching aids, 1994.

64 N. Ignjatović Savić, 2001.



# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

**The content of the Civic Education programme** for first grade of primary school is:

**Topic 1:** (1 lesson) Making the process of adaptation to school environment easier and stimulating social integration.

This lesson involves children in a name game, a discussion of what (if anything) they would like to be named, things they like to do, and making self-portraits. The activities are well designed for helping first grade children feel comfortable in the group and introducing the workshop approach.

**Topic 2** (7 lessons) Developing awareness of oneself, one's own feelings and needs, identity and uniqueness, self-esteem and self-confidence:

This topic begins with a lesson asking children to remember events in the past year and draw them, noting which memories are particularly pleasant or unpleasant. Other activities involve visualising and drawing a place of relaxation, sharing worries and what can be done about them, and expressing feelings non-verbally. A number of pair activities for building confidence close the lessons; some of these require physical contact, and may be better left for later in the curriculum when children have had a chance to develop trust in other ways.

This topic provides an effective introduction to understanding the range of human feelings, but it might benefit from a stronger rationale as to why this theme is an important foundation for Civic Education. 'Needs', which are mentioned as part of this topic, do not appear to be addressed directly. Discussion of feelings could be linked to basic human needs, and the relationship between needs and rights explored. More detailed guidelines for discussion questions could be helpful in these units, in order for children to understand the purpose of each activity.

**Topic 3** (10 lessons) Expressing and communicating feelings; building capacities for solving personal problems; acquiring techniques to deal with unpleasant emotions.

Activities in this topic address communication and misunderstandings. One lesson deals with points of view. As this is a foundation concept for understanding issues such as diversity, more time and practical activities might be allocated to this concept. One lesson deals with dreams, but the link between this lesson and Civic Education content is not clearly explained. There are several lessons dealing with difficult emotions such as anger, fear, and sadness. Conflict resolution is introduced through examining a conflict between a cat and a dog, then asking children to discuss conflicts they have been involved with, and the idea of finding solutions in which both parties have their needs satisfied. This is a concept that requires considerably more practice and reinforcement than a 45-minute period allows. Children make posters about their wishes in the next lesson and, in another, discuss love and how it is expressed.

The lessons on emotions in this topic could, again, be linked more strongly with basic human needs and their relationship to rights. For example, the lesson on anger could discuss feelings that arise when needs are not met, or taking action to change something in the environment as a constructive way of dealing with anger. Fear can be related to the basic human need for safety and security, and thus to protection rights.

**Topic 4** (2 lessons) Enhancing group work, dialogue and co-operation.

Lessons in this topic involve making a group story from individual pictures, a collaborative drawing exercise, and a physical activity in which children collaborate to find ways to carry

## Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

### An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

a balloon together on ribbons. The activities are likely to be well received by this age group. The suggestions for discussion after each activity could draw more connections to how co-operation is or is not practised in the classroom, school, or home.

**Topic 5** (2 lessons) Developing social knowledge, understanding and accepting individual differences, learning self-actualisation without aggression and with respect for others.

The lessons in this topic ask children to draw what is in their hearts. Children are introduced to the concept of non-violent communication through a story about giraffes (who communicate their feelings clearly and sincerely) and snakes (who do not listen to others and communicate with blame and judgment). The terms 'giraffe language' and 'snake language' are used to help children distinguish different approaches to communication. In another lesson, children pantomime various emotions, and develop lists of feeling-related vocabulary words.

There appears to be some overlap in this portion of the curriculum with material on emotions covered in Topics 2 and 3. The attitude of accepting individual differences is one that should be addressed in more than a single lesson. Additionally, the topic of differences should be examined not only through different emotional reactions, but also through the range of other differences that may be present in the classroom. Children should have the opportunity to discuss differences as they see them. It is unclear how the activities in this topic address the issue of 'self-actualisation without aggression and with respect for others'. The goal of this topic and the related activities may benefit from some restructuring and clarification.

**Topic 6** (10 lessons) Developing communication capacities, skills for non-violent communication and constructive conflict resolution with peers and adults; peer mediation skills.

This topic begins with an activity on children's wishes, and ways of fulfilling them. This appears to overlap with an activity in Topic 3, and the rationale for the placement of this activity in Topic 6 is not clear. The next lesson focuses on shame and embarrassment. Children listen to a poem that describes situations in which someone felt shame and failed to act. They draw and discuss possible alternatives that would have led to a more satisfying outcome. Again, the rationale for this activity within a topic on communication and conflict resolution is not clear.

The next two lessons explore effective listening through a series of games, as well as pair work in which each child has the chance to experience their partner not listening, and actively listening. Children practice what 'snake' and 'giraffe' listening (judgmental vs. non-judgmental) is like. This is effectively presented, though more time for practice of these skills is necessary.

A next lesson on derogatory nicknames could usefully be tied to previous work on respect for differences. A lesson on 'snitching' (telling tales to the teacher) encourages children to find other ways of handling this problem. In the context of a topic on conflict resolution, it may be more effective to elicit from children themselves what types of problems they see as priorities in the classroom, and develop problem-solving strategies based on concerns that they identify.

The final three lessons deal with peer mediation. The first lesson introduces a simple five-step process for mediating a conflict. The discussion that precedes the first lesson divides girls and boys into separate groups to discuss what girls and boys fight about. The second lesson deals with what children fight about within gender groups. The rationale for making the gender distinction at this early stage of introducing conflict resolution is not clear, and

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

could lead to divisiveness and stereotyping. It would be preferable to allow children to generate their own lists of conflicts, and work with gender differences if they arise during this process. In the third lesson, children practice mediating a conflict between a parent and a child. To expect a child of 7-8 years old to effectively mediate an adult-child conflict after two lessons on mediation seems unrealistic, and raises the question of whether mediation is even an appropriate strategy for this type of conflict. This lesson might be better used to provide more practice on dealing with peer conflicts.

In general, the introduction of mediation skills for this age group is questionable. Mediation is a complex skill that requires the ability to understand two other person's points of view, while distancing oneself from direct involvement in the conflict. This is a skill that may be more effectively taught to older children, while children in the first grade of primary school may benefit more from learning to apply problem-solving skills to conflicts that they themselves are involved in.

**Topic 7** (3 lessons) Stimulating and training for active participation in the life of the school:

In the first lesson, children role-play how teachers and pupils act in a 'snake' classroom vs. a 'giraffe' classroom, and discuss which they prefer. The second lesson has children discuss and draw things that they don't like to have happen in their class, and what they would like to have children and adults do. In the final lesson, they draw what they can do to help themselves, their friends, and their teachers feel better in school.

These three lessons provide a good start for identifying problems and taking action. Teachers should be provided with some guidance as to how to help children actually carry out their ideas and evaluate how effective they are. It may also be useful to encourage children to think in terms of working as groups to bring about some sort of change, rather than only working individually. Teachers should also be prepared to address changes that pupils may wish to make in the school as a whole, rather than just within the classroom or between individuals.

**Topic 8** (1 lesson) Evaluation.

Children are invited to share their views on the lessons that made the strongest impression on them. They are also asked to draw themselves before and after the programme, and to depict any changes in themselves. While this may be challenging for children of this age group, self-reflection and evaluation is highly appropriate to a programme that focuses on the development of social skills and attitudes, and should be encouraged.

### 3.1.4 Comparing the primary curriculum with international norms and standards

In order to compare the Civic Education curriculum in the Republic of Serbia with international norms and standards, it is necessary first to acknowledge that Civic Education as a required subject is not widely taught in the first years of primary school. For example, Civic Education in Germany starts at grade 7; in Lithuania, at grade 7 (although CE themes are present in other subjects from grade 1); in the Czech Republic at grade 6; in Greece at grade 5; and in Italy at the lower secondary level (although CE themes are part of the curriculum for children as young as grade 3). In Romania and Belgium, CE is first taught at grade 3.<sup>65</sup>

For purposes of comparison (and for the future development of CE in the Republic of Serbia), it is useful to note some of the countries that begin Civic Education in grade 1:

- Elements of CE are present in the Hungarian social studies curriculum from grade 1; however, curriculum documents were not available for this evaluation.

<sup>65</sup> See specific country reports in Torney-Purta, J., Schwille, J., and Amadeo, J., 1999. Civic education across countries: Twenty-four national case studies from the IEA Civic Education Project. Amsterdam, IEA.

## Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

### An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- In the UK<sup>66</sup>, civic education, or education for citizenship, in the first grades of primary school is non-statutory, and is addressed through “personal, social and health education and citizenship.” Education for citizenship encompasses social and moral responsibility, community involvement, and political literacy. In the primary grades, political literacy is given less weight, and is mainly confined to knowledge of democracy and the institutions that support it locally and nationally. The primary curriculum focuses on four thematic sections:
  - developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities;
  - preparing to play a role as active citizens;
  - developing a healthy, safer lifestyle; and
  - developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people.
  
- In Croatia<sup>67</sup>, plans to introduce a national programme of human rights education begin at the pre-school level. In first four years of primary school, the programme is structured around four topics:
  - *The Me* unit, in which pupils discover their own characteristics and learn to affirm them in community with others;
  - *The Myself and the Others* unit, in which pupils become aware of their relationships with others and develop pro-social skills and forms of behaviour;
  - *The Us* unit, in which pupils learn the rules of functioning of a democratic community and develop the skills of civic participation;
  - *The World As a Whole* unit, in which pupils learn to view themselves and others in the context of mutual dependence and connection of the natural and human world, the present and the future, and the world as a whole.

International standards, such as those being developed by the Council of Europe, outline concepts and core competencies for Civic Education. One useful framework, for example, divides core CE competencies into three domains: cognitive competencies; ethical, affective and value-related competencies; and competencies for action<sup>68</sup>. However, there is a relative lack of reflection on what might be age-appropriate concepts and competencies for primary school children. Noted human rights educator Betty Reardon has developed a developmental sequence for core concepts and content<sup>69</sup>. She defines the core concepts of human rights education for children aged 5-8 as encompassing rules, order, respect, fairness, diversity, co-operation, and personal responsibility. Key issues that children of this age should learn to deal with are inequality, unfairness, and harm. She suggests the introduction of human rights standards through the process of examining classroom rules, and the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (although the more contemporary Convention on the Rights of the Child, in one of its simplified versions, may be more appropriate).

Against this background, it can be noted that the Civic Education curriculum for primary schools in the Republic of Serbia shares some commonalities with international norms and standards for civic education:

- The emphasis in the current curriculum on awareness of self and others, similarities and differences, communication skills, and conflict resolution is consistent with the focus on attitudes and skills found in similar programmes for the early years of primary school. The teaching of social skills at this age level is seen as laying a foundation for later work on issues relating to rights, democracy, diversity, etc.
  
- The use of active learning methodologies is also consistent with international standards for teaching and learning of civic-related knowledge, skills and attitudes, and is especially important for the youngest children. Civic education at this age cannot be approached simply through the transmission of knowledge.

66 See Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2000. Personal, social and health education and citizenship at key stages 1 and 2. Also available online at [www.dfes.gov.uk/citizenship](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/citizenship).

67 See National Committee for Human Rights Education, 1999. National programme of human rights education: Part 1. Zagreb: Government of the Republic of Croatia.

68 See Audigier, F., 2000. Basic concepts and core competencies for education for democratic citizenship. Council of Europe, DGIV/EDU/CIT (2000) 23. Available online at [http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural\\_Co-operation/Education/E.D.C/](http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co-operation/Education/E.D.C/)

69 See Reardon, B., 1995. *Educating for Human Dignity*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- The teacher's relationship with pupils, the organisation of the classroom, decision-making processes, discipline and evaluation procedures, the classroom and school climate, and the ability of the teacher to model rights-respectful and democratic behaviour are all seen as integral to Civic Education. In other words, the learning of civic behaviour and education for democratic citizenship at this age level is not seen solely as an activity confined to one 45-minute lesson per week; it is also acknowledged that young primary school pupils learn as much about these types of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values through the 'hidden curriculum' of the classroom and school as through the explicit curriculum.
- The descriptive grading approach to assessment is consistent with international programmes that focus on social skills and attitudes with young primary children.

There are also distinctive differences between the primary Civic Education curriculum in the Republic of Serbia and international norms:

- The mere fact that the Republic of Serbia has offered a programme in Civic Education at the first year of primary school, and has attempted to define a set of knowledge, skill and attitude objectives that are appropriate for this age group, is distinctive in the international context.
- There is a relative lack of emphasis in the current curriculum on civic knowledge that would be accessible to first grade children. This might include the idea of groups and group membership (in the class, the family, the community, ethnic identity); rules in the classroom, school, and community; the relationship between needs and rights.
- There is a high degree of emphasis on topics that explore purely personal psychological issues (fear, worries, dreams, etc.), without a strong link between these issues and the needs and concerns of social groups – the class, the school, the community, or minority groups.
- Topics addressing values and attitudes that are accessible to this age group are not strongly developed. These include topics such as fairness and rights, equality and inequality, and respect for differences (other than emotional differences).
- The amount of time given to topics such as conflict resolution and peer mediation is considerably less than is generally found in similar programmes. Where peer mediation is taught in other countries, it is generally introduced to pupils no earlier than grade 3 or 4.
- The emphasis on practical application of skills to real life situations that is generally encouraged in international civic education standards is less prominent in the current curriculum.
- The systematic emphasis on having pupils evaluate lessons, and on having teachers keep journals on the progress of the class, exceeds what might be expected and is indicative of a view of the teacher as an active participant in the development of the programme.
- The place of Civic Education as an optional choice during the pilot year, as opposed to a part of the curriculum for all children, is unusual by international standards. Similarly, the timetabling of the subject outside of the normal curriculum is unusual; both of these characteristics may be reflective of the uncertain status of the subject in the first year.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- The fact that the curriculum was developed from existing projects in a very short period of time is atypical when compared to the normal processes of consultation and development, spanning several years, which normally take place prior to the introduction of a new subject in other countries. The political context in which Civic Education was introduced accounts for this.

### 3.1.5 Suggestions for the future development of the primary curriculum

On the basis of a review of available documents pertaining to Civic Education in the primary school, the following suggestions may be considered in the future development of the curriculum:

- The curriculum appears to be effective in meeting most of its current objectives. However, in order to bring the curriculum more into line with international norms, the goals and objectives of the current primary school curriculum should be expanded to cover more content relating to rights, democracy, diversity, and the child as a member of a number of social groups.
- The current curriculum, developed for the pilot year of Civic Education, may reflect the fact that the authors had a large number of topics they wished to address, and only one year in which to do so. Ideally, the Civic Education curriculum should in the long term be expanded across the primary school years, allowing for adequate time to cover each topic currently represented, the addition of new content, and the creation of a clear, logical developmental sequence of topics.
- As the curriculum is developed, the goals of each topic or unit should be clarified to ensure a logical progression and eliminate overlap. Consideration should be given to the development of a clear statement of desired outcomes, expressed in behavioural terms, in order to facilitate evaluation of the curriculum content and methods.
- The sequence of topics that is ultimately developed for Civic Education in the primary school should retain the current strong emphasis on development of skills and attitudes, particularly in the early years of primary school. However, the curriculum should also clearly articulate the connections between those skills and attitudes and the larger goals of Civic Education throughout the grade levels. For example, if understanding the emotions of oneself and others is part of the primary curriculum, the relationship between emotions and needs (met or unmet) should be clarified; the fact that there is a relationship between basic human needs and human rights should be elaborated; these concepts are key to children's later understandings of why international standards for children's rights and human rights have been created.
- Consideration should be given to the addition of a range of topics. For example, fairness and rights, rights and responsibilities, understanding membership in groups, respecting a variety of forms of diversity, understanding how the school as a social institution works (including the need for rules, order, fairness, respect for children's rights), roles and responsibilities in the family, and the relationship of the child to the community are all topics that can be dealt with in age-appropriate ways in the first years of primary school. Another approach to developing the topics covered by Civic Education in the primary school would be to address skills and attitudes pertaining to democracy and rights through the increasing complex groups that children are part of: friendships, the classroom, the family, the school, the local community, the region, the nation, and membership in groups based on gender, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, etc.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- Consideration should also be given to the elimination of certain topics (for example, dreams, shame) that have a purely psychological emphasis. These reflect the curriculum's origins in projects designed to provide psychosocial assistance and address stress in children exposed to trauma, but their connection to the goals of Civic Education lacks a clear rationale.
- In teaching conflict resolution, more time should be given in the first year to teaching the interpersonal skills of negotiation, with mediation left until the later grades of primary school. Perspective-taking is another topic that should be given more time and reinforcement.
- The teaching of skills such as conflict resolution or participation in the school or community, should be based on real-life situations identified by children, rather than on hypothetical situations. Even the youngest primary school children can be involved in action to change their immediate environment; in this regard, reference to projects such as the *Primer of Children's Rights* could provide useful guidance for teachers.
- Core skills should be identified for the primary school Civic Education curriculum. These may include communication, conflict resolution, decision-making, mediation, perspective taking, etc. As the curriculum is developed, these skills should be approached in a 'spiral' fashion, meaning that they can be introduced in age-appropriate ways in the early grades, and practised, extended and reinforced throughout the later primary grades by applying them to a range of different topics.
- Documentation in all minority languages is essential.

### 3.2 The Secondary Curriculum for Civic Education

The Secondary Curriculum for Civic Education has been developed for pupils in the first grade of secondary school (14-15 year-olds) and has been piloted on a voluntary basis during the 2001-2002 school year, by an estimated 3,173 pupils (3.5%) in 237<sup>70</sup> secondary schools.

#### 3.2.1 Regulations for Civic Education in Secondary School

The Ministry of Education and Sport Regulation No. 110-00-73/02001-08 (dated 14 September 2001)<sup>71</sup> on the Syllabus for the subject Civic Education in the first grade of secondary school states that CE is taught as an optional subject and there should be 35 lessons per school year. Article 4 indicates that the subject can be taught by:

- a person who is a certified teacher for a certain subject holding at least a bachelor's degree.
- a person who has university degree (B.A.) in
  - sociology
  - philosophy
  - psychology
  - education
- a school psychologist/pedagogue.

The Regulation indicates that those eligible to teach CE must successfully complete a training programme organised by the MoES. Priority must be given to those already trained in the following programmes: *Interactive Training/team work; Neither Black nor White; The Art of Growing Up; The Art of Communication; Active teaching/learning; Education for*

<sup>70</sup> An estimate of the 'real' rather than planned number of secondary schools.

<sup>71</sup> Reported in EDUCATION OFFICIAL JOURNAL, Number 5, dated 20 October 2001.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

*Non-violence – Words are Windows or They Are Walls; Smile Keepers; Goodwill Classroom; A Culture of Critical Thinking; A Primer of Children’s Rights; Debate Club; Safe Child; Child Neglect and Abuse; Hi Neighbour; Parents and Teachers in Action; Training of the Trainers in the area of Child’s Rights.*

Article 5 of the Regulation stipulates that, ‘Pupils’ performance in the subject Civic Education will be assessed in a descriptive manner without numerical marks’, and the criteria for assessment will be “regular attending of classes, interest and active involvement in the teaching/learning process”.

### 3.2.2 Goal and Objectives for Civic Education in the Secondary School

The goal of Civic Education for secondary school, defined in the MoES Regulation is:

“To help secondary school pupils to gain awareness, develop abilities and skills and acquire values necessary for the full development of personality and for the competent, involved and responsible life in civic society with respect for human rights and freedoms, peace, tolerance and gender equity, understanding and friendship among peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups.”

The following objectives are listed for Civic Education at the secondary school level:

- To develop the understanding of differences between people; and acknowledgement of, and respect for these differences;
- To strengthen pupils’ self-esteem, feelings of personal and group identity;
- To develop communication skills necessary for co-operative behaviour and constructive conflict resolution – argued presentation of own opinions, active listening, negotiation;
- To develop the capacity for critical thinking and responsible decision making and acting;
- To build understanding of the nature and manner of establishing social, ethical and legal norms and regulations and their importance for life in a society;
- To introduce pupils to the concept of rights and develop their understanding of the relationship between the causality of rights and obligation;
- To develop sensitivity to the violation of children rights, readiness to protect their own and other’s rights, and to help them to learn techniques for standing for and realising children’s rights;
- To stimulate and build capacities for active participation in school life;
- To train pupils for group work and group decision making;
- To respect democratic values and stimulate their acceptance through the choice of contents for this subject and through the entire work within it.

### 3.2.3 Civic Education in the First Grade of Secondary School

The secondary curriculum is based on two previously-developed NGO projects. These are *The Goodwill Classroom* developed by the MOST group based in Belgrade and *How Can We Do It Together?* developed by the Yugoslav Child Rights Centre. The authors of these programmes have also been centrally involved in the design of the secondary school syllabus for Civic Education.

**The syllabus** is made up of 35 lessons (45 minutes each). The lessons are grouped together into three units of study: Individual and Society (14 lessons); Rights and Responsibilities (12 lessons); and School as a Community (8 lessons). The first unit is based on the MOST programme, *The Goodwill Classroom*, and the second and third units are based on the Yugoslav Child Rights Centre programme, *How Can We Do It Together?*



# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

**The guidebook for teachers**<sup>72</sup> on Civic Education for the first grade of secondary school is a comprehensive and detailed document (184 pages). It provides practical advice on preparations for the workshop approach and advice on working practices and techniques. This includes useful advice on workshop structure, establishing rules and workshop techniques. The guidebook also provides:

- An introduction and explanation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- Detailed descriptions of all 35 workshops;
- Copies of pupil handouts for each workshop;
- Guidance on workshop evaluation, including a Teacher's Work Diary and Evaluation Sheets.

The level of detail for each workshop is excellent, although teachers unfamiliar with the workshops will require considerable advance preparation. In many instances the pupil handouts contain fairly dense text and could be made visually more attractive.

**The training programme for teachers** is based on two detailed guidebooks<sup>73</sup> designed by the authors of the civic education syllabus. Each provides a detailed description of activities and support materials for a five-day training workshop for teachers of CE. The first guidebook deals with the first unit of study (Individual and Society). The second guidebook deals with the second and third units of study (Rights and Responsibilities and School as a Community). Each guidebook provides step-by-step details for a five-day training workshop during which teachers experience each of the workshops that will be undertaken by pupils. The workshops also provide opportunities to discuss methodology and approaches to evaluation. Both documents provide an extremely high standard of detail.

**The content of the Civic Education programme** for first grade of secondary school is:

**Unit I: Individual and Society** (14 lessons) with an emphasis on life in a community (including differences, stereotypes and prejudices), communication and conflict resolution skills;

The first three lessons involve a simulation of issues that arise through living in a community; an activity to identify similarities and differences; and a lesson on identifying stereotypes and prejudices. Three 45-minute lessons seem like an extremely compressed amount of time to address such complex and challenging issues.

The second set of six lessons concentrates on the development of communication skills. Each lesson concentrates on a specific skill – assertive behaviour, rumours, non-listening, active-listening, non-blaming, and debating skills. These are highly appropriate skills for young people to develop at this age. However, they would normally be regarded as generic communication skills so it may be slightly misleading to label them under a heading such as the individual and society.

The third set of five lessons deals specifically with conflict resolution techniques – an exercise to experience the dynamics of conflict, small group discussion of conflict behaviours, looking at a conflict from different perspectives, finding a solution, and reaching agreement through a role play. Described in this way, this set of lessons may present a rather 'idealised' version of conflict resolution as a linear process that can be achieved relatively simply. The quality of learning is likely to depend on the relevance of the examples to the young people involved, and on how 'true to life' they experience the simulations and their outcomes to be – including the reality that some conflicts defy resolution and agreements cannot always be reached. Again it is not clear what rationale has been used to include lessons on conflict resolution under the heading of the individual and society.

<sup>72</sup> Guidebook for teachers 'CIVIC EDUCATION' for the first grade of secondary school, MoES, Belgrade 2001.

<sup>73</sup> Civic Education. Part I: The Individual within Society, Guidebook for educators, MoES, Belgrade, 2001. Also Civic Education. Part II: The Rights and Responsibilities of Schools as Communities, Guidebook for educators, MoES, Belgrade, 2001.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

Overall the balance of lessons in this unit may need review. Only a fifth of the lessons relate directly to issues of identity and relations between groups in society. More emphasis on these issues may be needed to justify the title the 'individual and society' and to balance the current emphasis on communication skills and conflict resolution. Special attention needs to be given to ensuring that the examples used for the communication and conflict resolution skills are 'authentic' (not hypothetical) and 'relevant' to the real lives of pupils in the first year of secondary school.

**Unit II: Rights and Responsibilities** (12 lessons) involving an introduction to the concept of rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child; responsibility and participation; violations and protection.

The first four lessons introduce the concept of rights. They distinguish between 'needs' and 'rights'. Through preparation of a contract, pupils are introduced to the concept of rights and the law, and they play a card game to become familiar with the Convention of the Rights of the Child and learn about different categories of rights. This seems like a considerable amount of content to cover in four 45-minute lessons.

The second set of four lessons concerns responsibility and participation and involves lessons on the responsibility of adults (role-playing), personal responsibilities of children (matching rights to associated obligations), freedom of expression by expressing opinions, and levels of participation.

The third set of four lessons deal with violations and protection of rights. The lessons involve completing a cartoon that illustrates a conflict of rights, an imaginary journey to highlight discrimination, an analysis of stories to highlight violations of children's rights, and a problem-solving exercise in the protection of children's rights.

The focus on rights is a highly appropriate foundation for civic education, consistent with current international developments in the field. The focus on the Convention on the Rights of the Child is also consistent with signatories' obligations to inform children of their rights, and there is appropriate concern that children are also introduced to the concept of responsibilities. The main challenges are to allow sufficient time to avoid superficial understanding of concepts; and to base learning on relevant, real-life examples rather than theoretical or legalistic approaches.

The workshop on protection of children's rights includes a handout for pupils: 'Whom To Turn To', in cases of neglect and violation. It lists a number of counseling and support institutions. It does not mention any point of contact within the school. The focus on support for children is impressive. However, the issue of responses to pupil disclosures of abuse has policy implications for all teachers in the school and needs to be addressed by senior management in terms of a whole school policy, otherwise individual teachers (particularly those of CE) leave themselves open to charges of inappropriate responses. This highlights the need for school directors and staff to be aware of the CE programme and its implications for the way the school functions as a whole.

**Unit III: School as a Community** (8 lessons) involving the practical application of skills to a project in which a youth-related issue is identified by students and an action plan developed to address 'the problem'. Pupils work in groups and present their action plan to others.

Based on an audit of the status of children's rights within their own school, pupils design an action plan for the benefit of child rights in their school. As above, this highlights the need for senior management and staff to be aware of the questions that may arise through the

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

action project and to be supportive of the legitimacy of the task being undertaken. This part of the curriculum is likely to run counter to the prevailing culture of the school.

The concept of an action plan is consistent with modern trends to see civic education as an opportunity for pupils to develop and practice the skills of participation and decision-making. It is more common for this to be introduced as part of an overall civic education programme across the first three grades of secondary school, rather than as a set of workshops in the first grade. The choice of 'problem' may be crucial to the outcome for pupils. If problems are predetermined or teacher-led then there may be no sense of ownership and the experience may be rather cosmetic. However, if the problem sets high expectations for changes within the school that cannot be met, then pupils may be disillusioned or disempowered by the experience. It may be helpful if real examples of action plans are built up and shared amongst CE teachers as a part of support for their professional development.

### 3.2.4 Comparing the secondary curriculum with international norms and standards

The CE curriculum for secondary schools in the Republic of Serbia is consistent with international norms and standards that are emerging for civic education in a number of ways:

- Diversity, human rights and democracy are core areas. This is reflected in the stated objectives for the secondary curriculum (one objective refers to differences between people; two refer to human rights and responsibilities; and three objectives refer to democratic values and processes).
- The curriculum has a strong human rights base and goes beyond the norm by devoting significant importance and curriculum time to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- The curriculum is characterised by a commitment to active learning methods and four of the stated objectives refer to the development of communication and conflict resolution skills. This is further evidenced through the inclusion of 'action projects' by undertaken by pupils – this feature is often an aspiration in the curriculum statements of many countries, but poorly implemented.
- The recommended time for CE (one 45-minute period per week) is consistent with international norms, but is likely to prove inadequate to meet the commitment to active learning methods.
- The use of descriptive assessment of pupil achievement is consistent with international norms.

Areas where the CE curriculum for secondary schools in the Republic of Serbia is distinctive from or inconsistent with international norms and standards are:

- The Goal emphasises understanding between people of different ethnic, national and religious groups, but this is weakly reflected in the objectives (mentioned obliquely in one of 10 stated objectives) and less explicit in workshops. Reference is made to issues of ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic identity in the syllabus and a small number of workshops refer to these issues, but identity issues overall are given less attention than other areas of the curriculum.
- The development of communication skills is an important characteristic of the programme and should be sustained. However, the skills agenda dominates the unit on

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

the Individual in Society and accounts for 11 out of the 14 workshops. This suggests that the skills agenda has displaced the diversity agenda in this unit. There is also a danger that skills development becomes an end in itself, independent of context rather than treating skills as tools to be applied throughout the whole programme.

- In many countries it has become the norm to specify curriculum in terms of learning outcomes for pupils rather than syllabus content to be taught. However, teachers have welcomed the detailed specification of workshops for CE in the Republic of Serbia. The support and direction that the documentation provides for teachers is regarded as a strength. The documentation has achieved a helpful balance between prescription and flexibility, content and skills.
- It is not clear what progression is evident in the curriculum: for example, in linkages with what has been learned at primary school or through increasing willingness to name and address controversial issues such as discrimination against specific groups in society.
- The skills-based nature of the curriculum is a strength, but the syllabus also lacks any reference to civic knowledge and understanding. Reference to such knowledge and understanding is regarded as the defining characteristic of civic education in most countries. In some cases the curriculum identifies specific knowledge that pupils must acquire, such as familiarity with the institutions of State or the Constitution. In others the emphasis is on acquiring 'political literacy', i.e. developing a knowledge and awareness of how political processes work (as distinct from indoctrination into the ideologies of particular political parties).
- Areas that are weakly represented in the current curriculum include little reference to the economic dimensions of civic life, young people's legal rights and obligations, how the law operates, and the role of the media within democratic societies.
- It is unusual for civic education to be an optional subject outside the normal timetable. Many countries require schools to offer civic education to all pupils in the first three grades of secondary school or integrate it into the subject matter of existing subjects within the existing timetable. It is unusual for pupils to be given the opportunity to opt out of timetabled classes.

### 3.2.5 Suggestions for the future development of the secondary CE curriculum

Based on an analysis of the Syllabus and other documents the following suggestions are made concerning the future development of the CE curriculum for secondary school:

- The current curriculum accomplishes its goals when set against its stated objectives, but there are still some gaps in the curriculum. Current gaps include the lack of reference to specific civic knowledge and understanding, the economic dimension of civic life, children's rights and responsibilities under the law, and the role of the media in democratic societies. The challenge will be to extend the content of the current curriculum in a way that maintains the commitment to active learning – to add these areas in a way that engages pupils.
- Overall, the amount of material included in the syllabus for first grade of secondary school may be too ambitious. This is supported later by evidence from questionnaires and case study interviews, which suggest that in the pilot year (2001-02) most teachers were able to cover the first unit and part of the second. Teachers are therefore likely to require more time to cover the current contents of the three units of study.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- One way of addressing both concerns would be to spread the current civic education syllabus over the first three years of secondary school. This would allow teachers more time to complete the existing workshops and spend more time in depth where appropriate. It would also mean that additional workshops could be developed to meet identified gaps.
- A review of the current syllabus might also consider the overall structure for a three-year syllabus. For example:
  - What are the links to what has already been covered in the primary school?
  - Should the first unit be split in two, perhaps one including the existing workshops on communication and conflict resolution skills, and another placing more emphasis on identity issues, prejudice and discrimination?
  - Where is it appropriate to add more civic content?
  - Where might workshops related to the law, the economy and the media be added?
  - How can the more difficult parts of the programme be made more engaging and relevant to real-life in an age-appropriate way?
  - Where is the appropriate place within a three-year programme for the 'action project'? How can this be timetabled so that it is not constrained by 45-minute classes?
- Consideration should be given to introducing Civic Education to the curriculum for all pupils in the first three years of secondary school.
- The Ministry needs to consider what steps should be taken to raise awareness amongst school directors and other staff about the Civic Education Syllabus; the issues it raises, its working methods and implications for whole school policy and practices.
- It is not clear whether all CE documents are available in different languages. These should be made available as to demonstrate sensitivity to diversity and a commitment to equal access and inclusion.

# 4 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

## 4.1 Co-operation and partnerships

The evaluation research involved five partners. In November 2001, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) commissioned the research in initial discussions with UNESCO and UNICEF. The Open Society Institute (OSI) was invited to participate because of its work in education, governance, human rights and other areas in the Republic of Serbia. UNICEF had shown a prior keen interest in a study related to Civic Education (CE) in the Republic of Serbia. The Open Society Institute participated through two of its network partners, the Fund for Open Society-Serbia (FOS) and the Education Support Programme (ESP), which is affiliated to the Open Society Institute office in Budapest. A consultant was nominated from each of the three international organisations to be on the research team. The Belgrade-based research agency, Strategic Marketing and Management Research Institute (SMMRI) was contracted to carry out the bulk of research after the first visit of the international team to Belgrade in January 2002.

### Steering the study

The international research team took full responsibility for the research concept, design, research process, findings and conclusions, and write up. UNESCO played an initiating, fundraising, co-ordinating and managing role throughout the evaluation process, and covered the costs of the fieldwork (national survey, case studies). UNICEF Belgrade and FOS provided important technical and financial support and advice. Additionally, UNICEF covered costs for the primary pupil assessment and the publication of the evaluation report; FOS covered costs for the translation of all documents (syllabi, training materials, etc.). The MoES made itself constantly available to provide information, official support, and clarification on its requirements from the research. SMMRI provided the infrastructure, physical and human resources, and technical expertise to make the research happen.

The three international evaluators visited Belgrade from January 28-30 and July 8-12, 2002. Field visits for the case studies were undertaken during the first and second week of June, 2002. The international evaluation team member from ESP designed the Case Study research and trained the field researchers. An additional ESP consultant oversaw the field research and edited the field reports. Members of the international evaluation team conferred with one another and the other partners by email and phone throughout the research process. SMMRI handled the entire questionnaire-based research process from testing and piloting the questionnaire, selecting the sample, fieldwork, data capture and analysis to writing *Part Two: Technical Report*<sup>74</sup> for the final evaluation report.

## 4.2 Evaluation design

The essential features of the evaluation design are the following: it is,

*Independent* – an external study undertaken by three renowned international organisations;  
*International* – by virtue of the international nature of the team and their organisational affiliations and the deliberate international perspective of the evaluation;

*Contextual* – the study is informed by an overview of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia over the past decade; *Co-operative* – it involved a local research company (SSMRI) and the offices of UNICEF, UNESCO and the Open Society Institute (FOS);

<sup>74</sup> The full text of this report can be found on the websites of the evaluation's partner organisations: UNESCO, UNICEF, FOS-Serbia, and OSI.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

*Consultative* – it actively sought advice from internal sources, including the MoES, as well as local experts and organisations;

*A combined research model* – including structured interviews carried out at a representative national sample of schools that offer CE; semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders in the CE curriculum, including MoES officials and professionals responsible for aspects of the syllabus; and formula case studies in sites selected either for their uniqueness or typicality.

The guiding principle for the research was that the process and product should have utility value for MoES and make a contribution to the broader debate about Civic Education in schools in the Republic of Serbia.

A wide range of documents provided a reference for research activities. These documents include the MoES strategy document *Quality Education For All*, expert working group documents, syllabi, curriculum documents and teaching materials (see Appendix 1).

Structured research instruments were developed in the form of six questionnaires<sup>75</sup> designed for:

- Parents of pupils who take CE;
- Primary school pupils who take CE;
- School principals;
- Secondary school pupils who take CE;
- Secondary pupils who do not take CE;
- Teachers of CE.

Semi-structured designs were adopted for the interviews with key stakeholders<sup>76</sup> and the review of the curriculum, to allow for a freer flow of ideas. A semi-structured approach<sup>77</sup> was also adopted for the case studies to ensure comparability across sites, an emphasis on local contexts, and commensurability with the rest of the study.

### Limitations

Three limitations emerged from this design:

- 1) Originally, it was intended that the evaluation would cover Religious Education (RE) as well as Civic Education. The questionnaires were designed with this in mind. It was not possible to rethink the instruments sufficiently after it was decided to evaluate the implementation of CE only.
- 2) The vigilance that was imposed on the study not to look at RE made it impossible to distinguish students who were taking RE from those who were simply not taking CE. This may have led to bias in the sample of students not taking CE, which could have affected answers to certain questions. There was no way to redress this possible bias.
- 3) The constraints imposed by not addressing religious education made it impossible to include questions for parents in the monthly national omnibus surveys undertaken by SMMRI, or to interview parents of children not taking CE or teachers not teaching CE. This made comparison between responses from these groups impossible, and limited the potential for multivariate analysis.

### Pupil enrolments in CE

The given enrolment figures for CE needed to be adjusted for two factors: the inferred drop out rate, and inaccuracies in the given data.

<sup>75</sup> For a copy of the questionnaires see: Part Two: Technical Report.

<sup>76</sup> For a copy of the Interview Outline see: Part Two: Technical Report.

<sup>77</sup> For a full discussion of this approach see: Part Three: Case Studies of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

As indications were that the primary school enrolment remained relatively steady, with natural attrition and recruitment, a dropout rate was only estimated for secondary school pupils. Five of the case studies confirm the stable enrolment in primary schools (there are specific explanations for the notable drops in enrolment in Čukarica and Novi Pazar), and the significant rate of attrition in secondary schools.

**Table 4.1: Dropout percentages in 5 case study sites**

Site	Starting enrolment	Finishing enrolment	Percentage dropout
Belgrade, Čukarica (Primary School)	18	15	*17%
Belgrade, Stari Grad (Vocational School)	38	15	61%
Draginje (Primary School)	14	14	*0%
Koceljeva (Secondary School)	36	34	6%
Niš (Primary School)	70	70	*0%
Niš (Secondary School)	18	10	44%
Novi Pazar (Primary School)	70	47	*33%
Novi Pazar (Secondary School)	30	20	33%
Subotica (Primary School)	40	40	*0%
Subotica (Secondary School)	10	5	50%

SMMRI, June 2002

\*Primary schools

It is difficult to work out a dropout rate from the national survey, as this question was not asked directly. However, it would appear from the changes in class sizes that the dropout rate was significant. A dropout rate of 33% over the first year has been assumed for secondary school CE pupils.

### Adjusted CE attendance rates

Of the sample of 400 schools listed by the MoES as offering CE, 53 schools<sup>78</sup> (17 primary schools, 36 secondary schools) were, in fact, not offering CE. The conclusion has been made that the total official enrolments for CE should be decreased by the same proportion. (This is working on the assumption that the MoES would have been informed if a school had decided subsequently to add CE, and that this data would be subsequently recorded.) Table 4.2 provides the percentage decreases for primary and secondary school that were projected for this study.

**Table 4.2: Discrepancies in enrolment data**

	Number of inaccuracies	Size of sample	Percentage difference
<b>Primary schools</b>	17	250	-6.8%
<b>Secondary schools</b>	36	150	-24.0%
<b>Total</b>	53	400	-13.3%

SMMRI, June 2002

The estimated enrolments in CE are provided in Table 4.3, taking into account the dropout rate for secondary schools and the adjusted attendance rates.

78 See Part Two: Technical Report.



# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

Table 4.3: Adjusted estimated enrolment of pupils in CE

	(A) Original number for CE provided by MoES	(B) Percentage error identified in research	(C) New estimate: A*(1-B)	(D) Estimated drop-out rate	Adjusted estimate C*(1-D)	Total schools/ pupils/ teachers	Adjusted estimate C*(1-D)
Primary schools	800	0.068	746	N/A	N/A	1,239	60.18%
Secondary schools	312	0.24	237	N/A	N/A	524	45.25%
Total schools			978	N/A	N/A	1,763	55.47%
No. of primary pupils (first grade)	*23,656	0,068	22,047	0	22,047	83,660	26.35%
No. of secondary pupils (first grade)	8,100	0,24	6,156	0.33	4125	90000	4.58%
Total pupils					26172	173660	15.07%
Secondary pupils taking CE (without drop out rate)							6.48%
No. of primary teachers	1,254	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	43,918	2.86%
No. of secondary teachers	419	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	24,546	1.71%
Total teachers trained	1668	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	68,464	2.44%

SMMRI, June 2002

\*Updated figures for primary school pupils from internal evaluation March, 2002)

## 4.3 Research instruments<sup>79</sup>

### Questionnaire

The questionnaire content was developed by the international researchers and then developed into questionnaires by SMMRI. This process involved a series of focus groups to identify ambiguities; refine concepts for the national context; test the translation of ideas; close answers to questions to enable efficient data capture and explore the initial coding of questionnaires. Each questionnaire was then piloted. The international researchers approved the final format.

79 All research instruments are provided in Part Two: Technical report.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

The “What is good and bad for democracy” item *Question 16*<sup>80</sup> *Section E, Conceptual issues, of the Secondary Pupils Questionnaire*<sup>81</sup> was taken from the study *Citizenship and education in twenty-eight countries: Civic knowledge and engagement at age fourteen*, carried out by the International Association for the Evaluation of Education Achievement. Despite the fact that the current CE curriculum does not directly address concepts of democracy, inclusion of this item provided baseline information about secondary pupils’ views.

### Focus groups

There were four focus groups<sup>82</sup>:

- teachers of RE in primary and secondary schools;
- teachers of CE in primary and secondary schools;
- pupils taking RE in secondary schools;
- pupils taking CE in secondary schools.

Information for the focus groups for teachers and students taking Religious Education was not used once it was decided not to include RE in the evaluation.

### The pilot study

The pilot study was carried out in Belgrade from 22 April to 1 May 2002. Ten interviewers, all psychologists, were involved. There were a total of 110 interviews in the sample. The pilot research identified additional ambiguities in the questionnaire and provided information that assisted the training and support for interviewers in the national survey of schools.

**Table 4.4: Sample structure for the pilot study of the questionnaire**

<b>Teachers of CE (primary)</b>	10
<b>Teachers of CE (secondary)</b>	10
<b>Pupils taking CE (secondary)</b>	20
<b>Pupils taking neither CE nor RE</b>	20
<b>Parents of CE students (primary)</b>	20
<b>Parents of CE students (secondary)</b>	20
<b>Principles of primary school</b>	5
<b>Principals of secondary school</b>	5
<b>Total sample</b>	110

SMMRI, June 2002

### Design for young respondents

Prof. Ksenija Kondić, a local consultant contracted by UNICEF, developed the instrument for primary school children in consultation with one of the international researchers. The instrument was designed to elicit young children’s perceptions of Civic Education through questions appropriate to their age group, and was administered in a face-to-face format.

80 This was taken directly from the instruments used by the IEA study: Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Oswald, H., and Schulz, W., 2001. *Citizenship and education in twenty-eight countries: Civic knowledge and engagement at age fourteen*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: International Association for the Evaluation of Education Achievement (IEA).

81 For a copy of this questionnaire, see: Part Two: Technical report.

82 See Part Two: Technical Report for a copy of the guidelines for the focus group discussions.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

## 4.4 Sampling procedure



**Figure 4.1: Map of Republic of Serbia showing three regions for sample stratification**

The Republic of Serbia was divided into three strata (or research designated regions): Belgrade, Central Serbia and Vojvodina. This stratification is standard in social science research within the Republic of Serbia. The national sample of schools, cross-tabulated by region, is provided in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: National sample of schools by type and in each research-designated region**

Total	Type of School			Stratum		
	Primary	Vocational	Gymnasium	Belgrade	Vojvodina	Central Serbia
369	238	91	40	66	91	212
100%	64%	25%	11%	18%	25%	57%

SMMRI, June 2002

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### The questionnaire

**Table 4.6: Planned sample for the study**

Target population	Primary schools	Secondary schools	Totals
Teachers of CE	250	150	400
Pupils taking CE	500	800	1300
Pupils not taking CE	0	800	800
Parents of CE pupils	1000	600	1600
Principals	125	75	200

SMMRI, June 2002

The basic sample frame included all the primary and secondary schools that offer CE classes. The MoES provided information on which schools offered CE, along with the number of students for each class<sup>83</sup>. The sample was taken in two stages. The schools were chosen in stage one. The sample was weighted to take a higher proportion of schools with larger CE classes.

Primary allocation to strata was proportional to the number of schools in which CE is held in each stratum. A further allocation, proportional to the number of students taking CE classes, was then made according to municipality. Schools were ranked by number of CE pupils. Six parents and six pupils were interviewed in the top-ranking group; five pupils and five parents were interviewed in the middle ranking group; and four pupils and four parents were interviewed in the lowest ranking group. Pupils, teachers and parents were chosen with equal probability based on the school register.

**Table 4.7: Realised sample for the study**

Target population	Primary schools		Secondary schools		Totals	
	No. schools	Percentage of planned	No. schools	Percentage of planned	No. schools	Percentage of planned
*						
Teachers of CE	238	95%	131	87%	369	92%
Pupils taking CE	487	97%	747	93%	1234	95%
Pupils not taking CE	0	0%	738	92%	738	92%
Parents of CE pupils	949	95%	593	99%	1542	96%
Principals	118	94%	73	97%	191	96%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1792</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>2282</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>4074</b>	<b>95%</b>

SMMRI, June 2002

\*The total number planned is given in Table 4.6

### Young Respondents

Two young pupils in the selected primary schools were randomly chosen from the school diary (ten additional interviews were also made).

83 The total number of students involved for primary and secondary school, according to this data, is provided in Table 4.6

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

## The interviews

A number of people were consulted less formally when the international researchers visited Belgrade in January 2002 and authors of the curriculum programmes were interviewed in July 2002. These included academics and professionals who were involved in the design of the CE curriculum.

## The case studies

Case study sites were proposed by the MoES and agreed on by the international team. The sites were selected to cover the following variables:

- Accessible primary and secondary school(s) in a proximate area;
- Urban, high density schools with a 'shift system' for students in Belgrade;
- Rural schools;
- Schools with distinctive ethnic/religious mix of population and enrolment;
- Schools in areas that have experienced conflict;
- Schools considered typical for the majority of the population;
- Geographic spread throughout the country.

This yielded the six sites provided in Table 4.8. Central Serbia, the largest geographical region, hosted four case study sites. This was necessary in order to investigate the ethnic and religious complexity of the region. Vojvodina and Belgrade hosted one case study site each.

**Table 4.8: Selected Case Study sites**

#	Site	Stratum	Significantly spoken languages	Major religions	Type(s) of School
1	Belgrade, Čukarica	Belgrade	Serbian	Orthodox	Elementary
	Belgrade, Stari Grad	Belgrade	Serbian	Orthodox	Vocational
2	Draginje	Central Serbia	Serbian, Roma Languages	Orthodox	Elementary
	Koceljeva	Central Serbia	Serbian	Orthodox	Gymnasium
3	Preševo	Central Serbia	Albanian	Muslim	Elementary & Gymnasium
4	Niš	Central Serbia	Serbian	Orthodox	Elementary & Gymnasium
5	Novi Pazar	Central Serbia	Bošnjak, Roma Languages	Muslim Orthodox	Elementary & Gymnasium
6	Subotica	Vojvodina	Hungarian, Serbian & Croatian	Catholic Orthodox	Elementary & Vocational

SMMRI, June 2002

Individuals from the following groups were interviewed during the case study site visit:

- Pupils, teachers, parents of Civics Education;
- Pupils, teachers, parents who have not chosen Civics Education;
- Principals and members of the wider community.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### 4.5 Research

#### The questionnaires

The total number of interviewers was 151; each worked in an average of three schools. All of the interviewers had previous experience with SMMRI and all attended workshops for the specific study. The research was carried out from 15 May, 2002 to 1 June, 2002.

To ensure field control, 15% of the schools from the realised sample were randomly selected and telephoned. Data capture was done by SMMRI personnel and was subject to their usual controls and scrutiny.

#### Young respondents

Interviewers for primary pupils attended a specialised workshop in Belgrade that was conducted by Ksenija Kondić, on an age-appropriate approach to interviewing young children. Two psychologists from SMMRI (Hana David and Iris Ivanović) conducted similar workshops in other cities.

#### The interviews

Two members of the international research team undertook the interviews with members of the Expert Group on Democratisation of Education, and authors of the Civic Education curriculum on 9 July, 2002 in Belgrade.

#### The case studies

##### Preparation

Ten field researchers attended initial training at SMMRI on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2002. The training was provided by one of the international evaluators and an additional ESP consultant. The purpose of the evaluation was explained and the nature of case study research was presented. It was stressed that the case study research reports were not expected to air the researchers' own opinions; the intention was to strive for an accurate and adequately detailed account of CE in the schools and communities selected. Researchers were asked to provide a contextual background and report on social, cultural and economic conditions in the civic sphere.

Table 4.9 presents the outline for the Case Studies that was developed at the introductory workshop. The workshop was structured around the detailed discussion of each of the areas.

**Table 4.9: Case Study outline**

Area to be covered	Weighting of section
History and demographic description of the area; Identification of social, civic, religious and cultural issues in the area;	30%
A description of what is happening in CE;	40%
What local stakeholders think about CE; What local stakeholders think the priorities of CE should be.	30%

SMMRI, June 2002

Researchers included nine students from the psychology department of the University of Belgrade and one final-year social science student from Hungary. An additional researcher from Niš, who was able to speak Albanian, undertook the Preševo study with the ESP

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

consultant. The researchers were identified and recommended by SMMRI, FOS, ESP and UNICEF.

## Field research

The research was carried out from 3-7 June 2002, and Preševo was revisited on 10 and 11 June, 2002. Either the international evaluator or the ESP consultant visited each of the case study sites during the field research period. The MoES and SMMRI provided important administrative backup and other support over the period.

## Debriefing and write-up

The ESP consultant convened a two-day debriefing period on 8-9 June, 2002. The researchers presented their findings and the writing of the final report was discussed. The case studies were written in Serbian<sup>84</sup> and then translated into English. Translations were checked for accuracy by original researchers. They were then given to the ESP consultant, who clarified various points of detail and content with the field researchers and edited the final version. The ESP consultant wrote the case study summaries annexed to this report (see Appendix 2). The views expressed in the case study summaries, and the excerpts included in Section 5, 'Main Findings', are those of the individuals interviewed, and do not necessarily represent the views of all stakeholders in the case study site. Individual opinions are included in this report in order to supplement the results of the national survey with qualitative information, and to indicate the range of views held by various stakeholders.

Complete versions of the case studies are presented in *Part Three: Cases Studies of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia*<sup>85</sup>.

## 4.6 Analysis

### Quantitative

Basic descriptive statistical procedures were carried out on all data: including arithmetic mean, percentages, ranking and cross tabulations, which were primarily undertaken by region or type of school. Most of the data is presented in tabular form and, where relevant, pie graphs, bar graphs and line graphs have been used for illustrative purposes. Selected tables and graphs are provided in part one of this report. The complete synthesised analysis of questionnaires is presented in *Part Two: Technical Report*<sup>86</sup>.

*Cluster analysis* was attempted in several places where multi-variant data was available. However, statistically significant clustering was only found in the pupils' responses to the given list of topics that should or should not be included in CE. The result was verified with discriminate analysis.

*Multivariate analysis* (mostly ANOVA) was possible with a number of questions. A significance level of 0.05 was used in all tests. SPSS<sup>87</sup> (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 10.0.5 (27 Nov 1999) was used for all procedures.

### Qualitative

A critical commentary was undertaken on available Civic Education documents (syllabi, teacher manuals, training materials and learning resources). The case studies were presented to the international team by the field researchers in July 2002.

84 The Subotica and Preševo studies were written in English first.

85 The full text of this report can be found on the websites of the evaluation's partner organisations: UNESCO, UNICEF, FOS-Serbia, and OSI.

86 The full text of this report can be found on the websites of the evaluation's partner organisations: UNESCO, UNICEF, FOS-Serbia, and OSI.

87 Copyright ' 2002, SPSS Inc. All rights reserved. SPSS Inc. Headquarters, 233 S. Wacker Drive, 11th floor. Chicago, Illinois 60606

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### **4.7 Findings and conclusions**

The international team considered all the various data to establish the findings and draw conclusions. It was possible to cover most of the data and agree on the key findings during the visit to Belgrade in July 2002. Preliminary findings were presented to the MoES on 12 July 2002. The international evaluators wrote the final report between 8 and 31 July 2002. After the joint visit to Belgrade in early July, all communication was carried out via email.



# 5 MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the evaluation draw on data gathered from:

- An analysis of syllabi, course materials, teacher handbooks and training materials;
- Meetings with Ministry personnel, interviews with members of the Expert Working Group who were involved in developing the programmes, visits to schools and interviews with school directors and teachers of Civic Education;
- A questionnaire designed for primary school children<sup>88</sup>;
- A national survey of a representative sample<sup>89</sup> of schools involving questionnaires to parents, principals, pupils, schools and teachers<sup>90</sup>;
- Case studies of schools and communities<sup>91</sup> in the Belgrade boroughs of Čukarica and Stari Grad, Koceljeva and Draginje, Niš, Novi Pazar, Preševo and Subotica.

The juxtaposition of detailed evidence from the national survey findings with anecdotal commentary from the case study findings is intended to illustrate the complexities of issues relating to Civic Education in a living context. The views expressed in the case study findings are those of the individuals interviewed, and do not necessarily represent the views of all stakeholders in the case study site.

The information from these sources has been drawn together under a set of common headings to report the main evaluation findings. More detailed information is available in parts two and three of the report. **Part Two: Technical Report** contains a detailed analysis of the survey findings. **Part Three: Case studies of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia**<sup>92</sup> contains the six case studies with adaptations to make them suitable for teacher training in civics education.

## 5.1 Participants in Civic Education

### Estimated number of pupils taking Civic Education

*An estimated 20,693 pupils in the targeted age groups took Civic Education (CE) in its first year of implementation – 12% of the total. This breaks down as 21% of the children (18,824) in primary school and possibly under 5% (3,173 or 3.53%) of pupils in secondary school – taking into account the adjusted estimate for schools and a projected drop-out rate of 33% [Tables 4.1-3].*

### Gender

*Civic Education has been chosen mostly by girls, and the majority of CE teachers are female.*

- A significant finding is that more than two thirds of secondary pupils in the survey sample who chose to take CE are female (68% in vocational and 81% in gymnasium).
- In gymnasiums four-fifths of pupils taking CE are girls<sup>93</sup>.
- In primary schools, 61% of pupils taking CE are girls<sup>94</sup>.
- The survey indicates that mainly female teachers (97% in primary, 95% in vocational and 88% in gymnasium) teach CE<sup>95</sup>. This means only 4 in every 100 teachers of CE are male.
- Mothers appear to be more closely involved in matters related to the education of their children and this is reflected in the higher percentage of female respondents in the survey sample (73%).

88 Part Two: Technical Report.

89 Section 3: Methodology for the Evaluation.

90 Part Two: Technical Report.

91 Part Three: Case studies of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia.

92 The full text of these two reports can be found on the websites of the evaluation's partner organisations: UNESCO, UNICEF, FOS-Serbia, and OSI.

93 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 1.4.1, p18.

94 Part Two: Technical Report, An Analysis of Children's Responses, Table v.

95 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 1.1, p10.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### Civic Engagement

*There is some evidence to suggest that pupils who take Civic Education have a higher level of civic engagement than those who do not take CE. This is not necessarily an outcome of CE, but may indicate that pupils with a higher level of civic engagement are self-selecting to enrol in CE.*

- Survey findings indicate that slightly more of those involved in CE have NGO involvement (10%) than pupils who do not take CE (6%).
- Additionally, a higher percentage of pupils who take CE (72%) are involved in other types of youth groups than pupils who do not take CE (62%).
- 12% of pupils from both groups are involved with religious organisations<sup>96</sup>.
- Approximately one-third of the students in both groups are not members of any voluntary organisation.

The case studies indicate that there are opportunities for civic involvement for youth, if limited, in most areas. Some of these are outlined below. In each of the sites, however, remarks were made to the effect that it is extremely difficult to get youth to engage in voluntary civic activities.

In Preševo, a community that feels itself increasingly isolated<sup>97</sup>, there is a sense that the Civic Education class in some way compensates for the great lack of social facilities and provides a feeling of connection with the wider world. There are only two NGOs with a 'youth focus' in Preševo, which are very similar in aims and approach to CE. They complain that the local authority, which discourages youth activity in the community, does not readily accept them.

Civic initiatives for youths in Subotica include: the Youth Parliament, which organises debates on various topics and is an important forum within schools; Teen-apel, an emergency phone-line; camps and other projects through Open Club; Scouts for boys and girls; and Young Scientists, which organises lectures and camps. The Youth Parliaments have separate wings for Hungarian and Serbian youth, as pupils feel it is not 'technically feasible' to have joint sessions. Some CE youth are involved in a school newspaper, which is one project that involves both Hungarian and Serbian youth – the paper contains articles in both languages, but on different topics.

There are a number of very active youth-focused NGOs in Novi Pazar, these include the Urban In, which deals with civic issues and runs a computer school, and English language and journalism classes. All secondary school members were involved in the first 'civic action' in the town just before the 2000 elections. The Centre for Multi-ethnic Dialogue (CEMED) also deals specifically with young people and is committed to tolerance for ethnic and religious diversity. According to young people, most local government organisations, such as the clinics or the Centre for Social Work, do not have a youth focus. The schools have few clubs or programmes for youth outside the curriculum.

Exceptionally, a lot of voluntary work is done within the vocational secondary school in Stari Grad, Belgrade. This includes work with the Red Cross and care for the aged. The school also cooperates with the local medical centre, the local police, a social work centre and an institute for mental health, and actively tries to involve pupils in these activities. Apart from these welfare organisations, the school does not cooperate with any other NGOs. There are about 532 NGOs in Belgrade.

<sup>96</sup> Part Two: Technical Report, Table 1.4.6, p23.

<sup>97</sup> "I am improvising, bringing in various materials from outside CE...we must work hard to reach other cultures...we (Albanians in South Serbia) are a naked people financially, this is my best reward...that students want more CE." Civic Education teacher, gymnasium in Preševo.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

## Pupil Interests

*There is some evidence to suggest that pupils who take Civic Education are more interested in a wide range of civic-related topics than those who do not take CE. Again, this is not necessarily an outcome of CE, but may indicate that pupils with a higher level of interest in these contemporary topics are self-selecting to enrol in CE.*

- A cluster analysis<sup>98</sup> of CE pupils in secondary schools, based on their rankings of the importance of various topics to Civic Education, reveals three statistically significant clusters [Table 5.1]. Children in Cluster A want to do everything on the list. Children in Cluster B want to know about human rights and children’s rights, but also, particularly, their own religion and current political issues. The children in Cluster C want to know about environmental issues, healthy life styles, minority rights, current political issues and knowledge of other religions

**Table 5.1: Results of cluster analysis**

Relationship of clusters to functions			
Cluster number	Number of cases	Centroid Function	
Ward Method	per cluster	1	2
Cluster A	499	.579	.678
Cluster B	785	-1.134	-.252
Cluster C	201	-.699	2.991
<b>Total =</b>	1485	-	-

SMMRI, June 2002

- A higher percentage of Cluster A children take CE than do not take CE; most Cluster B children do not take CE (even though Cluster B children in the CE class are the largest single group); and the percentage for Cluster C taking CE is twice as high as those who do not [Table 5.2].

**Table 5.2: Social interests of CE pupils and non-CE pupils**

Structural matrix	Function*	
	1	2
Human rights	.672	-.214
Children’s rights	.643	-.586
Current political issues	.470	.392
Knowledge of own religion	.358	.203
Environmental issues	.236	.455
Healthy life style (drugs, smoking, sexual behavior)	.237	.406
Minority rights	.368	.394
Knowledge of other religions	.168	.374
National tradition and customs	.261	.325
Relations within the family and between friends	.171	.323
Serbia’s relations in the wider world	.128	.280
How government works	.187	.261

SMMRI, June 2002

\*Statistical line defining the distance between clusters

98 See: Section 4: Evaluation Methodology, for a discussion of this analysis.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- Given the complex nature of these allegiances and interests, there is insufficient evidence to suggest that CE has engendered these values in its first year of implementation. It would seem most prudent to conclude that the pupils that were attracted to CE in its first year of implementation were more progressive and less traditionalist in their thinking to start off with. This characteristic of CE students would not be automatically assured if the subject were to be made compulsory.

### Psychosocial orientation

*Many of those involved with Civic Education have a strong psychosocial orientation.*

- The Civic Education curriculum that has emerged is located within a psychosocial framework. This is reflected in the influence of developmental psychology in programme design with an emphasis on emotional development, communication skills and conflict resolution, particularly at the primary level<sup>99</sup>.
- There is a high level of involvement of staff from the University of Belgrade's Faculty of Philosophy and Education Department in the design of programmes incorporated into the Civic Education curriculum<sup>100</sup>.
- The survey indicated that in most cases (68%) the Principal selected CE teachers based on teachers' qualifications and previous experience. In many cases there was only one candidate, or the selection of CE teachers was based on the fact that a teacher had already been involved in NGO-supported projects<sup>101</sup>.
- Other subjects that secondary CE teachers teach include Sociology (16%), Psychology (13%), Philosophy (10%), Constitution and Civil Rights (8%)<sup>102</sup>.

### International contact

*Curriculum developers of Civic Education have had some international contacts but few pupils, teachers or parents have experience beyond the Republic of Serbia.*

- In the interviews all those involved in the design of CE mentioned that they had had contact with programmes outside the Republic of Serbia. References were made to the UNICEF Education for Peace programme; US programmes in Croatia and Bosnia affiliated with the Centre for Civic Education; and civic education programmes in Austria, Croatia, Ireland, Romania, Slovenia and Switzerland.
- There has been significant contact with the Council of Europe through the project on Education for Democratic Citizenship, including a national seminar in Belgrade jointly supported by the Council of Europe and UNESCO.
- Few principals (10%), teachers (16%), parents (14%) or pupils (11%) have lived or worked outside the Republic of Serbia, and in most cases these refer to countries of the former Yugoslavia. Smaller percentages have experience further afield in countries such as Switzerland, Austria, France, Germany, Sweden and the United States<sup>103</sup>.
- The survey indicates that there is no significant difference between those who choose and those who do not choose CE in terms of their previous international contact. Less than one in ten of all pupils have had the opportunity of international contact outside the Republic of Serbia<sup>104</sup>.

## 5.2 Choices and policy issues

A feature of the initial introduction of Civic Education is that it has been introduced as a voluntary option and timetabled by most schools before the first class or after the last class. This means that a number of issues related to choice have arisen.

99 Part Two: Technical Report, Semi-structured interviews.

100 Part Two: Technical Report, Semi-structured interviews.

101 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 2.3.3, p41.

102 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.1.2a, p55.

103 See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 1.1d-g, p12-13; Table 1.2.3, p15; Table 1.3.3, p17.

104 See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 1.4.5, p22.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

## Information as a basis for decision-making

*While information about Civic Education has been good, there is still a need for better dissemination of information to raise awareness about the aims and purposes of CE.*

- The main source of information used by secondary pupils to make a decision about CE was a brochure issued by the Ministry of Education (cited by 74% of secondary pupils).
- Most pupils were given several days to make a decision (86%), with the rest being asked to make a decision within a day or a class.
- Primary schools were particularly active in supplying information (61% of primary parents received information in this way), and in most cases the decision was taken jointly between parents and pupils (59%)<sup>105</sup>.
- Secondary schools were less active in communicating with parents (22% of vocational and 16% of gymnasium parents received information), and it was more common for secondary pupils to make their own decision as to whether to take CE (60%)<sup>106</sup>.
- Pupils (66%) were the most satisfied about the level of information provided as a basis for decision-making. Only half of parents were satisfied. Principals (48%) were least satisfied and in many cases were critical of the level and clarity of information received from the Ministry of Education<sup>107</sup>.

The MoES disseminated information regarding the first year of CE through brochures distributed to schools and a media campaign to inform the wider public. However, the case studies demonstrate some problems arising from poor and insufficient flow of information, as illustrated by the following examples<sup>108</sup>:

Teachers in Preševo complain that they received information about CE very late in the school year. Teachers in the case study sites in Niš explain that they were informed about CE through the media, and say that the information was neither precise nor sufficient. Most parents that were interviewed believed that CE had something to do with *bon ton*. The teacher in the secondary school in Niš says she was only properly informed about the subject when she went on the training, that the students were only given ten minutes to decide which subject to do, and that the decision was made based on very little information. A principal in Koceljeva stated that while information was received on time it was insufficient and too general. According to this principal, the information on RE was at least partly clear, whereas no one knew anything about CE.

In general, principals are not well-informed about the subject. A principal in Subotica persistently referred to CE as 'that other subject'. As the writers of the Koceljeva/Draginje case study put it, "their knowledge of CE ends with the information they received from the Ministry of Education and Sports".

In Subotica, where the Hungarian and Serbian communities tend to keep many of their activities separate, the High School decided to teach CE in Hungarian. Of the 520 first-grades, roughly two-thirds are taught in Serbian and the Civic Education class has only eight pupils, all Hungarian speakers. The primary school in Subotica organised a meeting with all parents to discuss CE. In the secondary school, the pupils were not sufficiently informed about the subject and the teacher offered a sample CE class to her class so that the pupils could take an informed decision – the whole class of ten pupils joined CE afterwards. Form teachers were given the responsibility to inform pupils about CE but informal discussion with secondary pupils revealed that several had never heard of the subject. Some teachers in Subotica attribute the poor recruitment to CE to poor organisation by the school, as well as late and inadequate information by the Ministry.

105 See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 2.4.3b, p45.

106 See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 2.4.2, p43.

107 See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 2.4.4, p47.

108 See Part Three: Case studies of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia.

## Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

### An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

Individual opinions on why children chose neither CE or RE vary. For example, the CE teacher in the Belgrade borough of Stari Grad offers three reasons for why children 'opted out' of both subjects:

1. "There was a lack of information about the programme at the beginning of the year";
2. "There was a lack of determination on the part of the Ministry to begin the subject on time (in September) and provide course notes for the pupils and guidelines for evaluating student performance";
3. "The subject was rapidly introduced with insufficient media coverage".

#### **An alternative to Religious Education?**

*In some cases, an unhelpful perception has developed that Civic Education is an alternative to Religious Education.*

- Interviews with members of the Expert Working Group make it clear that there is dissatisfaction with the perception held by some stakeholders that CE is an alternative to Religious Education.
- The case studies substantiate this as a matter of concern, and suggest that part of the problem has been that there is still considerable lack of clarity about CE<sup>109</sup>.
- Pre-adjusted enrolment figures<sup>110</sup> from the Ministry of Education indicate that 22,5% of primary and 7,02% of secondary pupils chose CE and 36,4% of primary and 12,22% of secondary pupils chose RE in the first year [Table 5.3].

**Table 5.3: MoES data, pupils enrolled in CE and RE (September, 2001)**

	Primary schools	Secondary schools*
Religious education	30,452 36,4%	10,944 12,22%
Civics education	18,824 22,5%	6,314 7,02%
Both Subjects	8,617 10,3%	1,786 1,98%
Pupils who take neither	25,767 30,8%	46,302 51,45%
	100,00%	72,67%

SMMRI, June 2002

\*The secondary schools' tally does not total 100% in the given figures; 24 651 students are not accounted for in this data.

The case studies illustrate a very complex and interwoven range of issues related to religion, ethnicity and politics. In Preševo, for example, the supposed competition is not between CE and RE, for even though twice as many pupils take RE as CE, virtually all students who take CE also take RE. The perceived competition, rather, is between CE and the Serbian language class. Some teachers feel that pupils do not have time to accomplish both adequately. The principal of the school in Koceljeva thinks CE and RE should be one subject.

The principal in the primary school in Subotica believes that the poor interest in CE is because parents are uninformed about the subject. He attributes the greater interest in RE to the fact that such an emphasis was placed on tradition, customs, religious issues and aiding the church in the recent local elections. Local parents echo this opinion; they feel the church

<sup>109</sup> See Part Three: Case studies of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia.

<sup>110</sup> Pre-adjusted enrolment figures are used to enable a comparison with RE enrolment figures that were not investigated.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

has a far stronger influence in the community than other institutions. There is also a perception among some stakeholders in Subotica that CE was created as a deliberate alternative to RE.

RE for Islamic students receives far more support than does CE from the schools in Novi Pazar. In the secondary school, RE is held during the third class in the normal timetable. The other students have a free period during this time. CE is held after school, and RE for Serbian students (one small class) is held between school shifts. Several of the teachers feel strongly that this divides pupils and that it is not good for children to be separated. However, there is a very positive attitude to CE; it is not seen as an alternative to RE and most of the CE students also take RE classes.

Novi Pazar is ethnically and religiously diverse. However, interpersonal relationships between the different groups appear to be very good, and there is a general decline in tensions and conflict in these areas. Case study researchers came across great disapproval at schools when they asked about statistics on various ethnic and religious groups. They were told that neither the school authorities nor students ever thought about dividing people in terms of their ethnicity. The primary school principal in Čukarica believes that RE and CE should be one subject and that the two subjects complement one another rather well.

### Should Civic Education be voluntary or compulsory?

*There is significant consensus across stakeholder groups that Civic Education should be voluntary.*

- The strongest statements of concern that CE should remain voluntary came from members of the Expert Working Group who had been involved in designing the programmes. Their rationale is that compulsion runs contrary to the democratic values of CE and may prove to be counterproductive by developing negative attitudes towards CE.
- This position is supported by the majority of parents (64%), principals (49%) and primary teachers (45%) who also think CE should be voluntary.
- Only 11% of parents, 25% of principals and 28% of teachers think that CE should become compulsory, although there is strong support for this amongst secondary teachers (46%).
- A majority of pupils think that CE should be voluntary (56% of those who take CE and 67% of those who do not take CE). A fifth of those pupils already taking CE (20%) think it should become compulsory<sup>111</sup>.

Certain of the case studies<sup>112</sup> indicate that forcing a choice between CE and RE would not be popular. In Preševo, there is a strong commitment to both subjects – the former bringing the promise of social inclusion, the latter confirming a sense of cultural identity. There would appear to be a strong commitment to both subjects, but a stronger commitment to RE.

Some teachers in Subotica are of the view that making CE compulsory will turn it into an obligation for teachers and pupils, and that this will result in the subject becoming unpopular. A senior office holder in the local council believes making RE compulsory is not a good idea either.

However, some feelings were expressed in favour of making CE compulsory. In Čukarica in Belgrade, for example, the response to CE and RE was very half-hearted. The CE teacher was on maternity leave for a good part of the year, and only 11 classes were held. Nevertheless, she wants to continue teaching the subject in 2002/3. She believes making CE a regular subject will be a very good idea because of the qualities it develops in the children.

<sup>111</sup> See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 8.3.3, p158.

<sup>112</sup> See Part Three: Case studies of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

There is a general feeling in the Belgrade schools that making CE compulsory and extending it for all age groups will make its effects more visible and its connections with real life more explicit.

### 5.3 Timetabling

*There are significant issues related to timetabling that still need to be resolved.*

- In most schools pupils have one class of CE per week, (42% of primary, 59% vocational and 55% gymnasium) or two classes per week (37% primary, 31% vocational, 40% gymnasium). The remaining schools offer between 3 and 5 classes of CE per week<sup>113</sup>.
- Most teachers (70%), parents (76%) and pupils (54%) think that the number of classes is adequate, but a significant number of secondary school pupils (44%) suggest that CE classes should be held more often<sup>114</sup>.
- Some members of the Expert Working Group suggest that the minimum requirement for CE should be at least two periods per week, because the active learning methodology requires more than a single period for proper engagement of the pupils.
- In the initial year most schools (80%) have organised classes to take place before or after the formal timetable, and only 20% of schools have a special room for CE.
- Interviews suggest that if schools timetable CE within the formal timetable, the simplest solution for schools will be to timetable CE as an alternative to RE. However, this will not accommodate pupils who wish to take both subjects, as it will force a choice.

The secondary school building in Preševo accommodates 2,800 students, split roughly half-half in a shift system in two schools – a gymnasium and a vocational school. The 'outside-the-timetable formula' has been very difficult to manage but has not dulled enthusiasm for the subject. The long distances pupils have to commute and the dependence on bus schedules also makes it difficult for students to participate in extra-mural activities. There are also schools in Belgrade, Koceljeva, Niš, Novi Pazar, Preševo and Subotica that operate on a shift basis. Scheduling CE outside the timetable has been difficult to administer in all of them.

### 5.4 Curriculum content

#### Adherence to the curriculum

*Most teachers say they follow the Civic Education curriculum as it is written.*

- 89% of teachers say they follow the curriculum; only 7% say they follow it partially.
- At the secondary level, 91% of vocational school teachers say they follow the curriculum, as compared to 83% of gymnasium teachers.
- In this first year of Civic Education, only 3% of teachers say they were able to complete the entire curriculum. 70% of teachers report completion rates of 50-80% of the curriculum. This level of completion is likely a reflection of the fact that CE was introduced in November, and may affect teacher attitudes toward topics covered in the later parts of the curriculum.

While most of the case study sites reflect completion rates comparative with the national survey, the Subotica schools reveal both extremes. The primary school, which had a later November start, completed the whole syllabus. The secondary school, which had an even later start, completed only 15 classes (one third of the syllabus).

<sup>113</sup> See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.1.1, p54.

<sup>114</sup> See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.1.5, p58.



## Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

### An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

In the vocational secondary school in Stari Grad, Belgrade, teachers think pupils consider the 'second part' of the curriculum to be boring; they mention children's rights and laws and contract relationships. Pupils also feel the jargon used (such as 'youth participation' and 'participation in school') makes the subject seem artificial, as it is not the language they speak.

#### **Age appropriateness**

*Most stakeholders think the Civic Education curriculum is age-appropriate, although there are significant differences in the perceptions of pupils, parents, and teachers.*

- 95% of secondary school pupils say that the Civic Education curriculum is appropriate for their age.
- 83% of parents say the curriculum is appropriate, although a substantial proportion, 15%, say that they don't know<sup>115</sup>.
- 78% of teachers say the curriculum is appropriate. The most strongly positive are the gymnasium teachers. An average of 22% of teachers say that the curriculum is not age-appropriate. Primary school teachers (23%) are the most likely group of teachers to express concern about age-appropriateness.[Table 5.4]

115 See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 5.1.9, p104.

Table 5.4: Age appropriateness of the curriculum

	Is the curriculum adequate for the age of the children?											
	Teachers of CE				Pupils who take CE				Parents of pupils who take CE			
	Total	Type of school			Total	Type of school			Total	Type of school		
		Primary	Vocational	Gymnasium		Vocational	Gymnasium	Primary		Vocational	Gymnasium	
Base	N=369	N=238	N=91	N=40	N=747	N=571	N=176	N=1391	N=875	N=343	N=173	
Yes	78%	76%	79%	83%	95%	95%	97%	83%	84%	80%	80%	
No	22%	23%	21%	15%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	
No answer	1%	1%		3%	1%	1%		15%	13%	17%	17%	

SMMRI, June 2002

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

## What should the subject be called?

*Most primary school teachers, and a substantial number of secondary school teachers, think the name 'Civic Education' should be changed, but there is no agreement on what it should be called<sup>116</sup>.*

- 65% of primary teachers think the name 'Civic Education' should be changed. 20% suggest changing it to 'Consciousness of Themselves and Others'. Other suggestions include 'Others and Me', 'Keepers of the Smile', and 'Culture of Nice Behaviour'.
- 44% of secondary teachers think the name 'Civic Education' should be changed. 17% suggest changing it to 'Consciousness of Themselves and Others'. Other suggestions include 'Others and Me', 'The Art of Communication', 'Life Skills' and 'Democratic Society'.
- The number of suggestions for new names that related specifically to civic content was insignificant.

## Importance of topics currently covered in Civic Education

*Both teachers and pupils think that all subjects covered in the current Civic Education curriculum are important.*

- Secondary teachers think that the most important topics are realising and accepting differences, and self-assured reactions.
- Least important topics for secondary teachers (though these were still strong positives) were laws and rights, and readiness to take part in school life.
- Secondary pupils think the most important topics are responsibility of children and young people, and expressing opinions.
- The least important topic for secondary students (though still a strong positive) was debating. Vocational school pupils ranked almost all the topics as somewhat less important than did those in the gymnasiums, with the largest difference on the topic of debating.<sup>117</sup>
- Primary school teachers rated all of the topics as important<sup>118</sup>. [Tables 5.5 and 5.6]

<sup>116</sup> Part Two: Technical Report, Table 8.3.5, p161; Table 8.3.5b, p162.

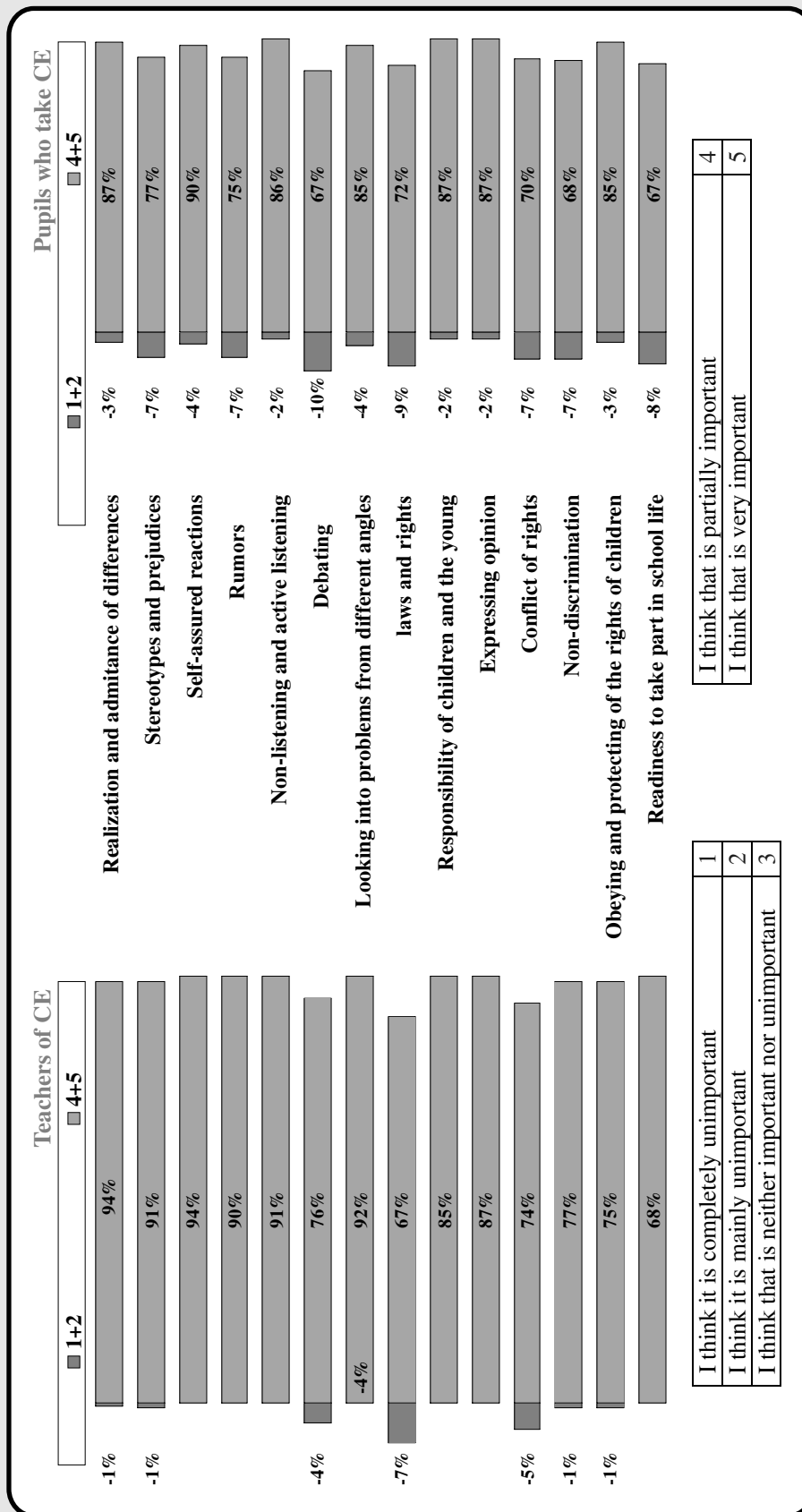
<sup>117</sup> See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 5.1.1, p102.

<sup>118</sup> See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 5.1.1, p102.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

**Table 5.5: Estimation of the importance of topics covered by the current curriculum (secondary teachers and pupils).**

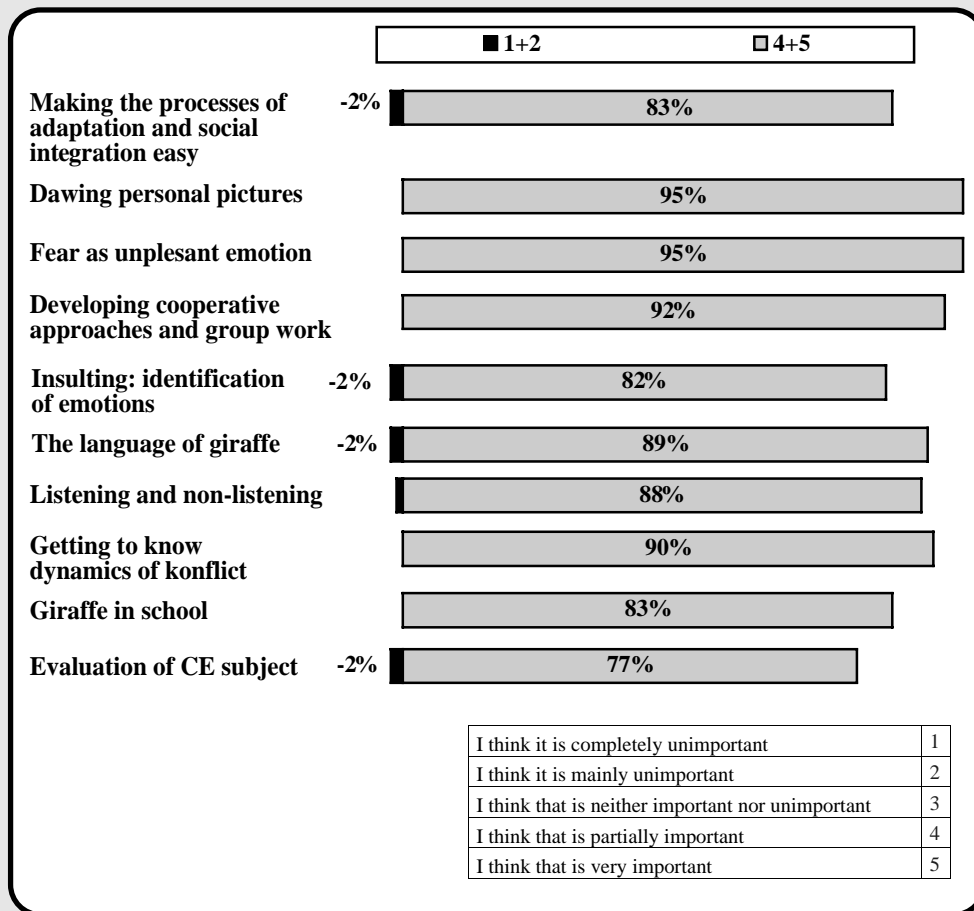


SMMRI, June 2002

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

**Table 5.6: Estimation of the importance of topics covered by the current curriculum (primary school teachers)**



SMMRI, June 2002

According to the high school pedagogue in Novi Pazar, the most interesting themes dealt with are discrimination and prejudice. These classes were interesting because students discussed their personal beliefs, and at the same time they learned a lot about the things that were unknown to them but are part of their everyday life. The CE teacher in the secondary school in Preševo feels that the emphasis on tolerance and anger management is well placed in the curriculum. "This class is good in dealing with student anger...to discuss it with someone...get it out of their system".

### Are any current Civic Education topics over-emphasised?

*In general, teachers and pupils do not feel that any of the current topics in the civic education curriculum are over-emphasised.*

- An average of 79% of teachers stated that no topics are over-emphasised in the current Civic Education curriculum. More primary than secondary teachers expressed this view.
- 86% of secondary pupils stated that no topics are over-emphasised.
- 57% of parents stated that they did not know whether or not any topics were over-emphasised. 36% of parents thought that no topics are over-emphasised<sup>119</sup>.

119 See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 5.1.12, p107.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- A minority of teachers (18%), pupils (14%) and parents (7%) expressed the view that some topics are over-emphasised in the current Civic Education curriculum. They were asked to specify which topics these were. The topic most commonly mentioned by teachers and pupils was 'children's rights'.
- 'Children's rights' was seen as over-emphasised by 5% of all teachers sampled. Among primary teachers, less than 1 % of all teachers shared this view, as compared with 13% of vocational teachers and 15% of gymnasium teachers. 'Children's rights' was seen as over-emphasised by 6% of all secondary pupils sampled. 'Children's rights' was not mentioned by parents.
- 'Human rights' was seen as over-emphasised by 12% of all secondary teachers sampled. 'Fear' was seen as over-emphasised by 5% of all primary teachers sampled.
- Other topics mentioned as over-emphasised in very low numbers included 'conflict', 'emotional spheres', 'rights of minorities/discrimination', 'prejudices/stereotypes', 'self-confidence', 'relaxation' and 'playing in the primary school'<sup>120</sup>.

The teacher in the secondary school in Subotica only appreciates the more psychology-based aspects of CE and is not motivated to teach the more civil/human rights components, which she regards as boring and 'not connected' to the children's everyday lives.

Parents and teachers in the elementary school in Niš agree that "current political topics, knowing other religions and nations, government operations, the relationship of the Republic of Serbia to the world or the role of media in democratic societies" are topics that will create additional burdens for children. They feel these kinds of issues are not dealt with in an age-appropriate way.

### Is additional content needed in Civic Education?

*Teachers, secondary pupils taking Civic Education, secondary pupils not taking Civic Education, principals, and parents were presented with a list of topics and asked if these should be included in Civic Education. Topics most often mentioned as important to Civic Education were healthy life styles (drugs and alcohol), relations with family and friends, children's rights, the environment and human rights. [Table 5.7]*

<sup>120</sup> See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 5.1.13, p108.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

**Table 5.7: Desirability of topics to be included in the curriculum — all stakeholders.**

	Should the following topics be included in the subject? - opinion of participants*									
	Teachers of CE		Pupils who take CE		Pupils who do not take CE		Principals		Parents of pupils who take CE	
	Primary	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Secondary
Human rights	69%	89%	95%	89%	86%	96%	51%	73%		
Children's rights	94%	95%	98%	94%	95%	96%	78%	82%		
Current political issues	3%	31%	17%	13%	13%	22%	13%	41%		
Knowledge of own religion	51%	56%	47%	79%	68%	71%	74%	76%		
Environmental issues	88%	76%	63%	86%	96%	89%	88%	81%		
Healthy life style (drugs, smoking, sexual behavior)	86%	95%	90%	93%	97%	93%	94%	96%		
Minority rights	50%	81%	65%	42%	75%	75%	30%	43%		
Knowledge of other religions	35%	54%	37%	37%	61%	60%	33%	42%		
National tradition and customs	67%	65%	55%	69%	83%	84%	78%	84%		
Relations within the family and between friends	98%	97%	89%	70%	94%	96%	95%	94%		
Serbia's relations in the wider world	19%	47%	33%	40%	53%	58%	19%	53%		
How government works	3%	33%	18%	15%	21%	33%	8%	28%		
Role of media in democratic society	24%	80%	37%	24%	58%	75%	16%	45%		

SMMRI, June 2002

\* Order is the same as the questionnaire

## Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

### An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- The topics considered least important to Civic Education by all groups are 'current political issues' and 'how government works'. [Table 5.8]
- There are considerable differences of opinion between the groups as to whether 'knowledge of own religion' and 'national tradition and customs' are important to Civic Education. Inclusion of these topics was more strongly favoured by parents, principals, and secondary pupils not taking CE, than by teachers and pupils taking CE.
- Rights of minorities' is more important for pupils taking Civic Education than for those who are not.
- 'Serbia's relations in the wider world' is a more important topic to secondary parents and principals than to other groups.
- When compared with students who do not take Civic Education, secondary pupils taking Civic Education find almost all of the topics for possible inclusion more important. Students attending Civic Education rank the importance of several topics more highly than do students not taking Civic Education. These topics include: human rights, children's rights, current political issues, minority rights, knowledge of other religions, national tradition and customs, relations within the family and between friends, Serbia's relations in the wider world, how government works, and the role of media in a democratic society. All these differences are statistically significant.



# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

Table 5.8: Comparative ranking of the importance of topics that could be included in CE by teachers in primary and secondary schools.

Ranking of priorities (topics that could be included in the program)		
Topic	Teachers of CE Primary	Teachers of CE Secondary
1 Relations within the family and between friends	4.7	4.7
2 Children's rights	4.5	4.5
3 Environmental issues	4.2	4.4
4 Healthy life style (drugs, smoking, sexual behavior)	4.2	4.1
5 Human rights	3.3	4.0
6 National tradition and customs	3.3	3.8
7 Knowledge of own religion	2.8	3.6
8 Minority rights	2.8	3.5
9 Knowledge of other religions	2.3	3.4
10 Serbia's relations in the wider world	1.9	3.1
11 Role of media in democratic society	1.8	3.0
12 How government works	1.2	2.2
13 Current political issues	1.1	2.2

SMMRI, June 2002

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

*When asked an open-ended question about whether any there are any topics that are not currently a part of Civic Education but should be, the majority of teachers and pupils said no.*

- An average of 64% of teachers said that there are no topics that are currently neglected in the Civic Education curriculum.
- However, the views of secondary school teachers are less positive on this issue than those of primary teachers. Only 53% of vocational and 33% of gymnasium teachers stated that there are no topics that are neglected.
- 88% of secondary school pupils said that there were no topics that were neglected in Civic Education.
- Most parents (57%) said they didn't know if there were any topics neglected; they were not familiar enough with Civic Education to know. 36% of parents said that no topics were neglected<sup>121</sup>.
- However, when asked what they would change about CE, 47% of parents said they would like better application of the subject to real life problems<sup>122</sup>.

*A minority of teachers (34%), pupils (12%) and parents (7%) expressed the view that there are topics neglected by the current Civic Education curriculum. They were asked to specify what they thought should be added. A topic on healthy lifestyles (relating to use of drugs and alcohol) was most frequently suggested by all groups. There was greater disagreement between the groups about other topics that should be covered by Civic Education<sup>123</sup>.*

- 'Healthy life styles' was suggested as a topic by 12% of all teachers, 4% of all secondary pupils, and 2% of all parents.
- 'Relations within the family and friends' was mentioned by 9% of all teachers, and less than 1% of all parents, but no pupils.
- 'The environment' was suggested by 7% of all teachers and less than 1% of all parents, but no pupils.
- 2% of all pupils and 3% of all teachers, but no parents, suggested 'Sexuality'.
- 'Children's rights', 'nice behaviour', 'general culture', 'knowing religions', and 'national traditions' were other topics mentioned by very small numbers of all stakeholders<sup>124</sup>.

### Controversial issues in Civic Education

*Controversial issues are sometimes raised in Civic Education, provoking arguments or emotional discussions.*

- Half of all teachers reported that controversial issues have arisen in Civic Education classes. 73% of all gymnasium teachers reported issues arising that provoked arguments or strong emotions.
- Only 37% of secondary pupils report that Civic Education has raised controversial issues leading to argument or strong emotions<sup>125</sup>.

*There is a wide range of issues that can provoke controversy in secondary Civic Education classes.*

- 'Conflict' was a topic that provokes controversy, according to 30% of teachers and 13% of secondary pupils.
- 'Debates' provoke controversy, according to 23% of secondary pupils and 10% of teachers.
- 'Fear' and 'anger' provoke controversy according to 37% and 25% (respectively) of primary teachers. Secondary teachers or pupils did not mention these topics.
- 'Children's rights', 'rumours' and 'rights of minorities/discrimination' were identified as other controversial topics by small numbers of secondary pupils.

121 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 5.1.12, p105.

122 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 8.2.2, p156.

123 (The percentages listed below are based on the total sample of all those responding to this question.)

124 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 5.1.14, p107.

125 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 5.1.15, p110.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- Other controversial topics identified by small numbers of teachers were 'love', 'prejudice/stereotypes', 'children's rights', 'listening and non-listening', 'non-violent communication', 'self-confidence', 'rumours' and 'expressing opinion'<sup>126</sup>.

**Table 5.9: Topics in Civic Education identified as controversial.**

Topics in Civic Education identified as controversial							
	Teachers of CE				Pupils who take CE		
	Total	Type of school			Total	Type of school	
		Primary	Vocational	Gymnasium		Vocational	Gymnasium
<b>Base</b>	N=369	N=238	N=91	N=40	N=747	N=571	N=176
<b>Conflict</b>	30%	34%	23%	21%	13%	13%	13%
<b>Fear</b>	23%	37%					
<b>Anger</b>	16%	25%					
<b>Love</b>	11%	17%	3%				
<b>Prejudice, stereotypes</b>	11%	1%	26%	34%			
<b>Debates</b>	10%	1%	23%	28%	23%	20%	33%
<b>Children's rights</b>	10%	9%	13%	14%	8%	9%	6%
<b>Listening and non-listening</b>	9%	4%	18%	17%			
<b>Non-violent communication</b>	7%	8%	5%	3%			
<b>Self-confidence</b>	7%		15%	21%			
<b>Rumors</b>	5%	1%	13%	14%	5%	5%	7%
<b>Expressing opinion</b>	5%	3%	8%	10%			
<b>Rights of minorities, discrimination</b>					6%	7%	1%

SMMRI, June 2002

*When controversial topics arise, they are dealt with through frank discussion, or role-playing the issues.*

- 86% of teachers, and 96% of secondary pupils say that controversial issues in Civic Education classes are handled openly, through discussion.
- 62% of teachers say that they use role-play to explore a controversial issue. This is more widely reported by primary teachers. By contrast, no pupils mentioned the use of role-play for dealing with controversy.
- 18% of teachers say they direct pupils to discuss the issue with their parents, and 4% of pupils also report this.
- Other approaches to dealing with controversial issues reported by less than 5% of teachers and pupils are: telling pupils to write homework on the topic, trying to change the subject, and saying that such topics are not to be discussed in class.

126 See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 5.1.16, p111.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### 5.5 Teaching and learning methods

#### Use of active learning methods

*Use of active learning methods in Civic Education is very widespread, and is considered highly important.*

- Teachers reported that the methods they use in Civic Education are those typical of 'active learning' (98% report using group work, 97% role-play and games, and 93% use work in pairs). Secondary pupils' perceptions of the use of these methods agree with the reports of their teachers.
- Less than one quarter of the teachers reported using lectures or examinations (oral or written). Less than 10% reported using visiting lecturers or visits outside of school<sup>127</sup>.
- Teachers rank the importance of the active learning methods as very high. Lectures and examinations were ranked as least important.
- Secondary teachers saw games as somewhat less important, and visiting lecturers were considered somewhat less important to primary teachers<sup>128</sup>.
- Pupils report use of lectures in Civic Education more frequently than teachers do (47%, as opposed to 23% for teachers). Pupils report use of examinations more frequently than teachers do (21%, as opposed to 15% for teachers). They also report the use of individual work less frequently than teachers do (56%, as opposed to 76% for teachers)<sup>129</sup>.
- Primary pupils react positively to the methods used in Civic Education<sup>130</sup>. Between 94%-98% of primary pupils report liking role-play, games, workshops, making things together, drawing, and the teacher talking.

The group of pupils in the secondary school in Subotica appreciate CE because of the 'more informal' approach and the chance to work in groups. Classes in the primary school in Subotica regularly involve siblings in the classes and even parents who come early to pick up their children.

The deputy principal in the secondary school in Subotica believes that the forms of active learning promoted in CE should be applied in other subjects as well. Children like the subject because they are asked to say what they think.

Pupils attending CE in Cukarica, Belgrade, say they "loved the lessons because they played there, drew, had a good time, were never bored and that the teacher was good too".

#### Civic education methods compared to methods used in regular classes

*Pupils report active learning methods are used far more frequently in Civic Education than in their regular classes, and that 'traditional' methods are used far more frequently in regular classes than in Civic Education.*

- 99% reported the use of lectures in regular classes, as opposed to 47% in Civic Education. 99% reported the used of examinations in regular classes, as opposed to 15% in Civic Education.
- Active learning methods are frequently used in Civic Education classes, and used little in regular classes. Comparisons of percentages of students reporting the use of each method in either Civic Education or regular classes were: work in pairs 95% vs. 39%, work in groups 98% vs. 42%, role-play 91% vs. 22%, and games 93% vs. 12%<sup>131</sup>.

127 See Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.2.1, p60.

128 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.2.3, p63.

129 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.2.1, p60; Table 3.2.3, p63.

130 Part Two: Technical Report, An Analysis of Children's Responses, Table xi.

131 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.2.1, p60; Table 3.2.3, p63.

**Table 5.10: Comparison of CE methodology and methodology of regular subjects**

Pupils who take CE		
Comparison of teaching methods of CE and regular subjects		
%yes	Regular subjects	CE
	Total	Total
Base	N=744	N=744
Lectures	99%	47%
Examinations (oral or written)	99%	15%
Individual work	66%	56%
Work in pairs	39%	95%
Work in groups	42%	98%
Role play	22%	91%
Games	12%	93%
Experiments	35%	24%
Visiting lecturers	17%	11%
Organized visits to cultural events, museums	48%	8%
Workshops	13%	91%

SMMRI, June 2002

Students in Koceljeva are particularly pleased with the games methodology in CE and wish that their other subjects would be more like that too.

The CE teacher in the secondary school in Novi Pazar is very interested in this workshop methodology and thinks that other teachers should accept these sorts of active learning methods. Students are also happy with the CE methodology, and they enjoy the activities.

## 5.6 Assessment

### Recording attendance

*Nearly all teachers keep records of attendance at Civic Education classes, usually in the Civic Education diary.*

- 96% of primary and secondary teachers report that attendance at Civic Education is recorded<sup>132</sup>.
- 56% of teachers use the Civic Education diary, while 32% use personal notebooks. 10% use the official school diary<sup>133</sup>.

*Both teachers and pupils think that attendance at Civic Education classes should be recorded, but differ as to where these records should be kept.*

- Half of teachers said the Civic Education diary should be used to record attendance, with 30% preferring the use of the official school diary, and 8% recommending use of teachers' personal notebooks. Use of the Civic Education diary is preferred by primary teachers; use of the official school diary is preferred by secondary school teachers.
- 48% of secondary pupils felt the Civic Education diary should be used, with nearly equal numbers (18% and 19%) saying the official school diary or teacher's personal notebook should be used<sup>134</sup>.
- Over two thirds of principals said that attendance at Civic Education should be recorded in the official school diary<sup>135</sup>.

132 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.4.1, p71.

133 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.4.2, p71.

134 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.4.3, p72.

135 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.4.4, p72.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### Assessing pupil participation

*While the authors of the primary and secondary Civic Education syllabus have recommended descriptive grading, less than one third of the teachers are actually using it.*

- Descriptive grades are used by 31% of teachers.
- Approximately half the teachers, in all three types of schools, assess by watching and recording pupil behaviour, without evaluating it.
- 11% of teachers have children evaluate their work themselves, and 1-2% say they use letter grades, number grades, or no evaluation at all.
- Pupil perceptions differ from those of teachers for certain types of grading. Only 27% of pupils say that they are assessed through teacher observation. 22% say there is no evaluation at all<sup>136</sup>.

*Disagreement on what form of assessment should be used in Civic Education is widespread among the stakeholder groups.*

- 37% of principals, 47% of teachers, and 30% of pupils favour descriptive grading.
- All members of the Expert Group on Democratisation in Education who were interviewed favour descriptive grading.
- Members of the Expert Group think that the new system of grading children as either 'successful' or 'very successful' indicates a move toward ranking achievement, and they are opposed to it (though one felt that this system might be preferred by teachers, as it is easier to implement than descriptive grading, and is closer to the more familiar type of grading).
- 34% of principals, 35% of teachers (with a stronger preference for this option in primary schools), and 21% of pupils favour no grading at all.
- 18% of principals, 11% of teachers, and 12% of pupils favour either a letter or numerical grading system (with preference for this option being stronger in the secondary schools).
- 30% of secondary pupils favour 'some other system' of assessment, such as written reports or comments from teachers. (Table 5.11)

*Teachers and principals favour having the grading system for Civic Education regulated by the Ministry of Education.*

- 54% of principals think that the Ministry should regulate the grading system for Civic Education, with 65-69% of secondary principals holding this view.
- 60% of teachers think grading should be centrally regulated, with 69-70% of secondary teachers in agreement.

## 5.7 Training and support for teachers

During the pilot year existing teachers taught Civic Education and received extensive training through workshops provided by the Ministry of Education. Enrolment figures for Civic Education (2001-02) provided by the Ministry of Education and Sports are shown in Table 5.12.

The evaluation sought to clarify how effective training and support for teachers has been.

### Teacher selection for Civic Education

*A majority of teachers reported that their principals selected the CE teacher. While this could affect teacher attitudes toward the subject, that effect may be mitigated by the fact that the main criteria for selection were the teachers' previous experiences and affinities.*

<sup>136</sup> Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.5.1, p74.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

Table 5.11: How are the pupils evaluated in CE classes?

	Pupils who take CE			Teachers of CE		
	Total	Type of school		Total	Type of school	
		Vocational	Gymnasium		Primary	Vocational
Base	N=747	N=571	N=176	N=369	N=91	N=40
Descriptive grades	31%	28%	44%	30%	32%	33%
Teacher watches and records pupil's behavior without evaluation	27%	30%	19%	50%	46%	53%
There is no evaluation	22%	22%	21%	2%	3%	
We evaluate our work ourselves	12%	12%	9%	11%	11%	10%
Numerical system of evaluation (1 - 5)	3%	4%	2%	1%	2%	1%
A-B-C grading system	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	
Comments	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	3%

SMMRI, June 2002

Table 5.12: MoES data (July, 2002), Number of teachers trained and current CE demand

Total for Republic of Serbia	Primary Grade 1 (7-8 years old)	Secondary First year (14-15 years old)
Pupils	83,660	90,000 (approx)
Teachers	43,918	24,546
Schools	1,239	524
CE Pupils	27,441 (32.8%)	6,314 (7.0%)
CE Teachers trained	1,249	419
Schools involved	800	312

SMMRI, June 2002

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- 57% of teachers and principals report that the principals selected the teacher for CE<sup>137</sup>.
- Both teachers and principals mentioned teachers' qualifications, experience with similar programmes, and personal affinity for the subject as the most common criteria for selection<sup>138</sup>.

### Initial training for teachers

*The training programme provided by the Ministry of Education has received a very positive evaluation from teachers – most CE teachers have attended training seminars and feel they have prepared them well in terms of the syllabus content, skills and teaching methods required for CE.*

- Virtually all teachers in the sample had attended both training seminars on Civic Education provided by the Ministry of Education (93% of primary teachers, 91% of vocational and 90% of gymnasium teachers).
- Teachers expressed high levels of satisfaction with both training seminars in terms of competency of workshop trainers (95%), workshop materials (79%), workshop methods (93%), contents of the training workshop (90%) and organisation (76%). Overall, teachers rated the first training workshop slightly higher than the second.
- Virtually all teachers had also received previous training through attendance at workshops or seminars (67% of a psychosocial nature, 31% in active teaching methods).
- The main additional workshops that had been attended by teachers were Goodwill Classroom (38%), Smile Keepers (31%), Primer of Children's Rights (30%), Active Teaching Methods (26%), Non-violent Communication (17%), and The Art of Growing Up (15%)<sup>139</sup>.

All the case studies confirm that teachers found the training seminars valuable and helpful<sup>140</sup>. For many of them, particularly in Koceljeva and Draginje, Novi Pazar and Preševo, but even for some teachers in Niš and Subotica, the training seminars were their first introduction to the subject. In every reported instance teachers who were sceptical about their involvement before training were enthusiastic about teaching the subject after the training.

### Future plans for training

*So far, training in Civic Education has been provided for 1,249 primary teachers (less than 3%) and 419 secondary teachers (less than 2%). Any substantial increase in the numbers of pupils taking CE will require a major investment in training and place significant demands on the capacity of the system to provide such training.*

A teacher in Koceljeva felt that there would have to be dedicated training for every new topic that is introduced in CE. Other case studies seem to confirm that the content of CE presented as important a learning opportunity as the method. Many of the elementary school teachers were familiar with the methods, but found the content new for them.

### Resources

*There is a very high level of reliance upon and satisfaction with the Teacher's Handbooks in both primary and secondary schools. Almost all secondary teachers are satisfied or extremely satisfied with the printed material for pupils; only a third of primary teachers are satisfied with printed material for pupils. There is some evidence that teachers use other resources such as audio-visual materials and visitors, but NGOs were not identified as a common resource.*

137 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 2.3.1, p39.

138 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 2.3.3, p41.

139 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 2.2.7, p.38.

140 Part Three: Case studies of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia.



# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- There is a high degree of satisfaction with the Teacher's Handbook – 96% of all teachers use it and 83% of all teachers assess the handbook as satisfactory or highly satisfactory<sup>141</sup>
- Just over a third of all teachers (35%) state that they use a 'textbook'<sup>142</sup>, although only 4% of pupils identify the use of textbooks in CE classes compared to 97% who identify the use of textbooks in other classes<sup>143</sup>
- Pupils identify a higher use of audio-visual aids in CE (88%) compared to other classes (49%)<sup>144</sup>
- Only 8% of pupils identified the use of cultural visits as learning resources. Visitors to CE classes were identified by 11% of pupils – this most commonly referred to the involvement of parents in CE classes in the primary school. There is no evidence to suggest that NGOs are widely used as a resource for CE.

The case studies offer conflicting examples: teachers in the primary school in Subotica appreciate the support they receive from the MoES, which includes materials for pupils to draw. However, the teachers in Preševo complain that there are no materials at all in the primary school. There is severe overcrowding in this secondary school.

### Providing CE materials for minority language groups

*There is a commitment in the Ministry of Education and Sports to providing translated CE materials for the minority language groups. However, the case studies in the two areas where 'minority language' speakers are a majority report that no material arrived.*

In Subotica, where 40% of the population is Hungarian and in Preševo, where over 95% of the population is Albanian, the schools received no translated CE materials from the MoES. The teacher in Preševo eventually obtained materials from Albania and Kosovo. Due to the fact that the translated materials requested were not delivered to the secondary school in Subotica, the teacher feels she cannot continue next year, as she cannot be expected to translate the material herself.

## 5.8 Stakeholder reactions and perceived impact

Three questions assessed the reactions of stakeholders to Civic Education: why they thought it was introduced, how necessary it was, and how satisfied they were with the subject after its initial year. Stakeholders were also asked about their perceptions of any impact that CE has had during this pilot phase.

### Why has Civic Education been introduced?

*Teachers, parents and secondary pupils think that Civic Education has been introduced to prepare children for life in civil society<sup>145</sup>.*

- Helping children develop skills and values for living in civil society was chosen from a list of three options as the reason for introducing Civic Education by 73% of principals, 81% of teachers, 80% of parents, and 88% of secondary pupils.
- When presented with a list of three options for why they take Civic Education, 93% of primary pupils say that it is to improve their relations with others<sup>146</sup>.
- 21% of principals, 15% of teachers, 13% of parents, and 3% of secondary pupils think CE has been introduced to offer an alternative to religious education.

Discussions with secondary school pupils in Preševo illustrate the importance of this dimension for children. One pupil stated that CE provides, "a vision for life; what kind of

141 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.3.1, p67; Table 3.3.2, p68.

142 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.3.3, p69.

143 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.3.3, p69.

144 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 3.3.3, p.69.

145 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 5.3.1/5.3.2, p.123.

146 Part Two: Technical Report, An Analysis of Children's Responses, Table ix. This is not a particularly strong finding as the options that were provided would have heavily skewed the responses.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

person I want to be in the future". Another thinks the "classes promote tolerance." Another pupil explains that CE helps him to understand "how we can behave with our friends in school and out...how to relate to teachers and parents". Another pupil view was that, "We need to learn how to co-operate with other nations".<sup>147</sup> Similar remarks were reported in the case studies in the Belgrade borough of Stari Grad, Koceljeva, Novi Pazar, and Subotica.

### Is Civic Education needed?

*All stakeholder groups agree that there is a need for Civic Education<sup>148</sup>.*

- 91% of principals, 93% of parents, 94% of secondary pupils, and 97% of teachers expressed agreement with the need for CE.
- Even among secondary pupils who do not take CE, 73% agreed that there is a need for this subject.

### Satisfaction with Civic Education

*Pupils and teachers express a high level of satisfaction with Civic Education.*

- 71% of pupils taking CE, and 25% of those not taking CE, would like to take it next year<sup>149</sup>.
- Secondary pupils rated CE more highly in terms of interest, activity, and the democracy of relations in class, when compared to their regular subjects<sup>150</sup>.
- 96% of primary pupils say they like Civic Education<sup>151</sup>, and 85% say they would like to take Civic Education in second grade<sup>152</sup>.
- 81% of teachers say they would like to continue teaching CE next year<sup>153</sup>.

*Parents also express high levels of satisfaction with Civic Education.*

- 76% of parents of CE pupils described themselves as 'mainly satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with CE classes<sup>154</sup>. 56% of parents of CE pupils would like their children to take CE next year; 32% would like them to take both CE and RE<sup>155</sup>.

*Teachers and principals are reasonably satisfied with the number of pupils attending Civic Education this year. However, there are reports of pupils dropping out, particularly at the secondary level<sup>156</sup>.*

- 66% of teachers and 58% of principals are satisfied with the numbers of pupils attending CE.
- Only 8% of primary teachers report that there are fewer pupils now than at the end of the year, whereas 63% of secondary teachers report pupils have dropped out. Secondary pupils share the perception that class size in CE has decreased since the beginning of the year.
- More than half of principals think class size has remained the same, suggesting that principals may not be well informed about changes in numbers.

CE is very popular in Preševo. The class in the gymnasium started with 50 pupils in December and increased to 67 by the end of the school – about 36% of the pupils in the age cohort. The teacher had to limit the size of the class when the pupils were sitting four to a desk. The primary school has seven Civic Education classes with about 20 students in each class, and 'satellite' CE classes are also offered in nearby villages, along with other subjects, for students who cannot commute to school.

147 Part Three: Case studies of Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia.

148 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 5.3.3, p.124.

149 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 8.3.1, p.157.

150 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 8.1.1, p.154.

151 Part Two: Technical Report, An Analysis of Children's Responses, Table x.

152 Part Two: Technical Report, An Analysis of Children's Responses, Table xvi.

153 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 8.3.2, p.157.

154 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 8.2.1, p.155.

155 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 8.3.1, p.157.

156 Part Two: Technical Report, Tables 3.4.5&3.4.6, p.73.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### **Extending the number of years that Civic Education is offered**

*The majority of stakeholders think that Civic Education should be offered for more than one year of primary school<sup>157</sup>.*

- There is strong support for offering Civic Education in all eight years of primary school. 43% of principals, 51% of teachers, and 45% of parents support this option.
- The second most strongly supported option is to offer CE in four years of primary school (21% of principals, 21% of teachers, and 27% of parents). [Table 5.13]

*There is also strong support for extending the number of years Civic Education is offered in secondary schools<sup>158</sup>.*

- 45% of principals, 55% of teachers, and 52% of parents support offering Civic Education in all four years of secondary school.
- 53% of secondary pupils enrolled in CE support offering the subject for all four years of secondary school, and 25% favour two years.
- Over 60% of secondary pupils not enrolled in CE favour offering the subject for either two or four years in secondary schools. [Table 5.14]

157 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 8.3.6a&b, p163; Table 8.3.71&b, p164.

158 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 8.3.6a&b, p163; Table 8.3.71&b, p164.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

**Table 5.13: For how many years should civic education last in primary school?**

	Principals			Teachers of CE			Parents of pupils who take CE				
	Total	Type of school		Total	Type of school		Total	Type of school			
		Primary	Vocational		Gymnasium	Primary		Vocational	Gymnasium	Primary	Vocational
Base	N=191	N=118	N=39	N=34	N=238	N=91	N=40	N=1533	N=942	N=404	N=187
1 year	6%	5%	8%	9%	3%	5%	3%	6%	4%	12%	7%
2 years	10%	4%	18%	21%	9%	10%	5%	11%	5%	19%	21%
3 years	6%	3%	15%	6%	3%	4%	5%	3%	2%	3%	5%
4 years	21%	17%	23%	32%	14%	34%	33%	27%	24%	32%	33%
5 years	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	1%	1%	0%	1%
6 years	2%	3%	3%		4%	2%	3%	1%	2%	1%	1%
7 years	2%	3%			1%			0%	0%		
8 years	43%	60%	21%	12%	58%	36%	40%	45%	57%	27%	24%
Don't know/ No answer	7%	3%	10%	18%	5%	4%	10%	5%	4%	6%	6%

SMMIRI, June 2002

**Table 5.14: For how many years should civic education last in secondary school?**

	Principals			Teachers of CE			Parents of pupils who take CE				
	Total	Type of school		Total	Type of school		Total	Type of school			
		Primary	Vocational		Gymnasium	Primary		Vocational	Gymnasium	Primary	Vocational
Base	N=191	N=118	N=39	N=34	N=238	N=91	N=40	N=1533	N=942	N=404	N=187
1 year	10%	8%	18%	6%	9%	10%	3%	9%	8%	13%	6%
2 years	25%	15%	38%	41%	20%	30%	23%	22%	19%	27%	25%
3 years	3%	2%	3%	6%	2%	3%	5%	2%	2%	3%	4%
4 years	45%	52%	31%	38%	54%	56%	63%	52%	52%	52%	57%
Don't know/ no answer	18%	23%	10%	9%	16%	1%	8%	13%	18%	4%	5%

SMMIRI, June 2002

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### **Perceived impact: changes in pupils, relationships between pupils**

*Views on whether or not Civic Education has had an impact on pupils varies, but most groups share a perception that there has been some positive impact.*

- Almost half of pupils (48%) say CE improved interpersonal relations in the school, a view shared by only 13% of principals and 17% of teachers. 64% of principals and 39% of teachers say the subject has had no impact on relations in the school<sup>159</sup>.
- Only 19% of principals saw a difference between those who do and those who do not take CE. Of these, the differences include greater tolerance, better communication, and less aggression<sup>160</sup>. Parents and teachers report noticing personal changes in pupils, saying they are 'more open and communicative', 'more tolerant', 'more confident', and 'better able to express emotions'. Principals report being less aware of these changes.<sup>161</sup>
- Pupils note personal changes in themselves, including being more open and communicative, more aware and educated, and having better interpersonal relations.

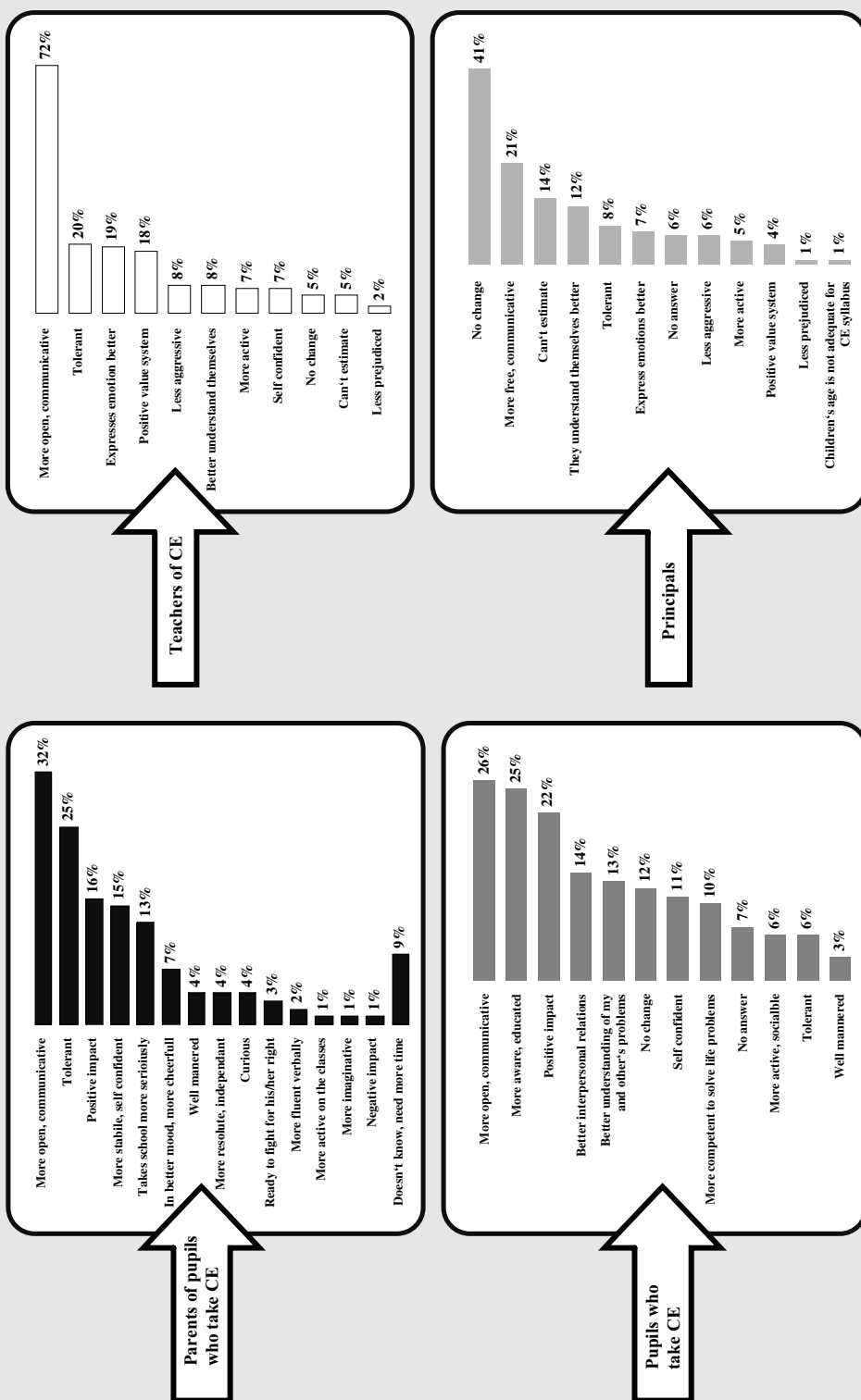
[Table 5.15]

159 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 4.1, p.81.  
160 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 4.7, p.89.  
161 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 4.7, p.89.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

Tables 5.15: Personal change in pupils under the influence of CE classes, all respondents



SMMIRI, June 2002

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

The principal in the secondary school in Subotica believes that the children in the CE class have become more tolerant, that the subject has influenced their thinking, and they behave better towards one another. In the primary school, pupils did not want to work with the 20 Roma children in the school at the beginning of the school year, because they said the Roma children were 'stupid'. This situation changed completely in the CE class: the children accept each other and there are no ethnic divisions.

*Primary pupils enrolled in Civic Education report interest in CE from their non-enrolled peers more frequently than do secondary pupils.*

- 42% of secondary pupils taking CE think most other pupils are not interested in what is learned in CE classes<sup>162</sup>.
- 28% of secondary pupils who do not take CE say they are interested in what is learned in CE<sup>163</sup>.
- 60% of primary pupils taking CE report that their peers who are not enrolled ask them about the classes<sup>164</sup>.
- Of the total number of primary school CE pupils surveyed, 51% report that non-enrolled children ask what they do in CE, 32% say they would like to attend CE too, and 17% ask why they attend the classes. 7% of primary pupils attending CE report that children not attending CE tease them<sup>165</sup>.

### **Perceived impact: Pupil – teacher relationships**

*Both pupils and teachers indicate a positive impact of Civic Education on their relationships with each other.*

- 95% of pupils rate their relation with the CE teacher as 'mainly good' or 'very good', while only 43% rate their relationships with teachers of regular subjects as positive<sup>166</sup>.
- 62% of principals claim CE teachers have 'better' relationships with pupils than teachers of other subjects<sup>167</sup>.
- 97% of CE teachers express satisfaction in their relations with students<sup>168</sup>.

A number of the pupils in the secondary school in Preševo say they took CE because they liked the teacher in the first place. It would seem that in a number of cases the teachers who chose (or who were chosen) to teach CE already had good relationships with the students.

### **Perceived impact: Communication between pupils and parents**

*Pupils and parents report that they discuss Civic Education classes together.*

- 65% of pupils and 86% of parents report that they discuss CE with each other<sup>169</sup>.
- The topic pupils most frequently specify that they talk to their parents about is children's rights (21%)<sup>170</sup>.

A teacher in Koceljeva, who is also a parent of a child in the school, noticed that her child is more responsive and likes talking about things a lot more since she started attending CE. Some of the parents in Draginje stated that they hadn't noticed any changes in their children because their children were "already perfectly behaved before they started CE".

162 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 4.9/4.9a, p91.

163 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 4.9/4.9a, p91.

164 Part Two: Technical Report, An Analysis of Children's Responses, Table xiii.

165 Part Two: Technical Report, An Analysis of Children's Responses, Table xiv.

166 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 4.1, p81; Table 4.2, p82; Table 4.3, p83.

167 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 4.1, p81; Table 4.2, p82; Table 4.3, p83.

168 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 4.1, p81; Table 4.2, p82; Table 4.3, p83.

169 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 4.5, p85.

170 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 4.5a, p86.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### Knowledge of democracy

*There are no significant differences between pupils who take Civic Education and those who don't in terms of their knowledge of democracy. Given the fact that the current curriculum does not directly address concepts of democracy, this finding is unsurprising<sup>171</sup>.*

- Gymnasium pupils appear to have a clearer understanding of the concept of democracy than do pupils in vocational schools. When asked to evaluate a series of statements about relations in society in terms of whether they are 'good for democracy' or 'bad for democracy', gymnasium pupils are more likely than vocational pupils to rate statements such as 'newspapers are free from any governmental control' and 'people have the right to demand their political and social rights' as being good for democracy<sup>172</sup>.

### Values

*Pupils taking Civic Education expressed greater agreement with statements expressing civic values than did those not enrolled in Civic Education. It cannot be determined from this study whether this was a result of exposure to Civic Education, or whether students who choose to enrol in this subject already hold these basic human values<sup>173</sup>.*

- Pupils taking Civic Education expressed significantly more agreement with the following statements than did those not taking CE: 'It is important to accept differences', 'It is important to develop critical thinking', 'It is important to believe in the rule of law', 'It is important to express emotions freely and sincerely', and 'It is important to listen to others with respect<sup>174</sup>.'
- Differences between the two groups were insignificant on statements relating to democratic values and human rights, such as 'Civic activism is important for the development of a democratic society' and 'It is important that women are treated equally to men, legally and in practice<sup>175</sup>.'
- There are significant differences in the strength of agreement with certain values between girls and boys. Girls more strongly agreed that 'It is important to accept differences', 'It is important that women are treated equally to men, legally and in practice', 'It is important to express emotions freely and sincerely', and 'It is important to listen to others with respect<sup>176</sup>.'
- On nearly every value statement, pupils expressed the view that their own level of agreement was stronger than the views expressed by the Civic Education teacher<sup>177</sup>.

### Primary pupils' understanding of Civic Education content

*Primary school pupils are able to distinguish between content that is unique to Civic Education and the content of their regular classes<sup>178</sup>.*

- When presented with a list of topics, some of which are covered by Civic Education and some of which are not, a large majority of primary pupils say that in Civic Education they learn to speak about their feelings (95%) and listen to one another (90%). Primary pupils also say that they learn to say what they think (85%), to work in groups (82%) and to solve conflicts (71%).

171 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 6.1, p130.

172 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 6.3.1, p135.

173 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 6.3.1, p135.

174 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 7.2.1, p143.

175 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 7.2.1, p143.

176 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 7.3, p144.

177 Part Two: Technical Report, Table 7.3, p144.

178 Part Two: Technical Report, An Analysis of Children's Responses, Table viii.



# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

# 6

## CONCLUSIONS

### 6.1 Participants in Civic Education

The main stakeholders concerned with the introduction of Civic Education (CE) are primary and secondary pupils, their parents, teachers of Civic Education, school principals and members of the Expert Group on Democratisation who were involved in designing the curricula.

During the 2001-02 school year, 746 primary schools and 237 secondary schools offered CE classes. This amounts to 60% of primary schools and 45% of secondary schools and 55% of all schools. However, voluntary enrolment in CE classes outside the normal timetable during the first year means that the actual numbers of pupils participating are relatively small – 18,824 (22.5%) of first grade pupils in primary schools and 3,215 (3.57%) of first year pupils in secondary schools. Because of the voluntary nature of enrolment in the first year, and lack of clarity about requirements for recording attendance, the Ministry estimates of pupil numbers are uncertain and have been adjusted to allow for inaccuracies and drop-out rates.

The IEA international study found no significant gender differences in civic knowledge in 27 of the 28 participating countries (the exception is Slovenia where females perform better than males)<sup>179</sup>. It is not clear from the evaluation why most of the pupils choosing CE in the Republic of Serbia are female and whether this has any implications for future development.

A slightly higher percentage of pupils taking CE are involved in voluntary and youth groups, but the most likely explanation for this fact is that those pupils already have a disposition towards civic engagement. It cannot be concluded that this finding reflects any direct effect of CE classes.

There is a psychosocial orientation of many of the designers and teachers of CE for historical reasons; these are the people who have been active in the development of programmes upon which the current curriculum was based. The development of CE within the mainstream curriculum may also benefit from the additional involvement of designers and teachers with a background in civic and political education. Those involved so far have appreciated and benefited from international contacts.

### 6.2 Choices and policy issues

The perception that CE is an alternative choice to religious education has created a very unhelpful dynamic where these are perceived to be 'rivals' – this is likely to be exacerbated by the 'compulsory choice' legislation that has been enacted for the coming school year.

The majority view across all stakeholder groups is that CE should be a voluntary choice. This may be due to a range of reasons. For some, including the authors of the CE curriculum, allowing pupils to choose whether or not to enrol in CE reflects the practice of democratic values. For others, the option to choose whether or not to enrol was likely important in the first year of a new and unfamiliar subject. There are indications that some stakeholders see the subject as one that develops knowledge, attitudes and skills needed by all citizens of a democratic society, and should therefore be compulsory, but this is a minority view at this time. As pupils and parents will be required to choose between Civic Education and Religious Education in the 2002-2003 school year, issues of choice will likely receive greater

179 Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Oswald, H. and Schulz, W. (2001) Citizenship and Education in Twenty-eight Countries. Civic Knowledge and Engagement at Age Fourteen, IEA, Amsterdam. p.62

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

attention. The MoES should consider carefully how to introduce CE and RE in the coming year in a way that preserves possibilities for choice (such as allowing pupils to attend both subjects if they wish to).

The findings suggest that the quality of information about CE as a basis for decision-making could be improved. There is greater satisfaction within the primary schools about the quality of information than the secondary schools. In some areas there is a need for information to be made available in different languages, and in all areas the way in which information is disseminated to parents and pupils might be considered more carefully.

Despite the speed of educational change, parents and pupils feel the need for adequate time to consider any choices they are being asked to make.

### 6.3 Timetabling

Most teachers, parents and pupils think that 1-2 periods of CE per week is adequate, but a significant number of secondary school pupils suggest that CE classes should be more frequent.

Many of the lessons in the current curriculum attempt to cover an ambitious amount of material in a 45-minute period, and Civic Education would likely benefit from an exploration of more creative timetabling options. Longer periods at the secondary level, for example, would allow the opportunity to fully explore issues through active learning methods.

There is broad support for including CE within the timetable for the normal school day. CE was commonly offered either before or after the regular school day, and this may have had a negative impact on enrolment, particularly for pupils who had to travel a considerable distance to school. Timetabling CE within the normal school day would likely encourage parents and pupils to view it as a legitimate and important part of the curriculum.

As school administrators deal with the implications of the 'compulsory choice' legislation, it seems probable that Civic Education and Religious Education will be timetabled opposite each other. This could perpetuate the inaccurate view that the subjects are somehow in opposition to each other. It may lead to a drop in enrolment for CE in areas where a high priority is placed on the practice of religion. It is also likely to provoke dissatisfaction among parents who want their children to have the option of taking both subjects. Emphasising to schools the importance of not timetabling CE and RE opposite each other would address this issue.

### 6.4 Curriculum content

Most stakeholders think that all the topics covered in the current Civic Education curriculum are important. They also find the curriculum is age-appropriate. However, the fact that nearly one quarter of all primary school teachers expressed the view that it is not age-appropriate merits further investigation.

Most of those responding to the survey express the view that there are no topics in the current curriculum that are over-emphasised. Topics mentioned by a small number of teachers and pupils as being over-emphasised are 'children's rights' and 'human rights'. Given that survey respondents overwhelmingly indicate that they think children's rights (and to a somewhat lesser extent, human rights) is an important and relevant topic for Civic Education, it

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

may be useful to explore the perception of over-emphasis in greater depth. A possible interpretation for this finding is that some teachers are uncomfortable with this topic, and unsure of how to approach it. Case study evidence suggests that some find this section of the curriculum less engaging than other topics. It may be useful to review this section of the curriculum in terms of methodologies used and application to real life. Teacher training in Civic Education may also need to give additional emphasis to helping teachers address this topic more successfully.

The moderately high numbers of respondents who indicate that they thought 'knowledge of own religion', 'national traditions and customs', 'Serbia's relations in the wider world', and 'rights of minorities' are important to the curriculum suggests that an exploration of how these topics could be addressed in ways consistent with the goals of Civic Education might be useful.

Most stakeholders do not think any additions to the curriculum are needed, but secondary teachers are the group most likely to want topics added. Examples of topics suggested by the small group of stakeholders that want additions to Civic Education included healthy life styles, the environment, family relations, and sexuality. The scope of content covered by these suggestions may indicate that Civic Education, as a new subject in a curriculum perceived by many as rigid and outdated, is being seen as an opportunity for introducing everything that stakeholders now feel is missing from the educational system. Or, this range of suggested topics may indicate a lack of clarity about what Civic Education is. It is striking that no groups mentioned adding topics that have specific Civic Education content, such as democratic decision-making or social change processes.

A highly positive finding is that most teachers and pupils report that controversial issues in Civic Education are handled openly when they arise. The view that such issues should not be dealt with until pupils acquire skills in communication and conflict resolution is one that was expressed by some teachers during the evaluation process. Even young primary school children are aware, at some level, of potentially controversial issues such as ethnic and religious differences. It is important, then, that Civic Education helps children learn and reinforce psychosocial skills by applying these to controversial issues as they arise, rather than waiting until some optimal level of skill development has been achieved.

### 6.5 Teaching and learning methods

The introduction of Civic Education has exposed many teachers to the use of more interactive teaching methods. The use of these methods is integral to the development of skills that are among the goals of the programme. The use of participatory methods also strongly supports the ability to apply Civic Education content to real life problems, a suggestion of stakeholders for the future development of the curriculum.

The new methodologies have been widely applied by teachers and enthusiastically received, particularly by pupils. The opportunity to interact and participate has made a strong contribution to pupils' positive perceptions of the subject.

Pupils see the active learning methods used in Civic Education as distinguishing this subject from the rest of the school day. In some cases, active learning was referred to by adult stakeholders as 'Civic Education methods', suggesting that the methodology may become identified with the subject. In the short term, it is possible that this could have the positive effect of creating a more distinctive identity for the subject among the parents, teachers, and pupils, many of whom express a lack of clarity about what Civic Education is.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

In the longer term, however, it may not be desirable for these methods to be seen as confined to Civic Education alone. For some authors of the programme, it appears that influencing the teaching methods used in the school as a whole is an aspect of their goals for Civic Education. A small number of teachers report an interest in, and experimentation with, the application of active learning methods to other subjects. This is a trend that deserves encouragement. Subject-specific training on the application of active learning methods is likely to have more of an impact on their uptake than relying on transfer of the methodological training received by the small percentages of teachers who have gone through Civic Education training.

### 6.6 Assessment

Two means of assessment were recommended for the first year of implementation of Civic Education: the collection of attendance records and descriptive grading of the pupils' participation.

Teachers have taken attendance records consistently. But teachers, pupils and principals do not agree as to whether these records should be kept in the Civic Education diary, the official school diary, or teachers' personal notebooks. The debate over this issue may have implications for how Civic Education is viewed by teachers, pupils and parents. Keeping attendance records in some 'official' format implies that Civic Education is part of the regular school programme.

An effective system of assessing pupil participation would also lend legitimacy to the new subject. However, the practice of descriptive grading has not taken hold among Civic Education teachers. It is not clear whether this is due to a need for more training in this new approach to assessment, a perception that the record-keeping required is burdensome, or some other reason. There is no agreement between stakeholder groups as to whether descriptive grading, observation, or no grading at all is the best form of assessment. It is clear that letter or numerical grading are the least preferred options. For the 2002-2003 school year, the Ministry has decided that pupils in Civic Education will be assessed as being either 'successful' or 'very successful', pending future teacher training in descriptive assessment. However, this is seen by some as a step toward letter or numerical grading for CE.

### 6.7 Training and support for teachers

The training programme of workshops for CE teachers provided by the Ministry of Education and Sports has been one of the main successes of the introductory year. Attendance at the two training seminars was high, the geographical coverage has been good and the levels of satisfaction expressed by teachers excellent. Comments for future consideration include the suggestion that training could be more regular and over shorter periods of time; and a pervasive frustration with late/non-payment of allowances. In the medium term some consideration should also be given to including training for Civic Education as part of initial teacher education programmes.

In terms of resources, teachers have responded positively to the teacher's handbook, but there is less satisfaction with printed pupil materials, particularly in the primary schools. Some consideration might be given to encouraging teachers to make more use of a broader range of resources, including effective use of NGOs.

## Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### 6.8 Stakeholder reactions and perceived impact

The majority of survey respondents indicate accurate perceptions of why Civic Education has been introduced. However, caution should be used in interpreting this finding, as respondents were asked to choose one reason from a list of three options. Responses might have been different if this had been an open-ended question. While a minority of respondents expressed the view that CE was offered as an alternative to religious education, these numbers are significant, particularly among adults. Even among pupils not taking CE, there is strong agreement that the subject is needed; in fact, the majority of respondents support extending it for more than one year in both primary and secondary school. Support for offering it during each year of schooling approaches 50%.

Satisfaction with the classes is high, and most pupils enrolled and their parents want to continue CE next year. When the number of non-enrolled pupils who are interested is added, it appears likely that larger numbers of pupils will enrol next year (although the impact of the recent 'compulsory choice' legislation is difficult to assess). A need to train far more CE teachers is highly likely. The fact that over one third of parents would like their children to take both CE and RE should be noted; this represents a substantial percentage of parents who could be dissatisfied with having to choose one subject or the other. This is an issue that can be addressed by not timetabling the subjects opposite each other.

Drop-out rates, particularly among secondary school pupils, should be investigated more thoroughly. It would be useful to know if those who drop out do so because of dissatisfaction with the curriculum, the pressure of having too many subjects, difficulties with the subject being timetabled outside the normal school day, or some other reason.

Parents, teachers and pupils report noticing positive changes in those enrolled in Civic Education, such as more open communication and increased tolerance. And pupils and teachers report more positive relations than are the norm in regular classes. This suggests that the curriculum may be meeting some of its goals of developing skills and attitudes needed for life in a democratic society. It would be useful to plan now for a more rigorous and objective assessment of the impact of Civic Education, perhaps to be carried out in 1-2 years.

Civic Education does not appear to have impacted pupils' knowledge regarding democracy. This finding is a confirmation of the fact that the curriculum of a Civic Education programme must explicitly address each desired knowledge, skill and attitude outcome, and suggests that greater specificity about those outcomes may be helpful to the current programme.

There does appear to be strong agreement with 'civic values' among pupils enrolled in CE, but it cannot be determined whether this is a result of the classes, or because pupils holding these values self-selected themselves into CE. This would be a useful issue to explore in any future impact study.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below have been grouped according to whether they pertain to the short term (to be addressed before the start of the 2002-2003 school year, or immediately thereafter), medium term (to be addressed before the start of the 2003-2004 school year), or longer term (to be addressed over the next 2-4 years).

#### **7.1 Resolve urgent policy issues regarding the future of Civic Education, particularly issues relating to choice of the subject, and the perception that it is an alternative to Religious Education.**

Short term:

- Strategies must be sought to uncouple the unhelpful perception held by some stakeholders that Civic Education is an alternative to Religious Education. It is recommended that this be considered a priority issue in all information on Civic Education that is produced for parents, pupils, teachers, and principals (see also Recommendation 7.3 below).
- Pupils should not be forced to make a choice between Civic Education and Religious Education. If the MoES proceeds with the current decision to require a 'compulsory choice' between Civic Education and Religious Education within the normal timetable in the 2002-2003 school year, schools should be instructed not to timetable Civic Education opposite Religious Education.

Medium term:

- It is recommended that the Ministry consider the possibilities for Civic Education and Religious Education presented in Box 7.1. Consideration should be given to the extent to which each provides genuine choice for pupils, and how the administrative or timetabling implications of these options might be addressed by schools.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

## Box 7.1: Policy options for the implementation of Civic Education.

1. CE and RE are voluntary and outside the normal timetable.
2. CE and RE are required by law within the normal timetable:
  - 2a. CE and RE are timetabled opposite each other, forcing a choice between the two:
    - Pupils cannot do both subjects, or neither.
  - 2b. CE and RE are timetabled separately, uncoupling the perception of the two subjects as alternatives to each other:
    - Pupils can do one subject, both, or neither.
    - Schools must make arrangements for pupils choosing neither.
    - Creative timetabling options can be considered (cycles, blocks, study periods).
3. CE is compulsory for all pupils:
  - Set target for this to be law in three years.
  - Phase in the introduction of CE to schools, with training and support.
  - CE becomes part of the normal timetable for all pupils.
4. RE remains voluntary
  - Schools need to make arrangements for pupils not taking RE.

- The Ministry should consider the different implications of introducing a forced choice in different regions of the country, depending on the demography. In regions where the commitment to Civic Education was high in the first year, this support could be undermined if Civic Education must compete with a strong commitment to Religious Education.
- The Ministry should provide guidance and support for resolving timetabling issues related to the introduction of the two new subjects. This should include responding to teacher and pupil concerns that CE may require double periods and that creative timetabling solutions may also be necessary.

Longer term:

- The MoES needs to consider its long-term goal for Civic Education. One set of arguments suggests that CE should remain a voluntary option for pupils. This position is supported across all stakeholder groups<sup>180</sup> and is consistent with an ethos that prioritises 'choice' for pupils. There is also qualitative evidence from interviews and case studies that some parents and pupils perceive CE as a new vehicle for ideological content and would therefore resist it being made compulsory. This may be reinforced by the perception that CE is an alternative to faith-based RE. However, CE is also one of the main ways that States can make citizens aware of their rights and responsibilities; increasingly, the international norm is that Civic Education is part of the curriculum for all pupils, particularly in the lower grades of secondary school. Where CE has been made an integral part of the school timetable, it is extremely unusual for it to be optional. Therefore the main recommendation in this area is that in the short term, participation in CE should

180 See Section 5.2

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

be voluntary, but the MoES should take all relevant measures to uncouple Civic Education from Religious Education. The next step would be to secure support for the introduction of civic education as an integral part of the compulsory curriculum for all pupils. A programme of compulsory Civic Education in the first three grades of secondary school would be consistent with international norms. Compulsory Civic Education in all eight years of primary school would exceed current international norms; however, a programme that places emphasis on skill and attitude development in the early years, and reinforces those skills and attitudes while adding increasingly complex civic-related content, could be designed to be developmentally appropriate (see Recommendation 7.2). Such a programme would need to be phased in gradually, perhaps extending the curriculum by one grade each year.

### **7.2 Maintain and extend the quality of the Civic Education curriculum.**

Short term:

- The current Civic Education curriculum, particularly at the primary level, is heavily oriented toward the development of psychosocial skills and attitudes (such as communication, ability to identify emotions, empathy, and conflict resolution). The emphasis on skills and attitudes is appropriate for Civic Education through the grade levels and should be retained, but the curriculum as a whole needs to be balanced with appropriate Civic Education content (such as human rights, democratic processes, and decision-making processes in groups and society).
- A broad-based Civic Education curriculum working group should be established, drawing on expertise from a range of backgrounds including, and going beyond, the psychosocial. The working group should be tasked with the development of the next phases of the curriculum, with a more balanced content in line with the curricula of Civic Education in other European countries.
- The emphasis on the use of active learning methods in the current Civic Education curriculum is essential and should be strongly supported throughout any processes of modification to the content. The curriculum working group should always include at least one member with extensive experience in the use of active learning methods, who can ensure that these methods are incorporated in the teaching of topics such as human rights.
- Children's rights/human rights issues seem to be the least well-received topic in the current Civic Education curriculum, by both teachers and pupils. It appears from the examination of the curriculum documents that this topic is absent from the primary CE curriculum altogether. While 12 lessons are allocated to this subject in the secondary curriculum, this may not be adequate for developing an in-depth understanding of the concept. It is possible that a greater emphasis on application to real life issues may improve stakeholder reactions to this topic. It is also possible that if teachers are less familiar with this content area, they may approach it through more traditional teaching methods. A review of this section of the curriculum should be conducted by the CE authors and trainers, with the intention of revising both the curriculum and the training on rights issues as needed. A survey of age appropriate methodologies for introducing children's rights with young children could also be useful.



# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- The name Civic Education should be retained, but as the curriculum is developed, a specific focus for each grade level can be added (see box 7.2 below).

Medium term:

- As a way of providing a clearer definition of Civic Education, any future development of the curriculum might consider focusing on specific topics at the various grade levels. The topics should provide a comprehensive approach to Civic Education content over the years of schooling, and should build upon each other in a logical progression of skills and content. An example of a possible sequence of topics, drawn from Civic Education curricula in other countries, is presented in Box 7.2. These topics should be seen as suggestions only, and not as prescriptive. The progression of topics covered by Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia should be determined in consultation with the Expert Group on Democratisation of Education, authors of the Civic Education curriculum, and other stakeholders as appropriate.

### Box 7.2: Possible Civic Education topics for each grade level.

#### Possible Civic Education topics for each grade level

##### *Primary*

- Grade 1: CE: Myself and Others (emotions, communication, similarities and differences, friendship)
- Grade 2: CE: The School as a Community (rules, order, fairness, cooperation, conflict resolution)
- Grade 3: CE: Families; Our Local Community
- Grade 4: CE: The Practice of Rights and Responsibilities
- Grade 5: CE: Understanding Diversity (minorities, prejudice, stereotyping)
- Grade 6: CE: The Environment (local, national, international issues, decision-making)
- Grade 7: CE: Children's Rights
- Grade 8: CE: Current social issues (in the school, community, or nation): planning for change, taking action

##### *Secondary*

- Year 1: CE: The role of the media, media literacy, critical thinking
- Year 2: CE: Human Rights
- Year 3: CE: Democracy, citizenship, decision making in institutions, society, government
- Year 4: CE: International relations, global interdependence, "global citizenship"

- Civic Education should not become a subject that covers all topics that are perceived as being missing in the current curriculum (for example, health-related perspectives on drugs, alcohol, and sexuality). However, addressing these issues from the standpoint of human rights or decision-making in a democracy would be entirely appropriate for Civic Education, as would having pupils explore ways that they can take age-appropriate action on these issues in their communities, in order to apply knowledge to real life situations.
- Some aspects of religion may be appropriate for inclusion in Civic Education, but instruction in the practice of faith is not. An exploration of religion as an aspect of contemporary society, world religions, relationships between different religious groups,

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

or religious discrimination as a rights issue, could be incorporated into Civic Education for older pupils.

- A review of the current Civic Education curriculum should be conducted to see if any pupil materials should be produced.
- Information should be provided to schools about NGO programmes that can support Civic Education through extra-curricular activities, by providing guest speakers, or providing opportunities for pupils to take part in action projects. Networking between schools and the NGO community should be encouraged.

Longer term:

- Cross-curricular approaches to Civic Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship should be developed through other subjects; this is particularly appropriate for subjects taught at the primary level.
- Attention should be given to how the whole school environment is modeling the values and principles of Civic Education/Education for Democratic Citizenship; for example, in discipline practices, school involvement of NGOs, and participation of all school stakeholders in democratic decision making through the school boards.

### 7.3 Improve information and outreach to all stakeholder groups.

Short term:

- Better dissemination of information to raise awareness about the aims and purposes of Civic Education should be carried out prior to the start of the 2002-2003 school year, particularly if all pupils will be required to choose between Civic Education and Religious Education.
- The Ministry might wish to develop a clear and simple statement defining Civic Education, to enable parents and pupils to make informed choices. A sample statement is included in Box 7.3. This is a sample only, and should not be considered prescriptive; any actual statement should be developed with the Expert Group on Democratisation of Education and authors of the Civic Education curriculum.

#### Box 7.3: Possible statement about Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia.

##### **What is Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia?**

'In Primary school Civic Education is learning about

- Relationships between people and within society
- Similarities and differences between people
- Children's rights and responsibilities

using active learning methods, applied to real life issues'

'In Secondary school Civic Education is learning about

- Diversity between people and within society
- Rights and responsibilities
- Democratic processes

using active learning methods, applied to real life issues'

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- In addition to information brochures produced by the MoES, alternative ways of disseminating information about Civic Education should be considered. Information meetings about the subject were positively received by parents in the first year, and should be held by schools wherever possible. Participation of current Civic Education teachers, pupils and parents should be encouraged, so that they can share their experiences of the subject with prospective parents and pupils.
- The MoES, the Expert Group, the authors of the Civic Education curriculum, and Civic Education teacher trainers should prepare short informational seminars on the subject for school principals, who as a group appear less well-informed about Civic Education than other stakeholder groups. Similar seminars may be appropriate for school psychologists, pedagogues, and school board members as well.
- Presentations or specially designed informational materials to address the questions raised by potential new Civic Education teachers should be developed. In communities where new Civic Education teachers are needed, every effort should be made to involve those teachers based on their interest in the subject, or previous experience with similar programmes. Ample information about the subject and time for consultation should be allowed in cases where teachers who have not come forward voluntarily must be recruited.
- Secondary pupils should be given appropriate information and adequate time, in order to make decisions about whether or not to take Civic Education. A minimal amount of time to make this decision would be 2-3 days.

### **7.4 Ensure that participation in Civic Education is possible for all students, particularly those who are members of minority language groups.**

#### Short term:

- Ensure that all Civic Education materials – information brochures, syllabi, teacher’s manuals, pupil instructional materials – are translated into minority languages, so that language minority groups are not excluded from participation. The case studies of Subotica (40% Hungarian population), Draginje (village near Koceljeva with 50% Roma population), and Preševo (95% ethnic Albanian population) particularly highlight the importance of this issue. Civic Education teachers should not be expected to carry out translation of these materials. Making translations available will reflect the core values of human rights/children’s rights that should be central to Civic Education, as well as lending greater credibility to the subject.

#### Medium term:

- Accurate means of collecting demographic information, disaggregated by ethnic group, gender, and age, should be put into place in order to monitor participation rates.
- The fact that 71% of Civic Education teachers and pupils are female should be monitored to see if this trend continues in the second year, and to determine whether this has any implications for the content and methodology of the subject.
- The different participation rates between primary (21% of pupils) and secondary (3.5% of pupils) should also be monitored during the second year, with the purpose of identifying reasons for the more limited uptake by secondary pupils.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### **7.5 Maintain and extend the current quality of teacher training in Civic Education.**

Short term:

- The Ministry should strive to retain the high quality levels in Civic Education teacher training that have been achieved so far. Given the fact that a 'compulsory choice' between Civic Education and Religious Education has been set up for the 2002-2003 school year, it can be anticipated that a greatly increased number of Civic Education teachers will need to be trained very rapidly (rough estimates suggest that the number of teachers needed at the primary level may increase by a factor of three, and by a factor of 10 at the secondary level).
- Provision to train additional trainers should be considered immediately. It is recommended that the MoES not rely on weaker cascade models (in which trained teachers are expected to return to their schools and train other teachers), as this is likely to diminish the quality of the training experience.
- The MoES should consider shorter and more frequent Civic Education training formats, as opposed to the intensive five-day model used in the first year. This could alleviate the sense of 'overloading' reported as one of the few criticisms of the training. It would also allow Civic Education teacher trainers to reach a larger number of teachers more rapidly, so that they could more quickly initiate the programme in their schools.
- The Ministry should demonstrate the value placed on Civic Education training by ensuring that training allowances and expenses are paid to participants promptly and efficiently.
- The sections of the teacher training on Children's Rights should be given particular attention and revised if necessary, to ensure that appropriate methodology and relevance to real life issues are integral features.

Medium term:

- Support should be given for creating and maintaining networks of teachers who have already been through Civic Education training, to encourage sharing of experiences.
- The Ministry should seek opportunities to support and extend contacts with professionals in the field of Civic Education in other countries, particularly for those involved in curriculum design and policy issues relating to Civic Education in the Republic of Serbia.

Long term:

- If a goal of the larger process of educational reform is to encourage widespread use of active learning methods across the curriculum, the role of initial teacher education in introducing these methods should be strengthened. While signs of interest in applying methods used in Civic Education to other subjects is encouraging, relying on Civic Education to appreciably impact teaching methods used in other subjects is not the most efficient way to bring about large scale change in teachers' methodological competencies.

## Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

### An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- Plan for the inclusion of Civic Education as part of formal initial teacher education programmes, and consider how best to accredit or certificate training for primary schools. Consider the introduction of a specialised programme in Civic Education for secondary teachers.

#### **7.6 Put into place effective and systematic mechanisms for assessing the outcomes of Civic Education.**

##### Short term:

- Attendance at Civic Education classes should be recorded officially and records kept in a consistent place, such as the school diary. Data from attendance records is essential to monitoring drop-out rates. Official record-keeping also conveys that Civic Education is a legitimate part of the curriculum.
- Assessment of pupils' participation in Civic Education should be included in the official school report.
- Descriptive grading is the most suitable way of assessing Civic Education at this time, as the subject deals largely with the development of skills and attitudes that are difficult to assess quantitatively. If the Ministry of Education chooses to proceed with the decision to assess pupils in Civic Education as either 'successful' or 'very successful', feedback from pupils, teachers and parents should be solicited at the end of the 2002-2003 school year on the appropriateness of this system, in order to make decisions about future assessment policy.

##### Medium term:

- In the medium term, clear pupil outcomes for Civic Education should be determined. As the content of the subject undergoes development and expansion, appropriate ways of assessing whether or not those outcomes have been achieved must be developed. These may include a combination of assessment strategies such as portfolio assessment, peer assessment, and assessment of specific knowledge components that may be added to the curriculum.
- As assessment strategies for Civic Education are developed and refined, a training component for teachers should be developed to ensure their effective use.

##### Long term:

- Planning should begin for a more comprehensive evaluation of the impact of Civic Education on pupils' knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviours, to be carried out within the next one to three years, or as determined by the development of the curriculum.

**Civic Education in Primary and  
Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia**  
An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

## APPENDIX 1: LIST OF DOCUMENTS

(\* indicates translated documents)

### Primary Civic Education materials

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An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

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**Civic Education in Primary and  
Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia**  
An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

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## APPENDIX 2: SUMMARIES OF CASE STUDIES

### A. Belgrade Case Study

#### 1. Description of the city

Data was collected in two of Belgrade's 15 municipalities, Stari Grad and Čukarica. Stari Grad is the central Belgrade municipality, and is the seat of the most important social, cultural and academic institutions in the Republics of Serbia and Montenegro. It is also the center of financial and commercial power in Belgrade, employing more people than the number of its inhabitants (71,000). The borough covers an area of 7 km<sup>2</sup>. It is an educational center with 8 university faculties, 10 primary and 9 secondary schools, as well as 8 prominent cultural societies, numerous sports clubs and cafes attracting young people in the evenings. The population is primarily Orthodox.

Čukarica (population 250,000) is a significantly larger borough, covering 155 km<sup>2</sup>. It is well known as labour's municipality. There are more than 4500 private businesses, 4000 shops and 33 public companies here that suffered great losses during the last 15 years. Čukarica's Orthodox, Catholic and Adventist churches, as well as its Adventist faculty, are testament to its religious heritage. It has dozens of academic institutions (13 kindergartens, 16 primary schools, a school for mentally handicapped children, a music school, 3 secondary schools and 3 university faculties, as well as 9 libraries). Youth have many cultural and social outlets, including community and cultural centers, cinemas, theaters, and art galleries. There are also two sports centers, a dozen active sports clubs, and two famous picnic areas.

#### 2. Civic Education in the schools

##### Primary School

- 1196 pupils attend the school in two shifts
- 15 pupils started CE; 12 completed the course (11 CE lessons were held, 45 minutes each)

One teacher applied for the CE position. She had previous experience with Goodwill Classroom (a UNICEF-supported programme developed by the NGO MOST, emphasising conflict resolution and self-empowerment). Unfortunately, because of the teacher's maternity leave and problems with her replacements, only 11 CE lessons were completed this year. Also, the fact that the class did not have a fixed position in the timetable hurt attendance. Pupils had to arrive before the school day, or stay after school for an 'extra lesson.' The teacher believes that more pupils should be involved in CE and would be if these problems were remedied.

Classes were conducted in a special CE classroom where pupils were able to sit in a circle and actively discuss topics in the 'workshop method.' This emphasises teamwork and role-plays. The teacher relied on the textbook provided by MoES, but augmented this with extra reading material, a teaching manual and some audio-visual material. She recorded pupil attendance, and made descriptive notes on pupil behavior and participation in each class. In return, pupils evaluated how interesting the lesson was for them. The teacher believes that MoES should issue grading guidelines next year to clarify and standardise these practices.

The teacher says that CE develops qualities that are not being developed in other classes, such as self-respect and respect for others, cooperation, communication without violence and

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

expression of feelings. She suggests making CE a regular subject at all grade levels. The principal believes that CE methods are contemporary, and well-adapted to both the age of the pupils and the contents of the subject. CE would benefit from a clearer information campaign by MoES; as is, parents were poorly informed about CE, saw it as an extra burden on their children, and remained disengaged from the programme throughout the year. Other teachers in the school looked down on the new subject because they were unfamiliar with its content and methodology. CE and its impact in the school remains isolated.

### Secondary School

- 1364 pupils in school plus part-time pupils (two shifts)
- CE enrolment decreased from 38 pupils to 15; (90 minutes each lesson)

One teacher applied for the CE position. The school pedagogue presented CE to the pupils, who had to choose between CE and RE immediately. The school pedagogue was not satisfied with pupil turnout (38 signed up for the class; only 15 finished). She blames this on the fact the class was not in the regular timetable and the fact that the MoES:

- rapidly introduced the subject and provided poor information to stakeholders;
- did not begin CE on time (in September), and did not provide course notes for the pupils, or guidelines for evaluating pupil performance; and
- produced insufficient media coverage of CE.

The teacher employs the workshop method in a special CE classroom; lessons last 90 minutes. The atmosphere is relaxed and friendly. Pupils are seated in a circle; they work in pairs or small groups, perform role-plays, debate and draw. Initial shyness and passivity receded as the year progressed. The teacher does not take attendance or give grades. The principal notices that the relationship between the teacher and pupils is different because there is room for topics that cannot be discussed in other classes. All of the prescribed topics were covered during the year. Pupils reacted more favorably to the lessons about identifying and respecting differences. Children's rights and contract relationships were labeled 'boring' by pupils. The teacher believes that these topics are too difficult and more suitable for older pupils in high school.

Pupils have begun to open up, to seek new ways of spending their free time, connecting CE topics to real life. But they have not yet made the connection to civic engagement, volunteerism or social work. The general opinion is that introducing CE into all the forms of secondary school education would make its effects more visible.

### 3. Main issues arising from the case study

- **Teacher training:** Teachers were satisfied with their training; guidelines for teacher selection and new topics for training are needs that may arise with any future expansion of the programme.
- **Public relations:** There is consensus that teachers, parents and pupils were poorly informed about CE, resulting in confusion about the content of the programme and weak pupil turnout.
- **Scheduling conflicts:** CE was held just before or after school, and was forced to compete with other lessons, including RE.
- **Pupil assessment:** Teachers prefer descriptive rather than numerical grading, but would appreciate guidelines established by MoES.
- **MoES role:** Stakeholders relied heavily on MoES brochures, information and training. They were disappointed that the MoES did not supervise the programme, and did not provide grading guidelines or financial support. Overall, the programme felt rushed.

## Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

### An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- **Methodology:** Pupils like the active learning methods. A special classroom for CE and longer classes (perhaps 90 minutes) were suggested.
- **Content:** Stakeholders would like to expand on the parts of the curriculum dealing with tolerance, respect, cooperation, communication, conflict resolution, to discuss more social issues, pupil participation and volunteerism, human rights and ethics.
- **Compulsory or elective:** Some stakeholders say that if CE becomes compulsory or is simply situated in the regular timetable, people will take it more seriously and the class will have a broader impact on the school.

## **B. Draginje / Koceljeva**

### **1. Description of the region**

Located between Šabac and Valjevo in central Serbia, the municipality of Koceljeva consists of 17 mostly Orthodox villages, of which Koceljeva (population 5,000) and Draginje (population 3,800) were surveyed. The region is primarily agricultural (fruit-raising), but 1000 people work in industry (textiles, shoes, and fruit canning). Koceljeva is suffering from population migration to larger cities and abroad, a mortality rate greater than the birth rate, alcoholism and suicide. Consequently, the population is aging and declining, from 18,000 to 16,000 over the past decade. Although located near the border with Croatia and Bosnia, Koceljeva has only 120 refugees, mostly day laborers on agricultural estates. While the ratio of Roma to Serbs in the small village of Draginje is 50-50, these communities live in relative isolation from one another.

Official crime statistics are low (consisting of burglaries and simple traffic offences), but pupils spoke of increasing drug trafficking. Local residents suggested that the Roma are engaged in smuggling cattle from Bosnia as well as other merchandise. Another claim is that Roma parents allow their primary school children to get married and abandon their education.

The social life of youth in Draginje consists of weddings, army farewell parties, and a local tavern. Many pupils attend soccer and karate clubs. Koceljeva provides the same sporting options, as well as a couple of cafes and a disco. An old culture centre with a library and 'movie theatre' are rarely used. 'Otpor', a national resistance movement, involves many young people in its activities. Two Roma societies, 'Rom' and 'Paun,' are also active. 'Rom,' with 250 members, is providing humanitarian aid to the most at-risk Roma families, trying to improve school conditions and construct a sewage system in the town. In general, politics is rarely talked about. No interviewees expressed knowledge of who won the most recent elections in the town.

### **2. Civic Education in the schools**

#### ***Primary School***

- Total of 366 pupils, (two shifts)
- 14 CE pupils (13 are Roma); 22 CE classes completed

The class was introduced a few months into the school year; as a result, it did not receive a position in the regular timetable. The CE teacher had no prior experience with active learning methods and CE content; she was selected by the principal because she was the only one in the school with a university degree. The principal notes he did not know how to explain CE to parents. He distributed brochures to them at a parent-teacher conference and gave them several days to decide. Enrolment in CE was 'rolling'; some pupils joined later in the year. As of June 2002, 14 pupils were in the class (13 of them Roma children).

The principal took a hands-off approach to CE. He provided the stipend and some money for materials but he deferred to the teacher to introduce and organise the class. According to the teacher, her stipend was often late. The teacher implemented the workshop method, which requires facilitating pupil learning. Pupils and the teacher sit in a circle; the teacher introduces a topic and leads a discussion related to it. The pupils participate (often in groups, pairs or role-plays) or opt out if they do not want to contribute. There are no traditional

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

lectures or examinations. At the beginning of the class, pupils receive printed material to help them understand the class. The teacher strictly adheres to the materials obtained from MoES and the training advice she received during the CE seminars, including the 'Giraffe Language' book on non-violent communication. Pupil attendance is taken and participation is graded descriptively; pupils evaluate the class as well. Pupils were initially afraid to express their opinions but gradually relaxed when they realised there were no wrong answers. They became more expressive of their own opinions and tolerant of each other.

### *Secondary School*

- Total of 300 pupils in school
- 18 CE pupils completed 25 CE lessons (20 pupils started the year)

The high school principal described nearly an identical situation to the elementary school. The class was introduced a few months into the school year, therefore CE was not on the regular timetable. Information from MoES, consisting of brochures distributed to parents, was insufficient.

The burden fell on the school (the principal and teacher) to organise CE. Once the principal distributed the brochures, he assumed a hands-off posture, relying on the teacher to develop the class. He disbursed the teacher stipend and some additional money for class materials. The teacher was chosen not because she had any prior experience with CE but because she had a university degree in humanities. The teacher implemented the workshop method in the same manner described in the elementary school. She strictly adheres to the materials obtained from MoES and the training advice she received during the CE seminars. She makes detailed descriptive grades of pupil participation in the classes, and their conduct. She has established a pupil 'bill of rights' for participation in CE. She has used some of her CE methods in other lessons she teaches (sociology for example).

Because information about CE from MoES was incomplete and insufficient when the subject was introduced, there was quite a bit of confusion about the subject among potential stakeholders. Is it bon ton? Is it a religious sect? Is it somehow a continuation of Marxism? As one parent put it, the effect of CE can be much broader than any other subject; it has practical application to everyday life. But a lot of parents do not know this.

### **3. Main issues arising from the case study**

- **Teacher training:** The training was useful, and the instructors highly competent, but many found the schedule too compact. Stakeholders recommended spreading the training out over more time, and providing updated training for new topics as they arise.
- **Public relations:** There is consensus that teachers, parents and pupils were poorly informed about CE, resulting in confusion about the content of the programme and weak pupil turnout.
- **Scheduling conflicts:** The issue of giving CE a place in the regular timetable was raised. CE was forced to compete with other lessons, including RE.
- **Methodology:** Teachers relied heavily on materials provided by MoES. They expressed a need for more class time to cover existing topics.
- **Content:** Suggestions were made to add classes about family relations; connect lessons to everyday life (topics like drug abuse); involve the community in the classes; and keep politics out.
- **Compulsory or elective:** Interviewees indicated that CE should remain voluntary until a pupil enrolls, then it should be compulsory. An alternative would be to make it mandatory without grades.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### C. Niš

#### 1. Description of the region

Niš, encompassing the city of Niš and Niška Banja, is 597 km<sup>2</sup>, situated in the Nišava River basin in the southeast of Serbia. Its population (300,000) makes it the second largest city in Serbia; more than 20,000 are refugees.

The local economy is based upon the machine, electronic, and tobacco industries. These have suffered great losses in the past decade, but they still employ 27,000 people. According to the 1991 census data, 43,405 are unemployed (this number is estimated much higher today). In 2000, the average per capita income was about 30 USD a month.

Niš is largely homogenous. Serbs constitute the majority of the population, followed in decreasing numbers by the Roma, Montenegrins, Macedonians, and Bulgarians. The religious structure is more diverse, including Serbian Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Muslims, Christian Adventists, Baptists and Jehovah's Witnesses, and those who do not profess a faith.

Niš is the university center of southern Serbia with 10 faculties and two colleges and around 19,000 pupils. There are also 80 primary schools, 19 high schools and 5 'special needs' schools. 4.2% of the total population is illiterate.

There is a colorful cultural life in the city, including a National Theater, state Puppet Theater, many cinemas, museums and art galleries. In addition, Niš hosts a film festival, a choir and international chamber music festival. Niš has about 60 different sports clubs. Niš boasts about 100 NGOs, of which 40% are very active. Most promote the development of civil society institutions. Others are focused on particular issues such as Roma rights, children and youth, persons with special needs, and environmental protection.

#### 2. Civic Education in the schools

##### Primary school

- 969 pupils in the primary school, (two shifts)
- 70 CE pupils were spread among 4 groups (unclear if they all completed)
- Between 25 and 36 CE lessons were held

Information, mainly in the form of brochures about the CE programme, was imprecise; even after a year, parents lacked a clear understanding of its content (is it bon ton, for example). The media have artificially created a picture that CE and RE are in opposition to each other, according to one instructor. Furthermore, other form and subject teachers are not clear about the legitimacy of the methods and content or its relevance in the curriculum.

Classes ran from November 2001 to June 2002; on average, 25 to 36 classes were held, about one a week per group after school for 45 minutes. This was not enough time to arrange the classroom for the workshop method. Teachers note that that children relax during CE and it would be difficult for them to transition back to 'regular' classes, therefore the schedule should remain as is. However, a CE classroom with necessary materials and equipment should be provided.

The principal deferred to the teachers for implementation of the CE programme. In turn, they adhered closely to the method and content described in the materials provided by MoES.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

Pupils sat in a circle; the teacher facilitated their work in pairs or groups, role-plays and drawing. Traditional lecture format and exams were omitted. Evaluators noticed that at the end of class when general conclusions were made, the teachers did this instead of the pupils. Pupils were allowed to evaluate each lesson with a 'smiley face' (satisfied, indifferent, dissatisfied). Teachers evaluated the children using descriptive grading (how active were the pupils in class). A record of pupil attendance was kept in the CE class journal. On the whole, the teachers are very satisfied with the content of CE, although the second part of the book, 'Giraffe Language', was very difficult for them to explain to the pupils.

### Secondary School

- 1250 pupils in the high school
- 18 pupils in 1 CE group (only 10 completed the 24 classes)

The school principal learned about the CE programme through the media and newsletters from MoES. He selected a psychology teacher to be the CE instructor because no one volunteered for the position. She had no prior experience with CE but quickly caught on after the CE seminar. According to pupils, they had 10 minutes to decide whether they would attend CE. Because of the lack of clear information about the subject (was it bon ton, law or politics?), pupil interest was weak. Eighteen pupils signed up but only ten attended regularly and completed the 24 lessons. Each class was held either before or after the regular timetable in a special CE classroom; they convened once a week for 45 minutes from November 2001 to June 2002. The teacher does not consider this a good arrangement because other teachers often do not let the children leave for their CE class. She believes CE needs its own place in the timetable, and it needs to be longer than 45 minutes to fully utilise the workshop method.

The same workshop methodology is used here as in the primary school described above. Pupils are evaluated on their attendance and participation. Pupils found the first part of the programme very interesting (tolerance) but struggled with topics such as human rights and children's rights. The teacher thinks that CE has helped pupils learn to listen to one another and to understand prejudice. Some of the pupils claim that CE has helped them find better solutions for resolving conflicts.

### 3. Main issues arising from the case study

- **Teacher training:** The training was highly regarded, but participants suggested it should be lengthened, or alternatively broken into shorter segments.
- **Public relations:** There is consensus that teachers, parents and pupils were poorly informed about CE, resulting in confusion about the content of the programme and weak pupil turnout. This created artificial conflict with RE.
- **Scheduling conflicts:** Interviewees thought that CE should start at the beginning of the year so that all stakeholders take it seriously, and that the subject needs a spot in the regular timetable.
- **Recruitment (teachers and pupils):** Pupils expressed a need for adequate time to choose CE (they had 10 minutes this year). Teachers reported being selected virtually by default.
- **Pupil assessment:** Teachers prefer descriptive rather than numerical grading, but would appreciate guidelines be established by MoES.
- **MoES role:** Needs identified included delivery of teacher stipends; funding for a CE classroom and CE materials; and provision of grading guidelines.
- **Methodology:** Active learning methods are very popular with pupils and teachers. Needs for a special classroom to work with these methods, and lessons longer than 45 minutes, were highlighted in interviews.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### D. Novi Pazar

#### 1. Description of the region

Novi Pazar is a crossroads connecting the Adriatic coast to Thesoloniki and Istanbul. Its rich cultural inheritance includes monasteries and mosques dating back to the 16th century. Surrounded by mountains, rich in flora and fauna, it has unspoiled natural beauty.

Novi Pazar is a multiethnic region of about 100,000 inhabitants. 40% of the population is under the age of 25. 80% are Bošnjaks and 20% a mix of Serbs, Montenegrans and 'others'. They have coexisted peacefully the past decade. According to the UN, about 5,500 refugees live in the city. The Islamic, Orthodox and Catholic faiths are all practiced in this area. There are few, if any Jews.

Novi Pazar is an important industrial center within the Sandžak region, producing textiles, shoes, agricultural products, processing metals and construction material. It is the largest producer of blue jeans in Serbia. According to the United Nations, unemployment is 18%.

Neighbourhoods are ethnically integrated, although some sections of the city are mainly inhabited by Roma. Secondary schools, local government, many community NGOs, mosques, an Orthodox church, as well as headquarters of political parties are located in the city centre. Social and cultural activities revolve around a national museum, national library, cultural centre and a cinema. The cultural centre sponsors amateur theatre. The city also has a youth choir and a folklore group, several sports clubs, including football, basketball, handball, volleyball and karate.

#### 2. Civic Education in the schools

##### Primary school

- 1633 pupils enrolled
- 77 pupils started CE, 47 completed
- 3 groups of 13, 15, and 19 pupils attended 24 lessons (45 minutes a lesson)

##### Secondary school

- 678 pupils enrolled
- CE pupils decreased from 2 groups of 30 pupils to 1 group of 20
- Only 26 lessons (60 minutes each) completed

The content and methodology of CE is entirely new to teachers, parents and pupils in Novi Pazar. Misinformed stakeholders thought this was a class about bon ton, and these initial perceptions lingered. Comparable to other case study schools, these two felt that CE was introduced too fast, without enough preparation, and that MoES provided insufficient information for the stakeholders. Stakeholders attributed the high attrition rates (66% at the high school and 40% at the elementary school) and low pupil turnout to this lack of adequate information.

The high school and primary school principals took a hands-off approach and deferred to the pedagogues to implement CE. The high school pedagogue became the CE teacher, relying on her previous experience with projects such as 'Goodwill Classroom'. The primary school pedagogue chose a fourth grade teacher without much experience, and as a result the class



# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

was much more traditional in format (not the workshop method). They both received a shortened training programme (both seminars were only 2 days each).

Classes were held outside the regular timetable, before or after the school day and occasionally on Saturdays. At the high school, only 26 lessons were held because of the late start (November), trouble with space and competition from obligatory subjects. Lessons typically lasted 60 minutes. At the elementary school, pupils completed 24 lessons. They followed the more standard format and duration (45 minute lessons). Teachers received no stipends for this work this year. They find that they need some financial support at least for materials, if not also for their time.

The most interesting themes for the high school pupils were discrimination and prejudice (because they were connected to personal beliefs, says their teacher); the least interesting theme concerned children's rights. Overall pupils enjoyed debating different points of view. They enjoyed the more equal power relationship with their teachers and felt challenged to assume leadership roles in the school. Unfortunately, they did not receive much support from other teachers for their newly found sense of self-empowerment. This class exists as an exception to the traditional teaching and learning environment in Serbia; other teachers, parents and pupils are potential assets for CE, but there must be a better information campaign to reach out to them.

### 3. Main issues arising from the case study

- **Teacher training:** Stakeholders felt the training programme was too short (there were only two, 2-day workshops), and that longer training would have been preferable.
- **Public relations:** There is consensus that teachers, parents and pupils were poorly informed about CE, resulting in confusion about the content of the programme, weak pupil turnout, and high attrition rates (66% in the high school).
- **Scheduling conflicts:** The view was expressed that CE should start at the beginning of the year so that the syllabus can be completed, and that it should be in the regular timetable so that all stakeholders will take it
- **Pupil assessment:** Teachers prefer descriptive rather than numerical grading, but would appreciate guidelines be established by MoES.
- **MoES role:** Stakeholders indicated that MoES should deliver teacher stipends, provide funds for a CE classroom and CE materials, and develop criteria for teacher selection and grading.
- **Methodology:** It was noted that active learning has changed the teacher-pupil power relationship in a positive way, making pupils feel more equal. There was a suggestion for longer lessons to better utilise this methodology, and cover all the topics.
- **Content:** Suggested additions to content included lessons about family relationships; solving everyday problems; drug addiction; poetry; and coping with developmental crises. It was also felt that pupils should be supported as they apply their CE skills to other classes and to pupil leadership projects.
- **Impact:** There is anecdotal evidence that CE improves communication between children, reduces prejudice, inculcates tolerance and respect, and helps pupils understand their basic rights. Pupils discussed abortion, homosexuality, religion, HIV/AIDS, Roma rights, drugs, prostitution, homelessness for the first time.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### E. Preševo

#### 1. Description of the region

Preševo is a city of 46,000 inhabitants in South Serbia, 450 kilometers from Belgrade. Despite its poverty and war-torn anxieties, it has an energetic spirit and café culture. The city is about 95% ethnic Albanian; this population is Muslim by tradition. Situated in an agricultural region of subsistence farming and goat herding, only 2000 people are employed. According to 1995 UN data, 55% of the workforce is unemployed; this number is rising. The Yumco textile factory once attracted jobseekers to the Serb city of Vranje, an hour north, but the textile industry is in serious decline now. The UN Rapid Employment programme (offering 700 temporary jobs to laborers cleaning rivers, roadsides and ditches) is the only significant employer, followed by the municipal government. Officials talk about building a tourism industry but because of uncleared minefields, and the lack of an infrastructure of good roads, hotels and restaurants, this seems unlikely. There are rumours of extensive drug smuggling and a black market in stolen cars.

Two years after the NATO campaign in Kosovo (on the southwestern border of Preševo), ethnic tensions are still simmering here. The presence of the Yugoslav Army (VJ) and a multi-ethnic police force is highly evident. This spring was the first since 1997 that war between the VJ and the Kosovar Liberation Army (KLA) did not break out.

Brain drain is severe. More than 4,000 people, mostly youth, are working abroad. They help subsidise the depressed economy, but they are afraid to invest more substantially in the economy because of the destabilised political situation. It is unclear if they will return. Others head for Tirana and Pristina to continue their education in an Albanian community that allows them linguistic, religious and cultural expression. Consequently, this community is aging, falling into greater economic despair, and is dependent on financial kickbacks from workers abroad and the international development community.

#### 2. Civic Education in the schools

##### Primary school

- Total of 2800 pupils in two shifts
- 140 pupils attend CE (7 groups of 20 pupils each)
- 26 lessons were completed (45 minutes a lesson)

There are 3 very enthusiastic CE instructors for 140 pupils. They all participated in the CE training, felt it was very good, but regret that materials were not provided in Albanian (in the last week of the school year they did receive a 'Smile Keepers' manual in Albanian). Unfortunately, they never received their stipends for this extra lesson either. The class meets weekly; due to the late start, only 26 of the lessons were completed. Pupils have embraced the CE methodology, particularly working in groups, role-playing, drawing, and taking part in roundtable discussions. The teachers believe that some of the curriculum topics (describing dreams and feelings) are too advanced for seven year-olds. Pupil attendance is taken by the teachers; some descriptive marks are made in a CE diary.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

There are two great challenges to the success of these methods. One is that the crumbling infrastructure of the school makes it difficult to arrange the classrooms for workshops; furthermore, they lack the resources to provide paper, markers, and chalk for pupils. The second is that the timetable is completely full. This class is an extra lesson that competes with compulsory (graded) subjects; it also takes away from time with families.

### Secondary school

- Total of 750 pupils in two shifts (because the gymnasium and technical school share adjacent buildings, the premises actually accommodate 1500 pupils)
- 50 pupils has grown into 67 pupils (4 groups)

The teacher was selected by the principal because he has a broad social science background and he needed extra lessons to receive his full salary. He and the pedagogue made presentations to pupils and their parents at a parent-teacher meeting, recruiting 50 pupils. (The decision to attend CE lessons was made by the pupils, not the parents). The group continued to grow during the first few weeks of CE class, as other pupils learned about it from their peers. The teacher capped the class at 67 because of physical space limitations.

The teacher believes the training was very high quality, although he did not receive a CE methodology book, or a detailed CE curriculum, or any materials in Albanian (which were promised and never delivered). Contact with MoES since the teacher training seminars consisted of reporting the number of pupils in the class and the name of the teacher.

Classes began December 15. It has not been possible to introduce the workshop methodology in its pure form. Tables are bolted to the floors; chairs cannot be arranged in a circle. The school lacks drawing material. However, pupil discussions and group work are rich. The teacher has incorporated material from psychology, sociology, philosophy, and ancient history. He has worked hard to put flesh on the CE skeleton he received from MoES. The focus has been on three themes: tolerance, anger management and social inclusion.

### 3. Main issues arising from the case study

- **MoES support:** Needs were expressed for CE materials in Albanian, and financial help to buy chalk, drawing paper, and crayons for pupils. The need for the CE stipends was also noted, both for compensation and for acknowledgement of teacher efforts.
- **Classroom:** The old, dilapidated schools are seen as lacking adequate space for CE methodology; desks and chairs are anchored to the floors. Support (from MoES) for a CE classroom was raised as an issue.
- **Timetable:** The schools would like to increase the number of CE classes, provided the content remains relevant. Because the timetable is completely full, this is impossible. Some stakeholders suggest putting CE into the regular timetable. As it is, commuter pupils are excluded from CE and the class competes with other compulsory lessons.
- **Expectations:** There was no public relations campaign on CE. It was felt that with some advertising, CE will attract even larger numbers of pupils.
- **Youth service:** There are no after-school options for youth in Preševo. The CE class is the extra-curricular option at the high school. As such, it was seen as a possible bridge between civic education and civic engagement of young people in the community.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

### F. Subotica

#### 1. Description of the region

Subotica lies in the most northern part of Serbia, 10 kilometers from the Hungarian border. It is an important administrative, industrial, trade, traffic and cultural center in the North Backa region of Vojvodina. The population, about 150,000, is divided by linguistic and a religious lines. Today, about 60% speak Serbian and about 40% Hungarian. During the past decade, 17,000 refugees and 3,600 internally displaced persons have arrived; there has been a large exodus of Hungarians and Croats. There is also a diverse Roma population, including migrant workers from Kosovo and South Serbia; they are Hungarian-speaking Catholic, Serbian-speaking Orthodox and Muslim. Subotica is multi-denominational; more than 50% are Catholic, 39% Orthodox, and the rest a mix of Evangelical, Jewish (230 persons), Islamic, and those who do not profess a faith. About 43% of the population works in industry (chemical works, oil and gas), 11% in health care and 7% in agriculture (cereals, fruits, vegetables and wine). The construction industry has been growing in recent years. The unemployed number 17,000.

The rich social and cultural life of the city, including theatres, folklore organisations, and a vibrant non-governmental sector, enables the different ethnic communities to nurture their heritage. The local governing coalition promoted multiculturalism rather than ethnic separation and confrontation. Through financing, it managed to preserve the existing network of cultural associations, periodicals and events that protected minority rights and developed interethnic tolerance. Major events were truly multiethnic. In Subotica, political division along ethnic lines has not resulted in exclusionary policies; balanced representation and mutual respect appear to be more the norm.

#### 2. Civic Education in the schools

##### Primary school

- 542 pupils in the school (83% study in Serbian; 17% in Hungarian)
- 40 pupils enrolled in CE
- 2 groups study CE in Serbian (30 pupils total); 1 group in Hungarian (10 pupils)

According to the principal and teachers, MoES provided sufficient information to launch CE this year. Three teachers applied to teach the classes, were accepted and participated in the CE seminars. They said these were very good seminars, but they regret not receiving materials in Hungarian (at the seminars or anytime during the year).

Parents and pupils were informed about CE via the school pedagogue and the first form class masters, who made presentations about the subject. One teacher went so far as to have pupils sample CE for a lesson before committing. Because no special CE classroom is available, each lesson begins with moving tables and chairs. The teachers are implementing the workshop method. Pupils particularly enjoy singing, drawing, conducting role-plays. Some parents are not so sure this is real learning; more information about the methodology and objectives of the class may be helpful. Pupils typically evaluate the classes anonymously by use of badges but on occasion are required to explain their evaluation individually before the class. Teachers keep a record of pupil attendance, and keep descriptive grades in a CE notebook (no numerical grades). Group discussions about the class serve as evaluations. Teachers believe that CE pupils have learned about tolerance and respect for other cultures, particularly applicable with regard to Roma refugees from Kosovo.

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

Classes began in November; all of the topics but one were completed. However, the teachers feel that some topics should be dealt with in greater depth, and require more lessons. The principal and the teachers take CE very seriously. For their part, however, the teachers did not receive any stipends until March of 2002.

### Secondary school

- 1629 pupils in school; 540 'first form pupils' (2/3 Serbian; 1/3 Hungarian)
- 8 pupils study CE (in Hungarian); 15 lessons were completed (January - June)

The principal and CE teacher said that information from MoES arrived late and was unclear. Each first grade class master was to inform their pupils about CE but this may not have happened; many first form pupils interviewed had not heard about the programme. For those taking the class, though, the decision to attend was theirs, not their parents'. The school psychologist was selected by the principal to teach CE because she knew both Serbian and Hungarian. She found the training to be quite good but the lack of Hungarian language materials was a problem. During the year, this added to the time constraints (having to translate from Serbian into Hungarian slowed down classes even further). Overall, she has been dissatisfied with the way that CE was introduced, and believes that MoES support was weak (the salary was not delivered between November and March; the syllabus never arrived in Hungarian).

Class is held outside of the regular timetable (before or after school; occasionally on Saturdays). This has resulted in low pupil turnout and irregular attendance (and puts CE out of reach for commuter pupils). No more than 5 of the 8 pupils attended each lesson. Classes did not commence until January; as a result only 15 lessons were completed. The teacher conducts classes informally, and takes no record of attendance. Pupils evaluate the class in an oral discussion.

Her pupils enjoyed role-plays and teamwork, and feel that CE has helped them form friendships, become respectful of each other and to deal openly with their feelings. CE stands out in stark contrast to other classes in the curriculum, where passivity is the norm. Pupils are active in CE, exploring relationships with their peers and teachers, learning about social and ethical values. The teacher believes that lessons on children's rights, though, were 'boring' because pupils did not see practical connections to their lives.

### 3. Main issues arising from the case study

- **Teacher training:** A concern was raised as to whether the teachers are prepared to facilitate lessons on children and human rights, or to link these types of topics to pupils' everyday lives. A role for the outside expertise of NGOs to address this issue is a possibility.
- **Public relations:** Some stakeholders felt that information from MoES was late and insufficient. MoES never delivered Hungarian language materials as promised.
- **Recruitment:** Stakeholders felt that teacher selection would benefit from guidelines.
- **Scheduling conflicts:** The view was expressed that CE should start at the beginning of the year and be placed in the regular timetable so that all stakeholders will take it seriously, and so that the syllabus can be completed.
- **Methodology:** It was noted that active learning has changed the teacher-pupil power relationship in a positive way, making pupils feel more equal. Longer lessons (60-90 minutes) would allow for better utilisation of this methodology, and completion of topics (particularly if there is not a special CE classroom).

# Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia

## An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations

- **Pupil assessment:** Teachers prefer descriptive rather than numerical grading, but would appreciate guidelines established by MoES.
- **Content:** Content suggestions included linking CE lessons more to pupils' every day lives. One view expressed was that 7 year olds have difficulty with lessons about feelings, dreams, conflicts, and communication. High school pupils were seen as being more interested in interpersonal relations and respect for differences than in human and children's rights.
- **Impact:** There is anecdotal evidence of improved attitudes toward Roma children, improved gender relations, improved communication, and improved tolerance.

**Civic Education in Primary and  
Secondary Schools in the Republic of Serbia**  
**An Evaluation of the First Year, 2001-2002, and Recommendations**

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