

Higher Education for Minorities in Kosovo

International discussion held in Prishtina
on 18 May 2006

Prishtina, September 2006

This publication has been financed by
Kosovo Foundation for Open Society

Print & Design:
Printing house Adnan Rezniki Company

Copies:
500
Prishtina, 2006

The one day international discussion “Higher Education for Minorities in Kosovo” was held in Prishtina, on May 18, 2006, organized by Forum 2015 in cooperation with the Kosovo Education Center (KEC). In this discussion, distinguished Kosovar and international experts presented their analyses on the current situation, on possible solutions and on future perspectives of education services for minorities in Kosovo.

What is Forum 2015?

Forum 2015 is an independent coalition of two non-government organizations: Kosovo Foundation for Open Society and Riinvest, established in 2003 with the purpose of providing support for government and non-government initiatives for integration of Kosovo in Euro-Atlantic structures. Forum 2015 is an important project of KFOS and RIINVEST, which aims at offering space for meaningful debates between representatives of government, political parties, civil society, private sector and independent intellectuals. The Forum also aims at mobilizing local intellectuals to research and analyze relevant issues and challenges for the Kosovar society. Forum 2015 will make recommendations and will encourage initiatives in respective sectors of public strategies, by promoting the idea of good governance, for development of democratic institutions and for Euro-Atlantic integrations.

Contents:

Keynote speech

“Higher education for Kosovo minorities
problems, solutions and lessons to be learned” 11

Georg Woeber,
international higher education expert of
the Austrian Development Agency and
of OSCE

Keynote analysis

“The multiethnic education dream
fiction and reality in Kosovo higher education today”

Dukagjin Pupovci,
Director of the Kosovo
Education Centre 21

Keynote analysis

“Responsibilities of the international community
for Kosovo minority higher education
the day after the status decision”

Alexander Bayerl,
EU Presidency, Head of the
Austrian Office in Kosovo 31

Case study 1

„University of Bozen/Bolzano
a trilingual success story in Europe”

Oswin Maurer,
Vice-rector, University of Bozen/Bolzano, Italy 37

Case study 2

“Challenges and solutions for minority
higher education in Romania”

Mircea Bocsan,
Lecturer, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj, Romania 43

Case study 3

„The SEE University Tetovo
from political challenge to academic success”

Dennis Farrington,
int. higher education expert of the Council
of Europe and of the European University Association 47

Introduction

By organizing this conference "Forum 2015" aims to open a genuine dialogue to address a very important aspect of education of minorities in Kosovo in the light of Kosovo's efforts to be part of European integrations. The discussion is organized at a time when intensive talks between Prishtina and Belgrade are taking place with the mediation of the international community, and when the issue of minority education is expected to be come to the table of negotiations; as a result, it was impossible to avoid the influence of these strong processes.

Notwithstanding objective limitations, there was high agreement that Kosovo has an obligation and is capable to create conditions for providing higher education in the minority languages, primarily in Slavic ones and, depending on needs and opportunities, also in the Turkish language. More so, mechanisms have to be built that will ensure for interaction between various linguistic groups within the Kosovar academic community, be it in the level of academic institutions or between faculty and students. Our country, striving to be part of European integrations and of the Process of Bologna, has to create pre-conditions for functioning of a Kosovar Area of Higher Education, in order to become part and parcel of the European Area of Higher Education – an already familiar concept in Europe.

In this Conference a number of examples of good practice from other countries were presented, which proved that there are functioning models in place that meet the needs of minorities for higher education. Presentations and discussions also clearly indicated that the legal infrastructure offers opportunities for organizing higher education in the languages of the minorities, coupled with the unequivocal readiness on the part of Kosovar institutions to morally and materially support the process of integration of the Serb community into the system of higher education.

At a time of publication of the materials from this Conference mediated talks in Vienna are approaching their end, whereas the Serb parallel system of education is getting only more emphasized, manifested in a strong refusal by education institutions with Serbian as language of instruction to receive any funding from Kosovar institutions. In spite of this, "Forumi 2015" strongly believes that the interethnic dialogue on the issue of higher education must go on; we also believe that publication of this brochure may be useful in the process, since it contains numerous good ideas on the issue of minority higher education; and finally, we are fully aware that other better solutions acceptable to all sides are also possible and worthwhile searching for in other similar events.

Prishtina, September 2006

Dukagjin PUPOVCI

Higher education for Kosovo minorities- problems, solutions and lessons to be learned

Georg L.F. Woeber, Vienna/Austria
International higher education expert for OSCE and
Austrian Development Agency
Adviser to the Kosovo Minister of Education, Science and Technology

1. Introductory thoughts

I am personally involved as an expert in minority higher education issues in Kosovo since the year 2001. To start with the end of this speech – not much has been changed and not much has been developed – that’s the bad news. I regard this seminary today also as something like a wake up call. It’s a wake up call for the Kosovo public, for the people who should make up their minds. In fact the people are supposed to give the message to the politicians and the politicians are supposed to execute it. What we as experts need is the message: What do you want? When? Where and how?

The term minority higher education is a political term in itself and not a technical term. This also explains the difficulties some of the experts here on the table might have today. I am speaking here as technician but also with a political mindset. The question is, what has to be transformed from the political vision into the technical implementation? Let me start with some provocative questions.

Let’s pretend such a minority higher education institution exists. What is this university supposed to do? Is it supposed to identify a minority student, is he black haired, or above 1.80 m, or younger than nineteen? Will they prepare a special timetable for him, make special studies for him, reserve special premises for him? To put it even worse – do we want to put minority students into a ghetto? No, certainly not! So the next question is, is it just a language issue, is it a political issue, or is it more? And – coming back to this question and answering it at the same time – isn’t the multi-language approach the message for today’s higher education all over Europe?

In my home university in Austria, my prime study program “Petroleum engineering” was educated in the prime language English, not German! So why is it a problem to implement studies in several languages in universities? Or is there something else to be considered ...? All this must be seen in the context of the history of the Kosovo higher education system and with strategic considerations of the Kosovo education system today.

2. A brief history of the Kosovo higher education

The University of Prishtina (UP) was established in late 1960ies. It faces, like many similar universities all over Europe, the problem of an inadequate teaching and research tradition as being a young university. It usually requires one to two generations to build something like a serious academic fundament. Amazingly, in another presentation today we will learn about another young university, the University of Bozen/Italy, which represents this broad academic fundament already today – the secret behind is money, much money.

The University of Prishtina had it years of growth in the 1970 and 1980. New faculties were established and later divided. The ethnic segregation between Serbian and Albanian staff began in the 1980ies and ended in the break up and the parallel system in the early 1990ies.

This break, which most of the audience may have witnessed from the political point of view, displays in fact a very dramatic technical cut in the history of university, too. When academics are removed from their premises, when they are losing their infrastructure for teaching and for research, they are simply out of any normal procedures – the Albanian academic community of the UP was virtually set on ice.

Then came the big turnaround in the year 1999, Albanian academics returned to their university premises – or what was left of it. Since then I would – as I would describe it – the higher education in Albanian language is “on the bumpy way up”. Minister Veliu mentioned in his opening speech the “lost years” of the University of Prishtina due to the continuing problems in the Rectorate.

The Serbian part of the previous University of Pristina was relocated in 1999 and reactivated in Northern Kosovo in 2001.

3. The reality today-on both sides

The University of Prishtina is still coping very much with the lost academic generation of 1991 to 1999. This holds for both the teachers and researches side as well as for the students side. Most of the current student parliament leaders are registered as students since the 1990's.

The UP has to cope today with a ten-year-gap of reduced academic operation in the university during a period when it could have made relevant development steps in the second/third academic generation. The mental tension of many UP staff between the parallel (anarchic) approach, originating from the 1990's parallel system, and responsible operation as of “We are in charge” is still visible in the daily operation.

Beside that, the UP faces a big problem of multi-contract reality. Many professors of the university have double or triple contracts in private universities or in international institutions. The salary system has been completely turned upside down – a young professor earns 280.- € per month, a student translator of UNMIK or OSCE maybe even twice as much.

The research of the university basically needed to be restarted, no research tradition was left over.

The University of Mitrovica (UM) – I recognize that the technical term is also a political one – had the advantage of being in full academic operation in 1990. They could teach and conduct research.

Today the coin has been turned. Now they are facing extensive infrastructural deficits, the new central campus in Mitrovica operates still on a very low and provisional level regarding laboratories, libraries, technical instruments etc. Between 2001 and 2004 the UM faced something what I called the “Mitrovica spring”. During this period a certain political move could be sensed towards being integrated in the Kosovo higher education system and the dedicated will to go into reforms.

But then came the big shock in 2004, when the legal Rector Savic was dismissed and Prof. Papovic was installed by the Belgrade as new “Rector”.

4. An even briefer history of the University of Mitrovica

When I am now looking a bit deeper into the Mitrovica case, I am doing this because its an aspect, which we have to focus on – simply because we don't have any other existing options for minority higher education in Kosovo.

The UM restart from scratch in autumn 2001 was certainly a very tough one, something which was remarkable also from the financial point of view. An estimated 8-10 million Euros were invested since 2001 in order to re-establish only the basic infrastructure, which was required for university operation. Today about 2/3 of the infrastructural investments have been completed.

During the “Mitrovica spring” there was a strong move into the reform and integration of faculties. Fourteen faculties will not fit with a total of 4-5000 students. So in a first step the total number of faculties was reduced to 10, the further steps were supposed to go towards 8 and finally 6 faculties, but at that point the reforms were stopped. This reform process also included the implementation of modular studies programs. As an example for the technical studies every student could start in a first year and decide then in which study he would want to proceed. Bologna and ECTS rules were started to be implemented, a two campus model was developed between Mitrovica and Leposavic.

All this was stopped in April 2004 – basically in the last moment before the UM would have been integrated into the Kosovo legal framework. Since then university suffers international isolation due to political reasons – this reality has to be faced today.

5. Requirement for minority higher education

Certainly the basic issue for minority higher education is to meet the language requirements – bilingually or multilingually. Maybe it would not be the perfect strategy to establish a university where individual classes are held for each language of a Kosovo minority – Serbian, Bosnian, Turkish etc. The institution might end up with classes with 2-3 students each in the first year and no students left in the third year.

So the message and the vision behind should preferably be to introduce multi-language

higher education in Kosovo in general. Allow a side-note at this point. The advertisement for the Rector's position of the University of Prishtina is to be published. Shouldn't it be a precondition to include in the advertisement the term fluent competence of English language? It has not been a condition so far, also not after in the elections after 1999.

Basically the overall higher education strategy of Kosovo has to developed and extend with the term minority higher education. A possible long-term vision could be to have English as the basic study language in certain fields of studies and then go into multilingual educational lines, ranging from Albanian to Serbian, Bosnian, Turkish or whatever. Certainly this cannot be a full-scale strategy, but starting with one or two study programs in English would not bear a big risk. And investigating at the same time what the labor market requirements are and what the student's interest is, could be quite interesting and revealing for a still very conservative academic society of Kosovo.

I would like to present another aspect of my home university my own study program. We had about 5 new students every year as long as it was taught in German language. When the study program was transformed into English, suddenly up to 50 new students registered, 80% of them being from foreign countries. This raises another question. Is the Kosovo higher education system exclusively reserved for Kosovo students? Or is it a part of a university network covering the Balkans, maybe even South Eastern Europe? Is Kosovo supposed to develop an extra high charging system for foreign students, studying in this university? Or should Kosovo even try to attract them?

Let me give you another example – the one of the Technical University of Zurich, which without doubt is ranked among the most renowned technical universities in the world. In its doctorate studies, almost 80% of the students are foreigners. When approaching the Rector about this fact, asking whether this might be problematic from a national Swiss point of view (spending tax payer's money for foreigners), he replies with a smile, saying that the university tries get 90% foreign doctorate students. Why? Because it's the best indicator for academic attraction of the institution, of it's quality, and of the competence of its academic staff. This example Kosovo should keep in mind when setting the framework for future higher education.

Minority higher education is also a chance for the Kosovo higher education system as a whole to develop its quality, its competence and its international profile. But this requires a fundamental re-orientation of the current pyramid of study programs, too.

You still find today in both UP and UM a very strong focus on Magister/Master studies, a Bachelor study – although representing European standard - is still not considered as a full academic degree. This contradicts fundamentally the most likely higher education perspective for Europe in 2020. It sees a pyramid where a minimum of 60%, maybe up to 80% of the degrees will be Bachelor degrees, with a remaining 20-30% for Master and a PhD's below 5%. This raises another question. Why not focusing more on the labor market needs, as it is still this aspect which makes university education most valuable for the individual student. The answer will again most likely be to have a Bachelor graduate at the age of 23 rather than a Master graduate in his late twenties and with unviable salary expectations.

The next important thing when talking about minority higher education is the "Where?" and "How?" – basically simple technical questions. Would it be convincing for an 18 year old student, living in one of the Kosovo enclaves, to attend daily lectures by bus, guarded by KFOR – or would he maybe prefer the teacher visiting him and his colleagues on a regular basis? Basically there exist several options, but they must be made clear and be individually assessed before the design of such university is developed. Who is traveling, the students traveling, the teachers traveling or will it be a distant learning model? International best practice can be found for any of these options.

The next big issue is academic quality. University education is all about quality, quality of the teachers, quality of the students, but also the quality of the infrastructure. Or stated more pointed: if Kosovo cannot afford quality infrastructure and quality equipment for such an institution – better not do it at all, don't make it another provisional institution. Such institutions, newly set on ground, must either function from the beginning or they will be dying a long and painful way. On under equipped university in Kosovo is enough. And at the end the quality question is that issue, where Kosovo public and politicians must set their own benchmarks – "Where do we want to go with our higher education vision?"

The next aspect that needs to be met is a relevant percentage of permanent staff. It is impossible to operate a university with 90% of the teachers traveling in and out, which has been part of the UM reality between 2000 and 2002. And last but not least such a university can provide professional services for its students only if its fully recognized by international agencies and when it is meeting basic European standards in terms of academic education (Bologna, ECTS) and research.

6. What to do with the University of Mitrovica ?

It is one of the main questions in the back of everybody's minds, but it is not discussed very openly – "What to do with Mitrovica?". One can approach this question with the political eye or operational eye. One can say "I am not talking about Mitrovica because Papovic (or any illegally installed successor) is a bad guy and we are the good guys". And "as long as these bad guys exist we should not discuss any other options".

What if the question is turned in the other direction? How many qualified academic teachers, capable of teaching in minority languages, do exist outside of the UM but within Kosovo? It is apparent that there is basically only one "pot". So what are the options?

The first option would be to establish the UM as a Kosovo public university fully under Kosovo legislation. The necessary Kosovo legal framework exists, the university statute would provide a certain degree of autonomous operation, the reform process, which was interrupted in 2004 could be restarted. Why insisting on the reforms? Because currently the UM costs quite as much as the UP (12+ Mio. €), but with the UP representing some 88% of the Kosovo population, compared to a merely 7-8% of the UM. No Kosovo politician will support such a fifty-fifty financing. So the size of the UM needs to be adapted to the new reality of some 4-5000 active students in the mid term perspective. The number of the faculties needs to be further reduced, as well as the number of staff and through the total costs be lowered. All this is possible, and could be completed in some 2-3 years time.

The second option would be to keep the UM in its current status as de facto Serbian higher education institution, address it from the side of the Kosovo legal framework as a private university financed by donors (Serbia). The minister would not have to care who the Director is as long as basic regulations would be fulfilled. Probably this would be technically the easiest option, because it simply transforms the current situation into a legal one. One disadvantage remains, as the status of a public higher education institution is lost.

The third option, which could be called the "Hong Kong model", would somehow try to move between the many limits, desires and political lines. It will be explained later in this text in more detail.

The fourth option would be to simply restart with the University of Mitrovica on a different

location. Why not? The competent staff is available and is mostly willing to continue education on Kosovo territory. For the potential students the location might not be the crucial criteria. What they expect for their money are recognized degrees, good infrastructure and competent staff. Wherever.

7. Requirements / “musts” for minority higher education

Certainly the Kosovo legal framework must be respected as prime backbone of any higher education institution on Kosovo territory. The Kosovo higher education law must be fully implemented, the university statute must obey to the rules and must fit in the system of Kosovo higher education licensing, quality assurance and evaluation.

Secondly, such a university – simply due to the misbalance of annual costs and the percentage of potential student customers – could not rely exclusively on the Kosovo consolidated budget but would have to find private donors. Reasons for donations could be of political or technical kind. Again – the university must be so attractive that it can provide sustainable quality, otherwise it will not find donors. From the political perspective, potential donors could be governments of such countries, who's students are expected to attend this university. Veto rights for such major donors in regard to the strategic development of the university would then have to be considered.

Thirdly, sufficient experienced staff on the location is required. The reasons for this have been explained earlier. Basically experienced and competent staff is needed, who can ensure that the institution start from the beginning with a certain quality level regarding organizational and academic criteria.

The next thing to be ensured under the conditions of Kosovo is that any such university can provide sufficient services for dislocated enclaves or municipalities. Higher education services need to be provided all potential students of minority languages, which are willing to study, wherever they are sitting in Kosovo. Again, this is both an organizational aspect and political aspect.

Last but not least European standards need to be implemented from the beginning, which might even result in the fact that this university might have implemented Bologna quicker than the University of Prishtina. But this would not even be a bad development under the auspices that such competition finally creates a functioning higher education system in Kosovo and will contribute to the development of quality on both sides.

8. Why no adapted version of the SEE university Tetovo ?

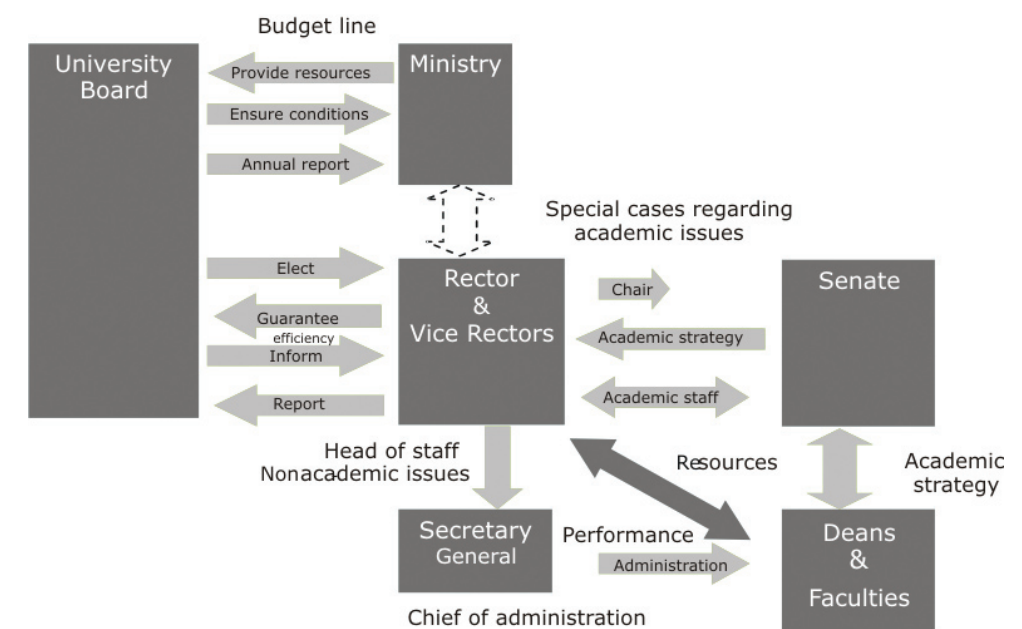
During the past weeks, several articles have been launched about the potential future design of the UM. Whereas these papers must primarily be seen in the context of the current status negotiations, they bear a certain danger of proposing supposedly “simple” solutions, which cannot stand any in-deep analysis. One of these concepts recommends an adapted version of the SEE university in Tetovo, Macedonia.

With a closer look into the conditions and the concept of the two universities, the following aspects are clearly different between SEE and UM:

- The customer market of student in a minority language is too small for two universities aside each other
- SEE/Tetovo is a success story also because of
- A lot of money was invested – which is not available in the case of the UM
- The old university of Tetovo is gradually sidelined – a parallel existence of Um and a second public university in Mitrovica would induce serious conflicts regarding the availability and allocation of the available academic staff
- A quality university requires quality staff on the location – either each staff member of the UM teaches on both locations or the experiment will fail
- The private university system of Kosovo – so far – is no success story, it rather exceeds the worst expectations
- Minority higher education in Kosovo requires a technical, not a political solution – the day after the status decision many political “experts” will be gone and the problems will still remain unsolved

9. The Hong Kong model

Autonomous university governance



Picture 1: Autonomous university operation according to the Kosovo Law of Higher Education

The “Hong Kong model” has a simple background. The Kosovo high education law is a very modern law. It gives a high extent of autonomous operation to the university. Picture 1 displays that the arrow which is almost erased is the one of interaction between the Rectorate and the Ministry. The Board takes over a lot of responsibilities from the Ministry, who's interaction with the university shifts from a daily to an annual basis through global budgets and annual budget negotiations, which are based on annual performance reports,

structural analyses and evaluations. This concept is very helpful for the case discussed today, as every close interaction between ministry and university also involves a political aspect. The more the institution can get distance from the ministry, the easier it will be to come to political solution which can be implemented into a technical model.

Which cornerstones does this Hong Kong model comprise:

- The legal framework of Kosovo is obligatory
- The statute must remain as the prime operational basis
- The legal competence for the statute is with the Kosovo government
- The strategic competence for the institution could be shared between the major financial contributors/donors
- The annual budget is recruited from two major sources
- Kosovo consolidated budget
- Governmental/private donors
- The institution must have the status of a Kosovo public university

10. A skeptical outlook ...

This analysis concludes with a skeptical outlook of mine because – from the technical point of view – the current situation remains a very difficult one. In general political times are bad times for technical solutions. Having so called “hot potatoes” in the top lines of the newspapers and other media will hardly help to bring forward the discussions for a good solution. It is a similar situation in which the University of Prishtina was since the problems in its Rectorate became public.

Secondly, a fully operational institution for minority higher education cannot be established within one month or half a year. This requires a long (financial and strategic) breath – and politicians normally do neither have a long strategic breath nor a substantial amount of money and dedication at hand. It adds to the problem that higher education – with all the emphasis it receives from political side and experts – remains a very small segment of public services, dedicated to a minority of people in itself.

What also contributes to my skeptic approach is that the University of Mitrovica becomes an increasingly political play ball during the past months. There are great concerns that the university might be “sacrificed” during the status negotiations. Therefore I am calling on the Kosovo public and on the Kosovo politicians to make up their mind on the University of Mitrovica and its future position within Kosovo – beyond the freaky Papovic term. There is a lot of academic substance behind Papovic, a lot of academic tradition and competence still exists in this university. If Papovic will be gone one day – what will official Kosovo doing then? What is concerning most is that the UM faces because of its isolation since two years a substantial brain drain of competent Serbian academic staff out of Kosovo.

This induces another question for the Albanian political stakeholders. Is there anybody who wants to stop this brain drain at all? This is a political question but it has a strong technical impact. It must be attractive for a non-Albanian academic teacher to teach and research here in Kosovo. Because Kosovo wants to establish a quality institution, not only a pro forma institution in order to pass through the status negotiations.

I consider it as an obligation for the Kosovo government and the Kosovo public to tell to these people: “We are interested in your experience, we are interested in your competence, please stay here. We want to give you a vision, but you must obey to the rules. There is a future for you in Kosovo.”

A question which has not been answered at all so far, becomes more and more urgent in this context. What is the labor market situation today and in the mid-term for non-Albanian graduates? Basically a university should “produce” a graduate in order to serve a labor market need so that this graduate gets a good job. What are the labor market requirements? Who will engage these graduates, who will pay their salaries? Will they work only as translators for UNMIK because this is the highest salary they can get? This cannot be the ultimate solution for academic graduates – neither for those from the UM nor for those from the UP! It will require in the future a more substantial interaction between the labor market and the universities both in Prishtina and Mitrovica to identify where their educational profile shall be directed to.

And last but not least one fundamental question remains – what counts? Does it count to be a student or does it count to be a graduate? From my experience in Kosovo it is the student status which counts for most people. I am a student; so I am member of a social elite (which is true); this helps me to find good jobs. But how many are dedicated to become graduates? Probably because there is no labor market for them.

So, this will be a basic question for the mission statement of the Kosovo Universities. Am I here to provide a pot for students to remain there or am I supposed to make them finish their studies? These are very political questions, which will have to be discussed intensively in the months to come, in order to focus then on the technical aspect of the Kosovo higher education system, deriving from the answers given.

The need, the wish and the dedication of the Kosovo government to provide higher education for the minorities will cost money, will take some time and will require a more pragmatic approach towards the Mitrovica case than before, based on the fact that the academic staff exists there, is willing to stay in Kosovo and represents academic competence.

Dream for multiethnic education- fiction and reality in higher education in Kosovo today

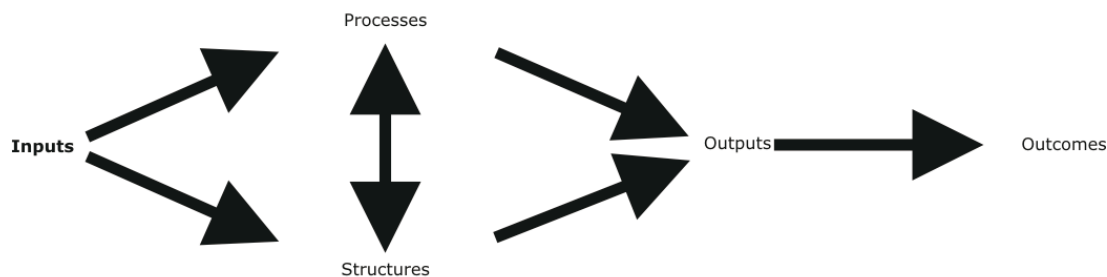
Dukagjin Pupovci
Kosovo Education Center

Kosovo Education CenterI have titled my presentation "Dream for multiethnic education – fiction and reality in higher education in Kosovo today," and conceived it as a sort of reaction to Mr. Woeber's discussion. Firstly, we all know that the end of the war saw two universities in Kosovo, both bearing the same name: "University of Prishtina". Even though both these universities functioned as a unique entity for over twenty years, in the beginning of nineties the then University of Prishtina was used as a ground for exercising crude state power. We all also know that all this ended in part of the University of Prishtina starting a struggle of survival in extremely difficult working conditions and waiting for more normal days to come. On the other side we saw the remaining part of the University of Prishtina pretending that everything was working well and continuing to utterly ignore the needs and interests of the majority part. During those eight survival years of the then University of Prishtina, its former multiethnic identity was divided into separate detached identities which did not rely on each other. The postwar period brought about a new reality. Whereas one part endeavored in a struggle to adapt to work in normal conditions after eight years of exile and operation in utter deprivation, the other part ventured into academic improvisations refusing to face the new reality. Once again, education was being used by the politics with a clear aim: to use education in preventing Kosovo going independent. In my view, today's reality is one in which we are waiting for a political settlement of the future political status of Kosovo, and we must show a high level of civil and social responsibility and responsiveness to the needs of our fellow citizens who do not speak the majority language. Only thus we can build a new and democratic society where there will be enough room for all those ready to live in it; a society capable of becoming part of regional and European integrations. The Strategy for development of higher education for period 2005-2015 has defined a clear vision and mission for the system. The vision of the Kosovar society as set there is one of: "Kosovo, a democratic society fully integrated in the European Higher Education Area, in which knowledge and scientific research serve for scientific, cultural, social and economic society of the country." This is the image of Kosovo in 2015 as set in this Strategy of higher education. This vision implies a mission for the system of higher education to exercise during the given period. It provides for building of an effective system of higher education which would contribute to the growing of societal wellbeing by at the same time offering equal opportunities for all. The concept of equal opportunities here is a key concept, which should be constantly kept in mind. Higher education in Kosovo enjoys a tradition of being key advocate and promoter of cultural, social and economic development of the country, which these days can not be measured solely by the number of graduates, masters or PhDs. In the postwar Kosovo we are building a system of higher education that will contribute to building of an accountable and responsible public administration and in bringing about a society fully in tune with the age of information. Therefore, this system has an additional responsibility to prepare experts and provide expertise in harmony with the societal needs. On top of these, it is also responsible for offering equal opportunities to all citizens. With the Strategy on higher education and through the set legal infrastructure, Kosovar institutions have undertaken specific obligations. These are primarily obligations towards its citizens, but also commitments towards the international community.

2. The current situation

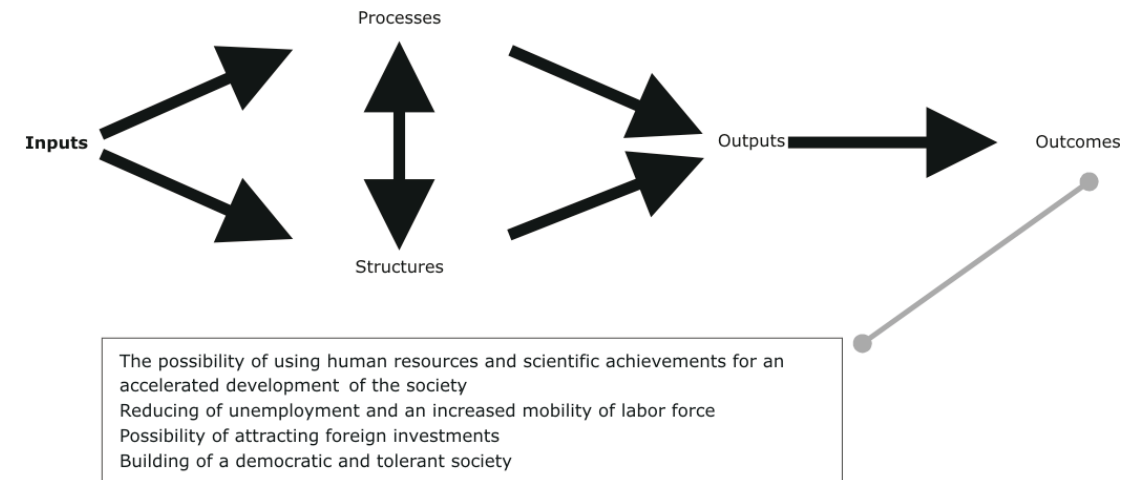
I will make use of this structure to venture in a brief analysis of the higher education system, which, I believe, will help to better grasp the link between resources or inputs (or what we invest in higher education) and the desired outputs or outcomes of the system.

THE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

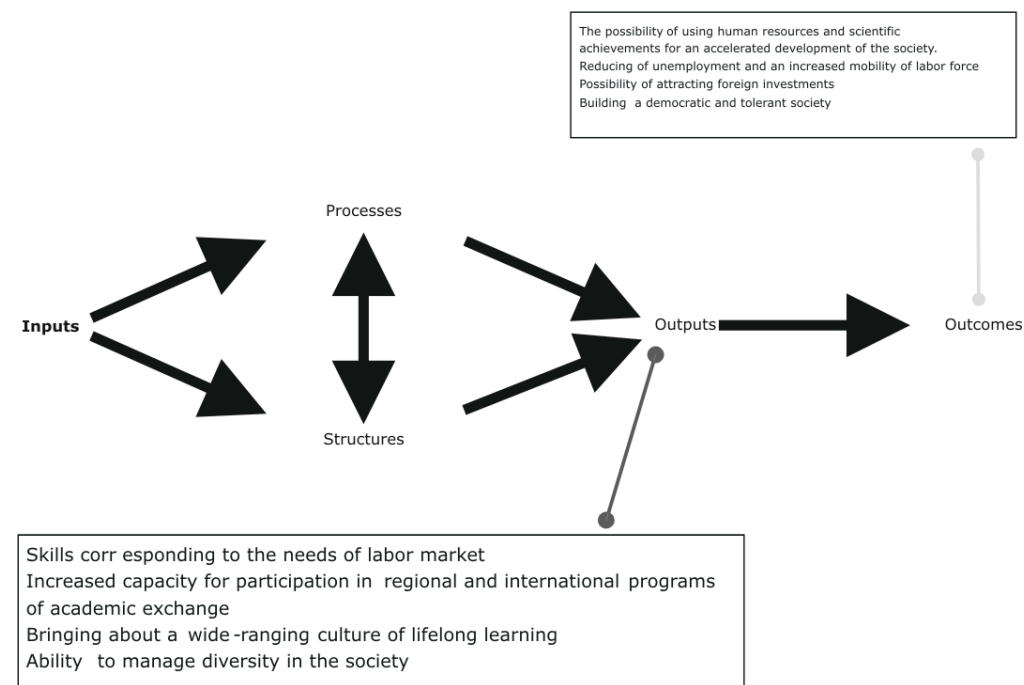


2.1. Outputs and expected outcomes

So, I will start from a relatively ideal picture of desired outcomes of education in the society in terms of inclusiveness, and then see into what would need to be done in order to bring about those desired outcomes. Logically, a society should be able to use its human resources and scientific achievements for the purpose of accelerated cultural, economic, and social development. The society must recognize that people are its most valuable riches and that special care ought to be given to the development of human resources. In our situation this would mean decreasing unemployment, which reaches the alarming 40 % of the Kosovar society. Another challenge is that about 20-25 thousand new job seekers enter the labor market of Kosovo annually, presenting a potentially easy source of social unrest. Therefore, the system of higher education has a special responsibility in providing employment for citizens and for ensuring more mobility of the labor force, which would lead to more mobility and their eventual employment in the countries of the region and wider of the EU. More so, graduates from the system should be able to create jobs for themselves, but also for the others. The level of skills and quality of human resources to a great extent also determines the level of foreign investments in a given country. In all this, higher education plays a key and unique role in a situation of regional competition, when various countries are offering a range of facilities to foreign investors. It goes without saying that one of the key amenities for investors rests in the high level of development of human resources. Another commitment we have undertaken before the international community is building of a democratic and tolerant society. In this too, higher education is in a unique position to offer not only skills, knowledge, and competencies, but also in providing premises for a culture of tolerance and respect of diversity in a democratic society. These are a few of the desired outcomes we would like to see coming from the functioning of the system of higher education.

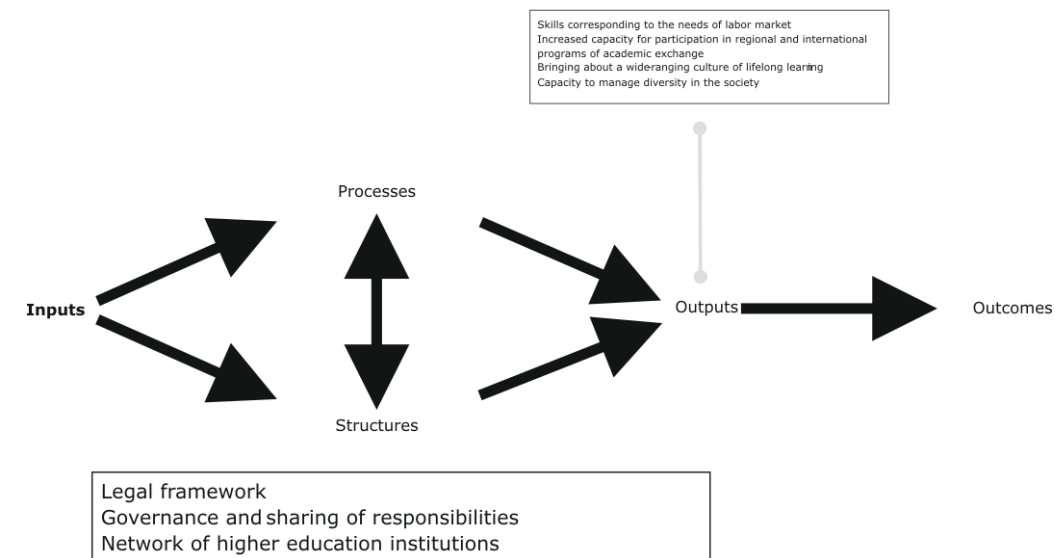


What are then the desired outcomes of this system? A good and functional system of higher education should provide its citizens with skills in harmony with the needs of the labor market. Nowadays, we witness a breathtaking dynamics of change in the labor market. The market needs change almost daily and the citizens should be able to adapt to such changing demand. One way of adapting to these demands is the lifelong learning approach as one of the pillars of the Process of Bologna. It allows people to adapt to the changing requirements, but also to more adequately address their daily needs. At the university level this is manifested in the shape of increased capacity to participate in programs of academic exchange both at the regional and wider international level. The system of higher education is expected to produce experts who are apt to participate in such programs of academic exchange and able to involve in scientific research and in cooperation and interaction with others in order to deepen their knowledge and to further disseminate it across borders. Such cooperation, at the regional level, in particular, would also help in bringing closer communities inside Kosovo. An important issue for multicultural societies is to find ways to manage diversities in the society; Kosovo is a diverse society – like many other societies in the region – and it is involved in the postwar period in a process of learning how to manage these diversities. The system of higher education is ideally positioned to contribute to increasing the capability of the society to manage its diversities, which would in effect work to minimize existing problems, differences and tensions between different communities coming either as a result of the past or a consequence of today's political actions and behavior.

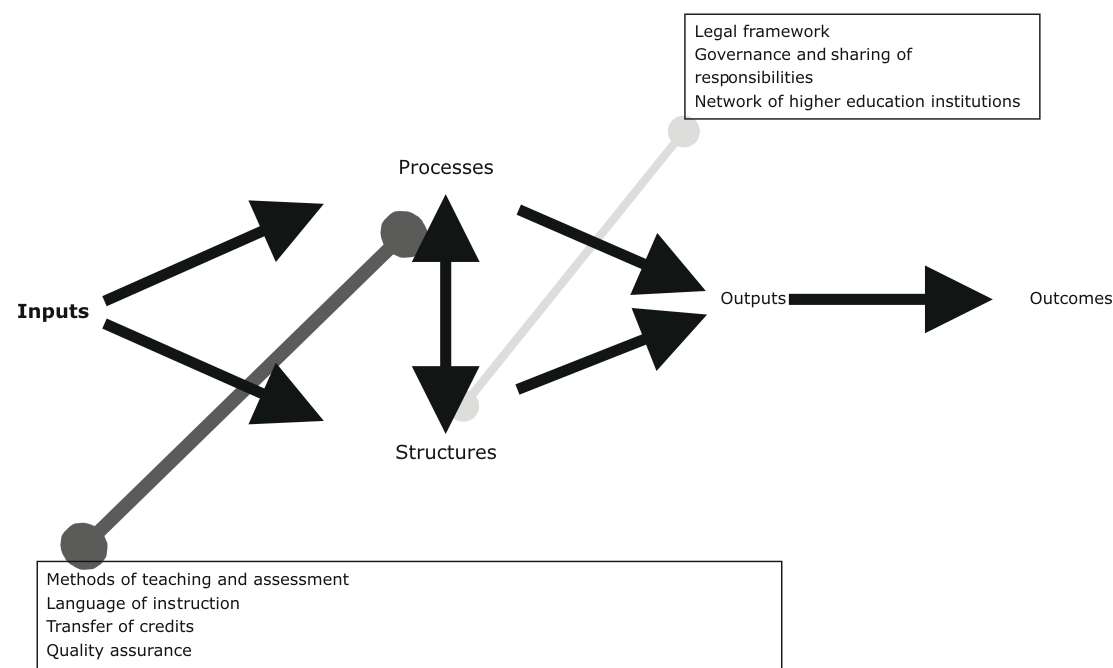


2.2. Structures and processes

This drawing shows that results are affected by structures and processes, that is by interaction of structures and processes. This requires that we engage in a brief analysis of structures currently in place in higher education in general, and of those referring to minorities, in particular. First, the legal framework of the higher education in Kosovo, as pointed out by the previous speaker, is entirely based on the principles of the Bologna Process. It is an up-to-date legal framework comparable to those of other European countries. This legal framework provides that the Kosovar institutions are obliged to respect the rights of all communities and to enhance and develop higher education in Kosovo. It offers a relatively high level of autonomy for all public institutions of higher education and, in my opinion, is an adequate legal framework for the organization of higher education in minority languages and for the needs of minorities. I do not think that the legal framework is an obstacle for minorities to participate in higher education. It provides for a division of authority and responsibilities which leaves the universities, that is public institutions of higher education, almost full authority to decide autonomously on study programs, on academic issues, and to a great extent even on financial issues. Not to mention the private institutions of higher education, which are fully independent in managing their programs and assets. The legal framework also leaves it to the discretion of the institutions to decide on the network of academic units, including the possibility for establishing a larger number of public higher education institutions, depending on the needs of the public, respectively on the needs of the various communities. To sum up, I think that there is an adequate legal framework in place for the implementation of programs and for meeting the needs of community members for higher education.

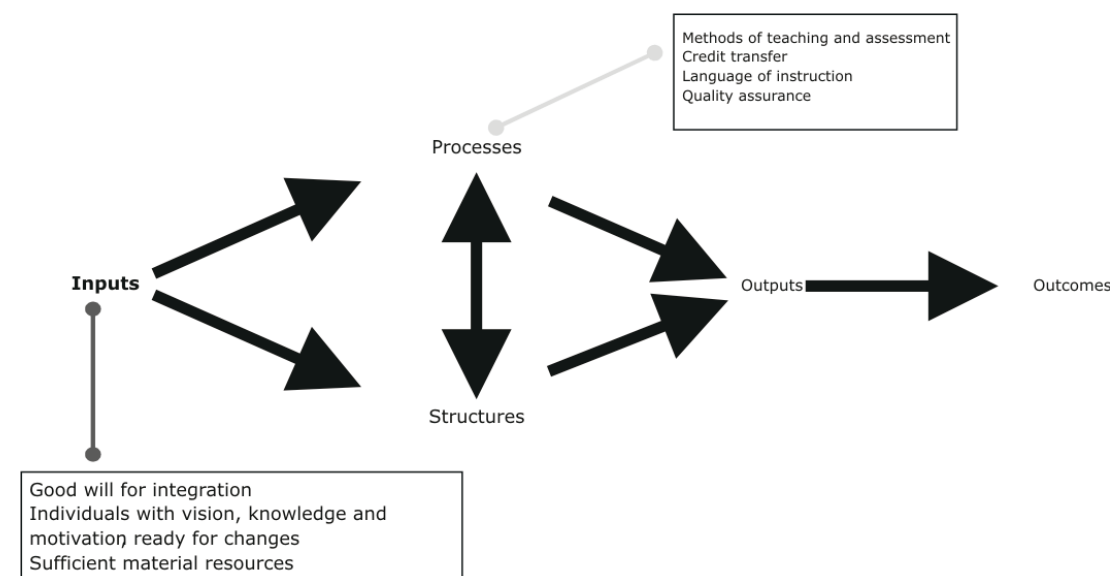


Next in line come processes, and among them I would like to discuss briefly the issue of language of instruction. In Kosovo we have a relatively long tradition of teaching in the language of various communities to the extent that sometimes we find it uncommon to overcome these practices from the past when various communities desire to have instruction in one of the languages. I assume that this will be kept in mind even after we have listened to the experiences brought by guest speakers from other countries. Apart from the language of instruction, there is also the methodology of teaching which is more or less common across communities and independent from the language of instruction - nevertheless worthwhile close attention among processes. Another aspect of processes is the possibility to transfer credits from one institution to another, which allows members of different communities, or better to say students, to gain credits in a given institution and to have those credits or exams transferred to another similar institution. Needless to say that we strive to have such systems functioning not only locally, but also regionally and at the European level, which would indeed allow for mobility of all students and for overcoming ethnic and linguistic barriers for all. When talking about processes we have to make mention, as the previous speaker did, of the quality assurance. Quality assurance in higher education is one of the pillars of Bologna and, in truth, without providing quality services it is difficult to speak of any organization of instruction or offering any higher education services in either minority or majority community languages. Quality comes before everything, and anything which disregards this aspect, is but a mere improvisation.



2.3. System resources - inputs

Now we come to the, as I will call it, the lowest level of this structure, which are resources or inputs that somehow feed the processes and structures. I think that the best input our society needs is the good will for integration. I believe that there is a good will with Kosovar education institutions to integrate members of all communities into a democratic Kosovar society; speaking about integration, I am hopeful that very soon political obstacles will be overcome and we will witness a more active approach on the part of some communities in the process of integration. Without good will for integration it is impossible to offer any services; this so, because, regardless of the quality of services, they have to be wanted by a given person, group or community in order to really take place. Currently in Kosovo we are in a situation when education is being used to a great extent by politics and, in reality, it is difficult to, as pointed out by the previous speaker, solve issues of technical nature when there are political issues being discussed between Kosovar and Serbian institutions. Secondly, individuals with vision, knowledge, strong motivation and readiness to change are needed in this context. I think that there are such individuals in Kosovo, but they need to be able to have a say on the current processes. In this respect I mean also openness towards members of all communities in order to better understand and meet the needs of all communities, in particular those of minority communities. Another problem always present when referring to education even in societies richer than ours, is the issue of materials resources – extremely scarce in our situation. I will refer to this aspect of system inputs later in this presentation, so that for the time being I will suffice to sum up that the material resources for education in Kosovo are insufficient to provide quality higher education for all.



3. What can Kosovo offer to minorities?

Primarily starting from the positive tradition and based on the tolerance we have constantly endeavored to cultivate in Kosovo, I think that we should offer the minorities financing of a public university with instruction in Serbian and Bosnian language. This is something that already exists, even though its existence is conditioned by political motivation. However, institutional support for quality instruction in these languages must be provided in the long term. Of course, my stand here does not mean I favor any neglect of the needs for higher education for other communities, but I maintain that we owe provision of higher education in these two languages which are used by most members of minority communities. I also think that we should not disregard members of other communities, such as Turks, who should be offered the opportunity to attend instruction in their own language whenever possible and desirable. Furthermore, the possibility to transfer credits from other universities in Kosovo should also be made available. In other words, members of other communities should be given the opportunity to attend lectures and to take exams in various universities, and similarly, members of the majority community should have access in the, as I called it, public university in Serbian and Bosnian language, without prejudging whether this university entity should be part of the University of Prishtina or a separate university. It is important for Kosovo to encourage international study programs at the local universities. Nowadays, at the age of globalization, it would not be uncommon to organize study programs in, for example, English or any other internationally accepted language, which would provide an additional opportunity for coexistence between members of various communities in Kosovo. There

are already study programs in English language in many countries of the European Union where English is not an official language, but this done merely in tune with the globalization trends that are strongly rooted in the field of higher education. There are partnerships in place between Kosovar universities with numerous European universities, but there very little partnership with universities in the region. I think that the first thing we should do is to encourage partnerships between universities in the region, since the exchange of faculty and students that would take place therein would make it possible to get to know more about universities in the region, which would make way for overcoming some barriers of political or any other nature, which in most of the cases are built on prejudices. Also there is number of issues and problems common to the universities in the region and which could be addressed together through joint research projects, through jointly organized conferences, through exchange of faculty and students and so on. Of course, numerous challenges lie ahead in this path, first and foremost the need to integrate the Serbian community into the Kosovar society, which essentially, has very little to do with higher education. In order to overcome these difficulties a lot of good political will is necessary together with an immense contribution and support by the international community. Further, with the lowest expenditure in public education in the region, budgetary restrictions are inevitable part of the Kosovar reality. During the process of development of Strategy for higher education in 2005 we made an assessment of funds needed for reforms in higher education. It is a fact that during the period 2005 – 2015 Kosovo needs to invest 32 million euros of public funds into higher education, compared to the currently invested 16 million euros per year. Calculations have shown that investment in higher educations should be doubled in order to reach at the level of 1.22 % of the GDP in Kosovo. I am convinced that this is to big a challenge for Kosovo both regarding meeting of the needs of communities in higher education and accomplishing the objectives of the Bologna Process. So, for the next year (after the settlement of our political status), we strive to join the Process of Bologna, which will require from us to meet several conditions before year 2010. For this reason we have made according budget calculations. Another limitation especially manifested among the youth is the limited usage of the language of the area. Here we refer to members of all communities, and especially the minority ones, who rarely speak Albanian and other languages of the area, which makes any integration into the system of higher education even more difficult. On the other hand, the same problem is also present among the Albanian young people. As I stated earlier, partnerships among institutions of higher education within the region are almost inexistent due to remaining prejudices. Institutions from the region prefer partnerships with HE institutions from Europe to partnerships with similar institutions in the region, in spite of the distance and lack of knowledge and other relevant information on those institutions. One challenge to follow us during our efforts for integration of all communities in the system of higher education is the need to move toward European integrations. Parallel to it, we need to meet other conditions and implement other standards, such as: quality assurance, setting up of a functioning credit system, and so on, which all require even more investments and more time and energy from our institutions as we go on with other necessary activities in the processes in higher education. Finally, let me thank you for your attention during this presentation.

Responsibilities of the international community for Kosovo minority higher education – the day after the status decision

Alexander Bayerl
Head of the Austrian Office, Pristina

My thanks go to Forum 2015 and to Soros Foundation and all the other international and local representatives who have helped to organize this conference, because I think that this is a very important initiative. I am the head of the Austrian office, currently at the first semester of 2006, Austria holds also the presidency of the European Union, so I am in a sense here in a double function as a functionary of the European Union, but at the same time of course as the head of the Austrian representation working here since 2003.

These are three years in which I have followed the field of education and this has always been a very important field of Austrian work. Now let me go back a little bit to the title "Responsibilities of the international community for the Kosovo minority higher education"; it is a complex one, and for me it is not possible to cover the entire field because if we talk of communities or minorities we have a wide range in the international de-postulated ethnicity.

We have here present a representative of the Turkish office, we have a huge and very important Turkish community in Kosovo which dates back to the hundred of years of Ottoman rule over Kosovo, we have Bosnians, we have in the Janjevo region Croats community, minority, we have Gorani etc, not to mention the Roma family of ethnic groups, Egyptians etc. So we have a wide field of ethnic communities in Kosovo, which are all relevant for higher education. However I shall leave my brief remark here concentrate on the issue of the Kosovo Serbs because of the political aspect.

Education had been at the center of attention back in the 1980ies and 1990ies. You will very well remember that after Milosevic's attack on the autonomy of the province of Kosovo, the university and the field of higher education had remained a focal point of resistance from the Kosovo Albanians side against the oppression of the regime of Slobodan Milosevic. The roots of LDK, the strongest party in the Kosovo political system goes back to university links of President Rugova, a literary with university background. Education having always been a central focus of the Kosovar society and the major focus of the Albanian resistance against the regime. We have seen for the same reason the deterioration at the university with Mr.Papovic who currently acts as illegal rector of the University of Mitrovica.

Let us come back to a few demographic realities on the ground. If we think back in the 1980ies we had a substantial number of Kosovo Serbs and you know that the gradual reduction of Kosovo Serbs in Kosovo had been one of the motivations for Milosevic to enter nationalist design. Of the 196.000 Kosovo Serbs, counted at the census in 1981 a substantial number fled, was forced to flee or fled deliberately after NATO's intervention in

1999. It is very difficult to assess the actual number of Kosovo Serbs in Kosovo. According to some statistics and to some calculations a number of 120-130.000 is realistic, probably a little bit more. So we have a substantial Kosovo Serb community, which in addition to its demographic relative strengths versus the other communities and minorities has the advantage at least in the North of coherent pocket of settlement in the three municipalities of Leposavic, Zvecan and Zubin Potok and of course in the northern now separated part of the municipality of Mitrovica

In the university field I think the change which was brought about by Milosevic and then by 1999 a fundamental visor with NATO's intervention, a shift of the university structures from Prishtina to the North and we had a case which is when down to Austrians I always tend to compare it with the fate of the German speaking University of Prague, the Karl's University. We then had the creation of two universities who claimed to have the same name but a double institution. With NATO's intervention the University of Prishtina was moved into the North with many documents, with leading staff etc. So we have actually two Universities of Prishtina in the perception of the Kosovo Serbs. Of course we don't recognize this so we call the university in the North the University of Mitrovica. The University of Mitrovica had from the beginning been at the center of Austrian attention because we thought that this fundamental crisis at the field of education should be resolved and we should help to come to an understanding. Both institutions, irrespective of their claims on representing the whole picture should be brought to the European education process.

Why did we do that? Because of a simple reason. Austria thought from the beginning that reconciliation and livable schemes of integration of Kosovo Serbs would be the key for the future of the whole of Kosovo. Education will stand at the center, if you take the demographic trends of Kosovo Serbs, it is perfectly clear that we must not allow from an international perspective to let this strain continue in the sense that if we do not offer the Kosovo Serbs schemes of higher education. In this case they will by necessity emigrate to other Serbian universities. That is for the most part the University of Nis, University of Belgrade. Therefore, if we do not invest into the youth, if we don't give them a perspective where they can stay in Mitrovica at their own university, it will be very difficult to hold the youth. You can very well imagine if you think yourself being at the age of 18 or 19, if you emigrate for 5 or 6 years to Belgrade, the likelihood of coming back to Kosovo is a very little one, particularly given the political changes and the difficulties of many Kosovar Serb and general population to come to terms with the development since 1991.

Therefore investing into the local Kosovar Serbs structure of higher education is a fundamental investment into their future. Now sadly enough the development of the University of Mitrovica was a very complex and since two years negative one. Mr. Woeber, who is sitting to the left of me as an Austrian expert working for the Austrian Development Agency, who is represented by Mr. Fritz who is sitting at the other edge of the table, had been working as a pretty lonely maverick fighter in the north on the reform of University of Mitrovica over years and thinking of schemes of reforming this university. We did have some progress, unfortunately enough I have to tell you that the UNMIK representatives at that time had a little understanding for the dossier and this is something that I critically have to remark. That the international community until recently lacked real understanding for the issue of higher education. I was sometimes bewildered when I think of the enormous sums of money, which are poured into all sorts of areas and all sorts of initiatives. I was always wondering why higher education received so little attention, particularly given the fact of the demographic trends of both the Kosovo Serbs and Kosovo Albanians and particularly taking into account the economic situation of Kosovo. If you take the economic perspective and the enormous economic problems, I think that the only sustainable answer is investing into education, because without higher education you cannot progress in the field of economy. So for me it has always been entirely inexplicable why the international community did not take care

sufficiently of the field of higher education. Now, of course if you take the Security Council Resolution 1244 and if you ask for the obligations of the international community in the field of higher education, you will not find detailed recipes for the simple reason, that the Security Council Resolution 1244 – which is the decisive, the crucial, the devout document of the international presence, of UNMIK presence in Kosovo – is in essence a document which is in many respects not an entirely fruitful guidance for the problems which we face today. It was drafted in 1999 against the specific background of the failure of Rambouillet, it was drafted against the specific background of the disastrous policy of ethnic cleansing of Slobodan Milosevic and against the background of 800.000 to 1 million Kosovo Albanians forced into emigration, colossal violation of human rights and it has this specific context of conflict resolution.

Now, we are not any more in the state of conflict resolution as we were back in 1999. What we need today is the emphasis of the international community, it is not anymore the requirement of the 10th June 1999. And in the beginning, recalling the first SRSK Kouchner and then Hakeroop and Steiner – they lacked in my view the understanding for the necessity of investing into higher education. The ongoing problem was known to a few experts but remained ignored by the rest of the political establishment. This is a fundamental mistake of the international community on the ground. Over the time it changed with Michael Steiner and his insistence on the Mitrovica issue. Some fitful attempts such as moving probably the administrative Headquarters of UNMIK in order to give a symbolic bust to the problem of Mitrovica. Michael Steiner was probably the first one who took care also of the educational field, but at that stage it was very late and I remember very well this is the point of time when I entered Kosovo as an Austrian representative.

At that time Mr. Woeber was trying to put the reform on track with the University of Mitrovica and we already had substantive progress in this field because we were entering the Bologna scheme, we were entering the reform process also for the University of Mitrovica and it looked for a certain time in 2003 – that's a historian perspective today – at that time the University of Mitrovica was more progressive than the University of Prishtina and we had many problems in the Europeanization of the University of Prishtina with the foreshadows of the Arsim Bajrami issue already there. At that time the University of Mitrovica was on track, we had an able rector with Gojko Savic, yet then struck the disaster at the brink of success. A disaster being motivated because of the fear of certain circles of Kosovo Serbs that the lasting reform of University of Mitrovica issue might lead to the weakening of those force who do not intend to have a reconciliation and understanding and integration of the North into the Kosovar PISG system and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the MEST currently led by Agim Veliu and then led by Rexhep Osmani. At that time we had a putsch at the University of Mitrovica, which brought Mr. Papovic illegally into the position of rector. Kosovo Albanian friends and colleagues sitting around the table will remember his role back at the University of Prishtina.

With Mr. Papovic's illegal installation we had a total grip on the University of Mitrovica, which developed over the time into a homebase of radical forces that is in particular by two persons – no need to hide the names – Marko Jaksic and Milan Ivanovic, who tried to do the same as they had done with the Hospital of Mitrovica to make a tool of their own agitation in the North. This of course is a development, which strengthened the respective power position within the Kosovo Serbs in the North and which substantially weakened the liberal and the progressive circles of Kosovo Serbs. It led above all to the situation where Kosovo Serb youth had to pay a price. Because, if you as a Kosovo Serb now study at the University of Mitrovica, you might earn your degree – I do not want to comment on the methods of earning of this degree, if this is an intellectual effort or only involving someone else – but however you can get your degree and then you can continue your studies in Serbia, and in Belarus and in Russia. And if you want to continue at one of the European universities, this

degree and this university is no longer acknowledged in Europe. It results in a very difficult process of nostrification, you have to go to Belgrade, there it will be recognized as a Belgrade university degree and with this fake degree you then can go to the Western Europe. This is effectively cutting of the Kosovo Serbs from the European mainstream development and leads to a serious deterioration of the overall future perspective of the Kosovo Serb youth.

The year 2006 is a fundamental year, no need to point out the importance of the status process. This process is very forceful, we have seen fundamental changes in the meanwhile in the political landscape. Recalling only the most recent fundamental changes both in the assembly and in the post of the Prime Minister with a new outreach program of the present Prime Minister General Agim Ceku, who is a very forceful, very able, very disciplined personality and who usually achieves what he wants and with whom cooperation is excellent. The Prime Minister has followed a credible outreach program, what I regret is that higher education is not necessarily part of the standards process and it has though become – implicitly and integrally – a part of status process, because people do understand the necessity to deal with the field of higher education. There has been growing interest in this from major stakeholders such as the SRSG, who is highly interested in the issue, the deputy SRSG, OSCE being involved now. It is seen that the progress in this field is a necessity.

We already had some progress, I am very glad about the recent development at the University of Prishtina not only having overcome the Bajrami crisis last year, but have now overcome a potential second crisis which would have harmed the university even more than the Bajrami crisis last year thanks to the work of some key players in Kosovo we could avert the crisis.

With the University of Mitrovica we lack this momentum and we currently lack progress and reforms. In my title there is a somewhat awkward mentioning of the day after the status. I cannot tell what it will exactly look like after the status because this is a complex decision taken by too many actors, but one thing is clear: after status the north of Kosovo will then be in the same difficult situation as now and it will remain a part of the Kosovo, for a simple reason that the political will of the international community is against the partition of Kosovo. Therefore dealing with the issue of the University of Mitrovica will be something which you will have to do in any case from the Kosovo side. You could do it now in this year with the help of the international community, you can do it this year with the SRSG, with UNMIK and next year the work must continue. What we need is – from the side of the Kosovo government – responsibility for the issue, of course also from the Kosovo Serb side. I can only hope that those voices of the Kosovo Serb side, who are really interested in the future of their own generation, will understand that and will refrain from political games by exploiting their own population.

What we need is the responsibility of both sides, of the Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serbs. What we need is sustainability. We need to think of a scheme of higher education for the Kosovo Serbs, which is sustainable. There are many ways of thinking of sustainability in this field and if you want to have a detailed analysis, the experts are sitting here in this conference – you are the experts yourself. And what we need is ownership, and the ownership both of the Kosovo Serbs and of the Kosovo Albanians. We need a firm re-integration of the University of Mitrovica into MEST, into the PISG structures, which at some stage will lose their “P” and their “I” and will be full structures of government, no longer provisional ones.

We need that and we need to think of the specific involvement of Serbia on the issue because it is perfectly clear that, whatever the future status of Kosovo will be, there will be a special link of the Kosovo Serbian population to Serbia. So we have to think of the scheme which is workable, especially in higher education. I can only call upon all of you, who are working here as experts, to help think of the issue and to invest your intellectual resources into this

very crucial, very important issue and to raise it with politicians, wherever you meet them. We all agree that the key for the future of Kosovo is to a huge extent education, education and education.

University of Bozen/Bolzano-

A trilingual success story in Europe

Prof. Oswin Maurer
Vice-Rector
University of Bozen/Bolzano, Italy

I would like to take you on a journey, a journey where all things you know about university structures are somehow thrown over board; where politicians and academics strived and still strive to achieve a common and mutually shared goal which is also an undividable objective - which is called education and creating potential for the future. This process of creating potential value for the future can somehow be connected to the legal framework, to languages and many other factors. But these are the details, the core is much more important: we are striving for best practice in and optimal outcome of education.

This is exactly what makes the success story of the Free University of Bolzano. In comparison to what is discussed in Kosovo with regard to establishing a university these days, Bolzano was also subject to extremely short timelines, documented in the fact that the first legal act of funding the university was established in 1997, with the university starting its programs in October 1998. Our institution is now seven and a half years old. During the current decade, the Free University of Bolzano is the most successful tri-lingual university start-up in Europe. Growth in terms of programs and student numbers has been substantial – whereas the initial strategic plan of the university stated to reach a student body of 2000 in 2005, we currently have 3000 students enrolled in four different Faculties and Schools.. At the moment, we are building a new, “Fifth Faculty or School”, that will be operational in 2007, offering programs in science. In 2008, according to the amended strategic plan we will reach a number of 5000 students enrolled at the Free University of Bolzano, however, this will be the absolute ceiling for our institution. We will not try to attract any more students than that, mainly to be able to keep our excellent education quality levels.

There have been many comments about what should be done in Kosovo, what may be the right strategy for your society and your university; I am very cautious in providing advice and in presenting the “model that works” under any circumstance. I can only present some sort of role model - parts of it may be applicable to your situation here. Mr. Bayerl, in his keynote address, pointed at the common goal of all the efforts in Kosovo: it is about education, it is about culture, and this is about society. I agree with that, but I wish to add one important point: it is about economics, too!

And this is one of the big differences in perception we were able to utilize: higher level politics as well as the people who were involved in establishing this university understood that this is an economic issue of creating value and sustaining value.

Approximately 450.000 people live in the province of South Tyrol an average wealth is above the European average. This wealth is historically based on the geographic location of the province, but also on an extremely well performing economy nowadays. But analyzing the situation in a comparative way between South Tyrol and Kosovo, we should be aware

of the fact that our discussion so far has been detached from the real issue of what has been mentioned in the presentations before, i.e. political frameworks, local sensibilities, political correctness, is the idea right and will it get support? However, we should restrict our discussion to only one, and in my opinion the only one relevant issue: do we want education yes or no? All the other arguments and concerns may count, but maybe at the second level of decision making. Hence, we should try to reattach the discussion to the core question: what we want and what are we striving for? Do we want to see education as a future option of youth in that country in 10, 15, 50 years time?

The province of Bolzano is politically also in a not so easy situation. It is an autonomous province in Italy and decision making, in particular political decision making, is not always as easy as perceived from the outside. There were diverse triggers for establishing the Free University of Bolzano and the discussion went on since the late 1950's, where ideas of establishing a third level education institution in Bolzano was pursued. The decisive trigger was a legal reform of the education sector in Italy, that required primary school teachers, preschool (kindergarten) teachers to hold a higher education or university degree. This led to the need to establish an institution that catered for bilingual tertiary level education of teachers – a bilingual university. However, the Government of South Tyrol became very proactive and started to develop a strategic education plan that took the specific linguistic and cultural situation of South Tyrol into account. The first outcome was to fund a research academy, the so called European Academy (EURAC) in 1992. Since then, EURAC became famous for its research on bilingualism and policy formation in multi-linguistic settings. In a next step, members of EURAC developed a strategic plan, triggered by the program "South Tyrol 2000", that tried to determine the educational situation 8 years ahead.. Feasibility studies were carried out and those studies also took some in-depth look into one thing that was already mentioned today: What do we want? But studies also provided strategic direction and defined those responsibilities that will come up if we get what we want? What will be our accountabilities in doing so? This questions and answers to it are very important. Not only to say what we want, but also to define our responsibilities and those likely developments we will be accountable for in the future.

In 1995 a new university structure project plan was introduced in Italy. At that time the university system was still highly centralized and project proposals, such as proposals for establishing a new university, had to be launched one year before the expiration of the nation wide university structure plan. It meant that the next round for proposals for the period 1997-1999 was due before the end of 1996 – and Bolzano had to launch the project university with only a virtual structure in place. Between 1995 and 1997 there was the typical situation: stop – go - don't know; discussions started at every level, pros and cons were exchanged and everyone had an "opinion" about the project. The problem in a situation like this is that most people were lacking an "informed view" when voicing their opinion about the proposed venture. There were many political discussions about the pros and cons, including an argument that there will be a Italian university in Bolzano and this is not wanted nor feasible. Other people were saying that the new university in Bolzano will be just a regional university and that such a university already exists in Innsbruck (Austria, termed in South Tyrol "the country's university"), 80km north of Bolzano, another operating just 50 km south of Bolzano (the University of Trento) and a third university existing just 100 km south of Bolzano (the University of Verona).

In the public opinion, there was initially no perceived need for a new university. But this is why I said I will try to take you on journey of imagination: in historic terms, in traditional economic terms, and in traditional rational terms there was no need to establish another university in the close vicinity of three other universities.

But then there was a breakthrough with the so called Basonini Law in 1997. It constituted

the legal basis for the foundation of the Free University of Bolzano and enabled the local government to provide for funding of this private university. "Private" does not mean that we are private university in an international context and understanding. It means that the funding does not come from Rome, but we are still subject to the legal Italian university framework. All rules concerning the educational programs and the administration of the university are set, however within those rules we do have some flexibility. The Italian government provides part of the funding which is around five percent of the total budget of currently Euro 35 million. It is mainly the reimbursement for the number of enrolments. The Ministry's contribution is a very small part of our budget, but this does not really matter. We are one of the few universities in Europe that currently does not use its total allocated budget. However, the term "free" mainly refers to the privilege to hire academic staff from outside Italy by direct call, a process that is not possible for other universities under current Italian legislation. We are the only university in Italy who has been granted that privilege to exceed five percent of all appointments and we are allowed to appoint up to 70 percent of all our academic staff directly from abroad

In essence, the success of the Free University of Bolzano is based on a clear vision – to be an international university in Italy with a strong local interest and fortunately this vision was carried through despite the fact that there was and still is some local opposition towards our institution. Secondly, the responsible politicians and particularly the Prime Minister of South Tyrol strongly supported and carried that idea and vision despite the strong concerns raised by the national government, the national academic community, and the Austrian university community as well. Many of the concerned were looking very suspiciously at this fledgling institution: Bolzano, who are they?

We are still asked the same question today, but not as frequently as some years ago. We did and we do our job, starting within a quite hostile environment, but against all odds we are since some years able to create top value and are perceived as a top education provider. Decisive for our success was, and still is, the ability to use windows of opportunity. After the Basanini Law came into force, the responsible people could have said we are now starting to think about this and that, but they put the focus of attention on: What do we want from the future? Education is undividable and it is creating value for our province, despite the language discussion of will this be Italian or will it be German. However, and as already said, this university is nowadays a very successful place of education. It is successful, because it attracts staff from all over the world, even if quite a few of them are of Italian nationality. We are contributing to the so called "brain gain", by attracting internationally highly reputed academics, but also by setting an opportunity for top expatriate Italian academics to come back to their home country. In terms of the local population, and this was mentioned before by Mr. Bayerl, the 18-25 year old young, bright and motivated people had to go to other provinces or even other countries for studying and many of them were not coming back to Bolzano after graduating. This led to a lack of skills, expertise and competencies in a wide range of professional fields resulting in problems when top positions in companies or public administrations had to be filled.

What else makes the model of the Free University of Bolzano a success?

First, tri-lingual education provides graduates with the extra skill set of languages that are needed in the context of a unified Europe and in global business as well. But the advantage of tri-linguality has also its downturns, mainly in the operations of our institution: legally, every document has to be written in German and Italian, often translated word by word. Just imagine how many hiccups you will get because of the different meaning of an Italian expression that has to be translated into German. Because of this and to avoid problems of different meanings and understanding, our lingua franca within the institution is English.

Second, the international body of academics and students, coming from 45 different national and cultural backgrounds is creating a learning and teaching environment that is unique. Third, our excellent teacher - student ratio of 1-6 is unprecedented in Italian and even European universities, particularly at the Bachelor's level of studies. Only top international Business Schools are able to work on an instructor-student ratio like that, but they also charge top fees.

Fourth, our politicians from the Prime Minister of South Tyrol to the Minister of Education and the Minister of Finance do understand that a university providing top level education also needs a top and international infrastructure, and hence sufficient budget. If you do not have the resources please don't start; if you start, you need to be top, maybe small in size, but top in terms of your educational offerings, academic staff and infrastructure.

Fifth, and this makes the Free University of Bolzano really work, is that all involved share a common vision and they are part of and contributing to a strategy, that is based on consensus, not compromise.

Sixth, our governance structure is clearly outlined in our statute. The major governing bodies are the University Council, comprising nine members, with none of the members holding any political office or exercising a political function; this applies also to student representatives and professors in our senate. This is a real blessing - please do not make the mistake to instrumentalise your university or having it instrumentalised for any political agenda. The major academic governing body is the senate and members are the Rector, the Vice-Rector, the Deans and Vice-Deans of the four Schools plus members representing assistant professors and students. At the school level, decisions are made by the members of the School Council.

However, all these structures only work, because all these institutions follow the basic vision and the shared strategic principles: what do we need, what do we want to achieve, does this help us to reach our goals more efficiently? We do it by focusing on one or two goals at the time and by being very precise in defining them. This does not work if anyone can come up with 10 or 15 so called "good ideas" - and experience shows that in universities these are mainly results of brainstorming agendas - without suggesting how to implement them and who may take responsibility and accountability for them. We request strict timelines on achievements, milestones with a clear stop and go decision framework and tangible outcomes. As I mentioned at the beginning of my presentation, education is too valuable to be left to politicians and/or academics only, it is an overall and most important societal issue and it is an economic issue: Do our educational activities create value? Do they improve the educational level of the people that attend our university? Do they provide them with the extra "value added" compared to other universities?

Apart from highly satisfied students and graduates, national competitive rankings clearly show the value we created during the last seven years. For example, the School of Economics and Management was recently ranked No 1 in Italy for the third time in a row by the Association of University Rectors in Italy -an outstanding and unprecedented result for a newcomer. Also rankings for staff - student ratios and state of the art infrastructure in a European context are within the top 10 percent ranks in Italy.

So what is the essence of success? If you have a vision you can go a long way and I am saying this as someone who has experienced this several times in different countries. A clear vision allows you to focus on things you can do.

Involve people who are committed, but beware of the typical "wellmeaners" who provide an opinion, but usually generate little tangible outcome.

Do your homework and think beyond the obvious. Don't try to copycat existing models, any university needs and deserves its own vision, strategy and structure. Focus on quality and content, education is not about structures it is about how much do people learn, appreciate and value that learning experience at your institution.

Do not inflate your vision, do not deviate from your strategy, nor do overcomplicate things - use common sense. You will certainly make mistakes, but making mistakes is part of learning and hence part of our business.

Challenges and solutions for minority higher education in Romania

Prof. Mircea Bocsan

Babes-Bolyai University, Romania

First of all, I would like to thank Mr. Pupovci for his kind invitation. In fact his effort, his colleagues effort, we've seen during the discussion are already paying off.

As we received in Cluj-Napoca his letter, we saw there you wanted us to share our model on dealing with higher education on minorities. Our university has some experience in this field and I would like to structure my expose in two sections. First of all, a useful model cannot be offered here if you don't have some basic knowledge on the history and the evolutions which took place in the part of Romania where I am coming from. Second of all, I would like to give some information on the present status of our university and the way we implemented multicultural structure.

Cluj-Napoca is the main town of Transylvania. What is Transylvania? In fact, it is a strategic place in Europe, it is and it always was an attractive place for Western Europeans and, during centuries, an arena for religious and political fights.

The Cluj University lays on the foundation of several attempts to establish higher education studies and we can emphasize its beginnings in the year 1581. You also have to know that Romanian inhabited Transylvania was conquered by the Hungarians between the 11th and the 13th century. In the later installation here of German and Hungarian speaking populations by the Hungarians we can find the roots of the multicultural present of our region. The first foundation in 1581 was a college funded by Hungarian Prince of Transylvania, Istvan Bathori. This college was put under the control of Jesuits and it was led by an Italian rector – Antonio Possevino. It didn't have a long life, because the next prince was a protestant; he tried to make his own foundation, so we can encounter a gap of sixty years. The Jesuits came back in 1688 with a small academy and try to reinforce the Catholic influence in Transylvania. What I want to say is: the beginning of our universities is fixed in the religious fights between Catholics and Protestants. It wasn't a linguistic dispute, nor a cultural one, but a religious conflict. What was happening next? As you know perhaps, in 1699 Transylvania was conquered by the Austrians and the emperors Maria Theresa in 1776 took the initiative and made generous effort of confessional reconciliation. She founded a university where German was prescribed as unique language for teaching. But this enterprise was not to survive long wither; her son, Joseph II, replaced the university with a high school (which became later on famous) where the teaching language was once again Latin. In the context of the 1848 changes, after the European revolution, the issue of setting up a university in national language was explicitly raised. This time, the Romanians – who always formed the majority in Transylvania – asked themselves for a university. Their demand seemed to be successful in the beginning, because the Hungarian Minister of Education Eotvos suggested in 1868 the creation of Cluj University, having Hungarian, Romanian and German as teaching languages. His project was abolished later on and in 1872 the authorities established in a new university: here lie the modern foundation of our university. The new establishment was supposed to teach only in Hungarian. In fact, the very aim of it was to build a single Hungarian nation

and to promote a single Hungarian language all over Transylvania. This decision caused a major discontent of the Romanian population. As a reaction, after Transylvania reunited (in 1918) to the other territories inhabited by the Romanians, the Romanian government from Bucharest took over the university – as it happened in Bratislava, as it happened in Strasburg – and established teaching only in Romanian. This lasted till 1949, when something rather curious occurred: as you may know, Romania was under Soviet occupation at that moment, and they split our university in two: a Romanian teaching university called Babeş and a Hungarian teaching one, called Bolyai. That's why we are called Babeş-Bolyai. This lasted till 1959, when the government in Bucharest took the decision to reunite them and make a single and more powerful university. Finally, in the end of the 70s and during the 80s, because of mislead educational policy, the number of specializations decreased; the number of the students was also shrinking. Teaching in German disappeared and the Hungarian one also decreased a lot. This was the historical introduction I wanted to make and let's focus a little bit on the present situation.

We are right now a multilingual and multicultural university. Where can we find origins of this orientation? Of course, in the historical context I just described but you have to know one thing, a very important one. In December 1989, after the revolution an important and active group of young academics and students took the initiative to rebuild the tradition of professionalism and democracy in our university, in order to integrate it in the world of the free world values. This group issued a proclamation on which the charter of our university is based.

The charter of "Babeş-Bolyai" University was adopted in 1995. The present form is a modified one, after having implemented the suggestions kindly made by his Excellency Max Van Der Stoel in 2001, those brought by the European University Association and the Salzburg Seminar.

What is the mission of nowadays university in Cluj-Napoca? Allow me please to read the second article of the charter. It states the following:

"The mission of Babeş-Bolyai University is scheduled out in the following direction. It promotes education and research in agreement with demand of the knowledge based society, through initial training, ongoing education and integration in the circuit of international values. It provides a framework for multicultural, multi-linguistic, and inter-confessional contacts. It offers equal training opportunities in Romanian, Hungarian and German and finally it contributes to the local, regional, and national development from a social, economic, cultural and political point of view, by becoming involved in current affairs, according to the needs of the community".

This mission is reflected in the third article, which states the principles of organization and activity. I would like to read only the eleventh point:

"The use of Hungarian, German or of a widely spoken language in teaching, research, scientific publications, as well as in the inter-academic communication is object to no restrictions whatsoever. The Senate decides the specializations for which training is provided in the languages of the national minorities or in widely spoken languages".

These two texts are the most important points for the issue we are interested in. What was our multicultural solution? I would like to underline something: you brought here in Prishtina representatives from Bolzano University, Tetovo University; there are in Europe other two important multicultural universities, namely Freiburg/Fribourg in Switzerland and Abbo Academy in Finland. But you have to take some differences into account. For example: Switzerland is a confederate state having three official languages; Romania is

a national state with only one single official language: Romanian. Therefore, we cannot make a direct comparison between us and the University of Freiburg/Fribourg, the one in Bolzano or Abbo Academy in Finland. Our constitutional framework is different and we have chosen the following solution: we founded several lines of studies. What is a line of study in Cluj-Napoca? What does it mean? You can teach in the same faculty in Romanian and/or in Hungarian and/or in German. So we have one single faculty and its lines of study have their own autonomy. What does it mean to be autonomous? Having autonomy means the possibility to raise funds, to elect people, to search for sponsors and having its decisional independence. And I would be glad to read you once again from the charter two articles, full of significance on this matter. One of them refers to the departmental line of studies"

"The departmental line of studies includes all faculty members who teach in the respective line of studies. The department line of studies is led by a department council that includes the director of the line of studies, department and a deputy"

There is one more provision on the line of studies department director. He has the following attributions: he "manages the educational process in the respect of line of studies and ensures that its activity is properly carried out. The relationships between the authorities of line of studies department director and those of the line of studies representatives in the academic council college of the faculty can be approved by the senate decision upon request. The line of studies department director sees that all discipline taught within the line of studies is covered by adequate academic staff".

To resume these problems, right now 15 of our 21 faculties have both a Romanian and Hungarian curriculum, 9 of them provide both Romanian and German curriculum. At this moment, our university encounters almost 47000 students: almost 37000 are Romanians, 9500 Hungarians and less than 400 Germans. We also have Jewish studies and between the 21 faculties we have two of them: the Faculty of Reformed Theology and the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology where all the courses are given only in Hungarian (because only Hungarians have these religions).

This is our multicultural organization and in fact the representation of minorities is assured at the level of any governing bodies. For example, every faculty who has a German or Hungarian line of study has to appoint a Vice Dean representing this line of study; we have a general secretariat that represents the interest of Hungarians or German line of studies and we also have a curricula dedicated to Jewish studies.

The SEE University Tetovo- from political challenge to academic success

Dennis J Farrington, DPhil,
Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Law, SEE University

1. Introduction

I have been involved in this region in various countries for nearly fifteen years. And I have had significant experience in Kosovo, having quite a major role in writing the Higher Education Law in 2000-2002. As a nominee of EUA I have been a member of the expert group on reforming the governance structures in the University of Prishtina. So, I think I do know something about it and of course I have my personal opinions. But the purpose of this presentation is to inform you about SEEU. Many of the participants in this Forum and eventual readers of this paper are familiar with SEEU anyway, particularly from the Albanian community in Kosovo. There is a book 'SEEU-The First Four Years' available to any participant or organization interested.

The South East European University in Tetovo (SEEU) has been described by many observers including OECD^a as a 'model' of multi-lingual, multi-ethnic higher education. It was established in the particular circumstances of 2001 in the Republic of Macedonia and while it may not be possible to replicate it exactly in other countries experiencing similar language and ethnic issues, its development provides some guidance to interested parties. Nothing would have been achieved, however, without the inspirational leadership of the former High Commissioner for National Minorities of OSCE, HE Ambassador Max van der Stoep, whose efforts in promoting bilingual higher education in Romania and elsewhere have also been recognised. In addition, the project had the support of the then government of Macedonia and through international donations was able not only to build a new university from nothing in the space of less than 12 months but also to establish a sound interim management which over the first few years transformed into a modern governance structure recognised by EUA^b as meeting modern European standards. The three elements: good leadership, local support and adequate financing, were essential to SEEU's success. In my view, any form of 'imposed solution' would not have worked.

2. Situation in the Republic of Macedonia

The Republic of Macedonia (recognised by EU and UN by the interim name FYROM, hereafter referred to as Macedonia), has a population according to the 2002 census of just over 2m, of which about 65% have stated Macedonian ethnicity, 25% Albanian, ca. 4% Turkish, ca. 3% Roma and 3% others.^c Use of 'mother tongue' language follows the same general pattern. In pursuance of the theme derived from various international instruments 'no one shall

be discriminated against by any public authority on the ground of language,' the principal issue, therefore, is to try to provide equal rights in access to education to citizens speaking two entirely different languages: the official state language Macedonian (a language of the South Slavonic group written in the Cyrillic alphabet) and Albanian (a unique Indo-European language written in the Latin alphabet.) As the figures show, the Albanian population is not exactly a minority; it constitutes a substantial part of the population. In practice most urban and many rural-based citizens with Albanian mother tongue also speak Macedonian, having learned it compulsorily at school, but relatively few of Macedonian mother-tongue speak Albanian. The western regions of Macedonia dominated by Albanian-speakers have close historical, family and related ties to Albanian-dominated Kosovo, which between 1991 and the conclusion of the conflict in 1999 was officially dominated by the Serbian language. Macedonian-speakers on the other hand often have close links with Serbia and Montenegro or with Bulgaria: the Macedonian language has many similarities with the other South Slavonic languages Serbian (and Croatian and Bosnian) and particularly Bulgarian but none with Albanian.

Prior to 2000, higher education in Macedonia was delivered exclusively in the Macedonian language, apart from a small teacher-training section in the main state University Ss Cyril and Methodius, Skopje (UKIM) which provided some courses in Albanian and of course, Albanian language as a subject in itself. Naturally, the perceived denial of equal access to higher education was a source of great concern to the Albanian-speaking community. The South East European University (SEEU) was a politically-negotiated international response to demands for recognised higher education in the Albanian language. It set out to help to solve the problem of under-representation of Albanian-language students in recognised higher education in Macedonia while being open to students from all ethnic groups. Starting with about 900 students in 2001/2, about 95% Albanian-speaking, when access by Albanian speakers to recognised higher education was only about 5% of the age cohort (as compared with almost 20% for Macedonian speakers), by 2005/6 the student population has grown to about 6000, about 75% Albanian-speaking, and access to recognised higher education directly attributable to SEEU has risen to 14.5% of the age cohort. As the State University of Tetovo, which succeeded the unrecognised Tetovo University (founded in 1994, but whose diplomas were effectively worthless) founded in 2004 is also recognised, the access of Albanian-speakers is now broadly similar to that of Macedonian-speakers, albeit there are as yet no faculties teaching pure sciences, medicine, engineering and similar disciplines in the Albanian language.

3. International obligations of Macedonia

Macedonia's international obligations allowed the OSCE and the Council of Europe to argue successfully for a change in state policy which allowed SEEU to open. In 1988, prior to the independence of Macedonia, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted Recommendation 1353(1988) on access of minorities to higher education: as is well known this says that education is a fundamental human right and therefore (sic) access to all levels, including higher education, should be equally available to all permanent residents of the states signatory to the European Cultural Convention (ECC). Macedonia acceded to the ECC in 1995, ratifying the separate European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) in 1997. The 1988 Recommendation says that member states with minorities should avoid prescribing the exclusive use of the official language. It also recognises the fundamental liberty to engage in higher education activities and to establish institutions for that purpose. Such institutions, it says, should be officially supported once their satisfactory quality has been established – on a non-discriminatory

and fair basis – and a genuine demand has been demonstrated; language should not be a criterion for recognising institutions or qualifications. Also, broadly, members of the European Higher Education and Research Areas are voluntarily committed to bring some degree of uniformity to the higher education systems of the wider Europe while maintaining diversity of approach. They aim, through changes to legislation or otherwise, to create a framework of comparable and compatible qualifications seeking to describe them in terms of workload, level, learning outcomes, competences and profiles. The uniformity of approach is intended to increase opportunities for student mobility, the European Union target of at least 20% of students by 2010 considered achievable given the emphasis on common language learning within the Common European Framework (CEF) to be discussed later, usually English.

Albanian fits the definition of a regional or minority language in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) (1992), which entered into force in 1998. ECRML was signed by Macedonia in 1996 but by 2006 had not been ratified so the state is at the time of writing not obliged by the Charter's terms to promote and protect the use of Albanian in education. However, Macedonia ratified in 1998 the more comprehensive Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCPNM) (1995), which obliges Parties to promote equal opportunities for access to education at all levels for persons belonging to national minorities. Parties are obliged, within the framework of their education system, to recognise that persons belonging to national minorities have the right to set up and manage their own private educational and training establishments, not in itself entailing any financial obligation for the state.

4. Constitutional and legal provision

The Constitution of Macedonia states that parents have the right and responsibility to ensure their children's education (Art. 4); that all citizens have an equal right to education; and that basic education is compulsory and free (Art. 44). Private education institutions may be established at all levels except basic education (Art. 45).

The first political solution to the problem of Albanian higher education was the Law on Higher Education of 2000 - in which as an expert of the Council of Europe I was involved, and Mr Max Van Der Stoel as HCNM was very intimately involved - provided for the right to higher education in the communities' own languages but at non state founded institutions. So it was a compromise, and can I say a very difficult one to achieve as there was considerable opposition from the Macedonian speaking majority. Eventually it passed the parliament of Macedonia by a narrow margin. So it was a close political struggle to get even this far and SEEU was founded as this type of institution with international support in 2001. But still higher education in other languages than Macedonian could only be offered in non-state funded institutions. The second political solution was after the conflict in Macedonia in 2001, which led to the Ohrid framework agreement; producing eventually a new law on higher education in 2003 amending the law of 2000. That provided for the right to higher education in a community language at state founded institutions. So for the first time, teaching could be available in state founded institutions in the Albanian language, provided that the Macedonian language is also taught; this was the government's attempt to stabilize situations after the conflict to make sure that every time Albanian language was used, there were also taught at least some subjects in Macedonian language. This led to the creation by the Parliament of Macedonia of the Tetovo State University, as a new state institution on the closure of the former Tetovo University, which as I explained was not recognized. Now we have two universities in Tetovo: the South East European University and the Tetovo State University. They are approximately 400 metres apart, essentially within the same

educational complex because within that area are also a newly constructed Medical High School and an older Agricultural High School. So we have everybody in the same place but with separated institutions.

In legal terms, the Constitution was amended following the 'Ohrid' Framework Agreement of August 2001. Article 7(6) of the Constitution provides that 'In the units of local self-government where at least 20 % of the population speaks a particular language, that language and its alphabet shall be used as an official language in addition to the Macedonian language and the Cyrillic alphabet. With respect to languages spoken by less than 20% of the population of a unit of local self-government, the local authorities shall decide on their use in public bodies.' Article 48(4) of the Constitution provides that 'Members of communities have the right to instruction in their language in primary and secondary education, as determined by law. In schools where education is carried out in another language, the Macedonian language is also studied.' Among other changes in legislation to accommodate this provision, as noted above, changes in the higher education law in 2003 have permitted publicly-funded institutions to offer courses taught in the Albanian as well as in the Macedonian language. The revised Article 95 of the Law on Higher Education provides:

- '1. The Macedonian language is a language of instruction in the higher education institutions. In accordance with this Law and the Statute of the higher educational institution, in order to express, nurture and develop their identity and other peculiarities, the members of the communities shall have the right to acquire their education in the State higher education institutions, through certain study programmes in the language of the community, different than the Macedonian language. The State will provide financing for higher education in the language that is used by at least 20% of the population in the Republic of Macedonia.
2. Teaching at the private education institutions may be done in the languages of the members of the communities that are not in majority or in some of the world languages. When the language of instruction is a language of the members of the communities that are not in majority or a world language, the Macedonian language is studied as a separate subject and Macedonian will be used as language of instruction in at least two other subjects.
3. Elementary education as well as the education in the didactical and methodical subjects for secondary school teachers may be held in the languages of members of other communities that are not in majority in the Republic of Macedonia. The lectures in the institutions of higher education can be held in one of the world languages for certain study programmes of foreign languages, for parts of study programmes in which professors-guests from abroad take part and study programmes for which the lectures are held in the Macedonian language and in accordance with paragraph 2 of this Article. The institutions of higher education may offer that the lectures for the complete study programme are held in Macedonian language and in one of the world languages in parallel.
4. In the private institutions of higher education, the lectures can be held in the languages of members of the communities, which are not majority in the Republic of Macedonia or in foreign languages. When the lectures are held in the languages of members of the communities that are not majority in the Republic of Macedonia or in foreign language, the Macedonian language shall be studied as a separate subject and the lectures shall be held in Macedonian at least for another two subjects.
5. When the lectures are held in the languages of members of the communities that are not majority in the Republic of Macedonia, in accordance with paragraphs 2,

3 and 4 of this Article, the Macedonian language shall be studied as a separate subject and the lectures shall be held in Macedonian language and at least other two subjects of the study programme will be studied in Macedonian. The subjects shall be determined with the statute of the institution of higher education, which will determine the fund

of lectures, determined in the Rules of norms and standards for establishing the institution of higher education and realizing the activity of higher education.

6. In the state institutions of higher education, as part of determining the conditions at the competition for enrolment of students in the first year of studies, the universities shall provide equitable representation of citizens, who belong to the communities that are minorities in the Republic of Macedonia through an additional quota, determined by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia.'

5. The development of SEEU

In 2001-2002 when SEEU started we had about 950 students, about 95% Albanian speakers; you could not actually travel very easily from Skopje-Tetovo then because the motorway was not completed, there were many police and other road blocks, it was difficult for Macedonians and others travelling from Skopje and other parts of the region to actually get into the area. The foundation of SEEU and the continued non-recognition of the 'Tetovo University' was seen by a substantial section of the Albanian-speaking community as not going far enough, which meant that SEEU suffered its share of attacks, usually propaganda or invective, but occasionally physical. Many SEEU staff and others were made to feel uncomfortable in their support for the project. SEEU was highly dependent on international support: almost €40m were committed by the international community, of which the largest single donation was from the United States of America and the largest state donation outside that was from the Kingdom of The Netherlands. The European Commission donated approximately the same as The Netherlands, and smaller contributions were received from member states of the European Union and OSCE. But by far the greatest supporters throughout the period were the US and The Netherlands: we owe both countries a great debt.

SEEU is now a self-standing institution; we no longer have substantial international financial support. The main support that we have at the moment is through scholarships to try to address the problem of access by those from lower socio-economic groups, and again we are greatly indebted to The Netherlands because again they are one of the largest donors, along with OSI. The only other major international donation we have at the moment is as a result of a feasibility study carried by OECD in 2003 which led to the donation in 2006 of approximately €2.5m from the European Commission through the EAR for more buildings. The OECD review recommended a sum of €4m, which would have enabled us to do more in the area of business education to assist the developing economy, but the European Commission does not have the resources available for this purpose in Macedonia.

The student country of origin is 89% from Macedonia, 7% from Kosovo, 2% from Serbia and Montenegro excluding Kosovo, many from Presevo, the rest from Albania and from other countries, mainly returning diaspora, so we have people from Belgium, Sweden and so on who are children of diaspora who left Macedonia, Kosovo or Albania during difficult periods. We have a new three-year first cycle degree from this academic year with the Bologna Process being implemented over four years, we have master degrees, which started last October, and this year we are starting PhD programmes. We now have a Research Review which is in its third edition, so we are now much more active in research not just in teaching. The academic programmes are Law, Business Administration, Public Administration, Communication Sciences and Technologies, and Teacher Training. Apart from Teacher Training and Public

Administration you can see how this fits into a classic description of a private university outside the state sector. But we always said that we are interested in improving the access of the Albanian population to Public Administration and to improve secondary education for Albanian schools and teachers. So, Public Administration and Teacher Training which are not typical of the classic private university are part of our curriculum.

Admission to the first cycle is dependent on our resources. We have 'x' groups in Albanian language, 'y' groups in Macedonian language depending on our resources to teach in a subject. Generally this leads to about 75% Albanian speaking and 25% Macedonian speaking students, not based on political discrimination, quotas or anything of that kind, although there are some courses where there are more Macedonian-speakers and some where there are more Albanian-speakers. All students learn local languages so Albanian speakers learn Macedonian and for the first time ever in Macedonia, Macedonians officially learn Albanian. Hardly any Macedonian-speakers spoke Albanian; now they can speak in Albanian they are mixing socially, in cafés, talking to each other and so on and they are learning the English language. As mentioned above, the Law on Higher Education still requires the teaching of the Macedonian language and at least two subjects in each faculty to be taught in the Macedonian language.

There are problems of teaching in the Albanian language, first of all very scarce staff resources; for example our university employs most of the PhD holders in law in this country (Kosovo) as well as in Macedonia. So a lot of professors from the University of Prishtina, who are PhD holders, are teaching in our university. Of course they are part time but we have full time people too. We have relatively few modern internationally-referenced textbooks in Albanian or in Macedonian. Actually Albanian is a more widely spoken language than Macedonian, so there is more access to information in Albanian than there is in Macedonian. There are few Internet resources in Albanian; there are hardly any periodical resources in Albanian. There are some problems with language and terminology; as for translations, we heard during the Forum about the problem of translation from Italian to German to English from our colleague from Bolzano but from Albanian, or from Albanian to Macedonian, or English to Macedonian or English to Albanian is quite difficult. Some argue that Albanian is becoming corrupted in some sense: English words are incorporated with some changes into Albanian which purist Albanian speakers say are not correct, for example 'menixhmënt' (management) is not really Albanian but 'Alblish' according to these experts. And the requirement to teach also in Macedonian, which is the legal requirement, or employ Macedonian speaking staff, adds to the cost and hence to the tuition fee where the state does not support the effort. The only support from the state was to give the original site and to give a few scholarships otherwise the state provides no funds to support our university, despite the provisions of the Ohrid framework agreement.

6. Flexible Use of Languages

The Council of Europe's *Common European Framework* for language learning provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe. It describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively. The description also covers the cultural context in which language is set. This provided the basis for the new approach to language learning in SEEU. Given the objectives of the *Framework*, and in accordance with the Law, SEEU requires students to have a solid knowledge of Albanian and Macedonian languages. This helps the process of integration of students, and consolidate linguistic and cultural diversity, one of the greatest strengths and defining characteristics of SEEU. SEEU's work allows students from both major language groups to follow higher education of a

quality comparable to western institutions.

The legal basis for SEEU's language policy is paragraph 4 of revised Article 95 of the Law on Higher Education, which is essentially unchanged from 2000. The concept of a 'flexible approach' to language use was adopted by SEEU during 2002-2003^d, as the policy of 'flexible use of languages' which dates back to Council of Europe Committee of Ministers Recommendation R(98)6 concerning modern languages. The Recommendation encourages teaching programmes at all levels that use a flexible approach, taking into account the different Conventions already discussed. The Recommendation promotes the genuine intercultural outlook encouraged by bilingual and bicultural education, and points to the need for adequate numbers of suitably trained language teachers. The 'flexible language policies' are also mentioned in Article 5.3 of Council of Ministers Recommendation R (98)3 on access to higher education.

The policy is applied to all the first year and most second year of the first cycle i.e. the Bachelors degree of the new 3+2 Bologna process curriculum. But it is not understood by everybody. Some members of the local diplomatic community who came to SEEU had obviously never read the Convention or Recommendations, which we found astounding, and so we had to explain what they were. Now they understand because we have told them a lot about it.

Whatever the policy adopted, the curriculum must pass the scrutiny of the Licensing and Accreditation Board of the Republic of Macedonia, since courses which do not convey required professional competences will not be acceptable for recognition of diplomas. Successful completion of a higher education programme in the Republic of Macedonia, as in other neighbouring countries, has hitherto depended on the ability to learn facts and to be able to repeat them in a written examination, rather than on the acquisition of competences including language competence. Ongoing adjustments to curricula consequent on adopting '3 plus 2' instead of '4 plus 1' first and second cycles from October 2005 are almost certainly necessary if the correct balance is to be drawn between learning professional subjects and language skills.

7. The shift to English

It is obvious to all that given the high level of competition in the new marketplace of higher education from systems originating outside the SEE region, in particular from the United States, and the relatively poor funding of state education, the only way in which a student can achieve personal goals which include a high standard of living is to have a good command of an international language, in practice the English language. It is recognised that success in the modern world depends in most subjects, apart from those exclusively of domestic importance, on having a good command of a modern international language related to the subject discipline. It is not only for professional reasons. The European Union takes the view that learning to communicate in common languages helps to tackle xenophobia and ultra-nationalist backlashes as a primary obstacle to European mobility and integration, and as a major threat to European stability and to the healthy functioning of democracy.

Whether this means that the actual teaching has to be carried out only in English is another question entirely. We started the university with mandatory courses for all students in the English language but very few lectures in English because hardly anybody could teach in English and few students 'knew' enough English to understand them or the materials in the Library, a significant number of which were donated from the US. The records of the early meetings of the International Foundation which established SEEU show a tendency by some members to follow the 'American University' model as seen in countries such as Bulgaria and

Kyrgyzstan - and indeed now in Kosovo – even to the extent of one member recommending denying graduation to anyone not fully competent in English. However, in the end this was not adopted as it was obviously impractical given the mission of SEEU and the ‘clientele’ who would be studying with us.

SEEU takes the view that it does not necessarily aid the economic and social development of the country or the region to attempt to exclude local languages from the teaching process, as is the case in some private providers, not least because as yet there is an inadequate cadre of senior professors able to teach in English. The Law envisages either teaching in the ‘languages of the communities,’ in practice Albanian, or in foreign languages. A mixed approach means that Macedonian must also be studied. The flexible use policy therefore has high cost. The aim now is more practical: it is to raise students to what is called level B2 in the Council of Europe language documentation, as described on the Council’s website. From that we progress, as more staff are trained or recruited or competent in English, with major staff development costs funded mainly by USAID, not by the European Union, to level C1, C2 users in some subjects in later years of first cycle but more importantly at second cycle, that is master’s degree in ‘private sector subjects’ (business, computing). However, achieving this is not based solely on the number of hours of instruction undertaken at SEEU: many students arrive at SEEU having already reached A1 or A2 level. It is not the University’s sole responsibility to provide language tuition within the Common Framework: as this makes clear, it is necessary for common language learning *to be encouraged, put on an organised footing and financed at all levels of education by the competent bodies*. So the state also has a responsibility to encourage and finance language learning at all levels. One contribution of SEEU to this, with government financial support, is to help with the provision of well-trained teachers in Albanian-language schools. SEEU also has the right to expect the government to help with the costs of providing high level language tuition in the national interest but so far this has not happened.

We maintain the stress on local languages of Albanian and Macedonian in public sector subjects for good reason. If we graduate, as we will, 500 lawyers, 400 of them are going to work in Macedonian legal practice. There is no point whatever in them knowing English to a high level and not knowing enough Macedonian and Albanian. So they have to be trained properly in local languages. And for Public Administration it is the same: if Albanians are going to have access to Public Administration in Macedonia they have to learn Macedonian because that is the top official language of the state. And in Pedagogy if a graduate is going to teach children in an Albanian school he or she has to be able to speak and write Albanian properly. It is astonishing to me, but not to my colleagues at SEEU, how few students come prepared to university with good speaking and writing knowledge even of Albanian.

8. Further steps

Now in the next year we are expecting changes in the law, by the time this paper is published we will have had, as is often the case in this part of the world, another round of elections in Macedonia so we have another government, another parliament later in the year. In the new Law on Higher Education we hope to see greater detail of implementation of the Bologna process, greater autonomy provided to the universities, more flexibility of approach. Particularly we think we should not be compelled to teach in the Macedonian language, that should be a consensus between the people. Do you want to learn the Macedonian language? Of course you do, because as explained if you are going to work in a local community you ought to be able to speak both languages.

The ground is prepared for a possible next step if the Law is further liberalised during the course of 2006-2007. It is possible to envisage a one or two year foundation programme

as part of the Macedonian National Qualifications Framework in which students concentrate on gaining language, IT and other generic skills leading to entry to or completion of Year 1 of the three-year first cycle degree, depending on ability and performance. After that, professional subjects could be taught in English. However, the current Law is not flexible enough to allow study programmes to be responsive to student needs. As it is, now all students entering SEEU must take the TOEFL exam (Pre-TOEFL) in order to enrol. The results represent a proportion of the points required for entry. For prospective students in all faculties a minimum score of 300 is required (Pre-TOEFL has a maximum score of 500). In addition, the results of the TOEFL score will be used to place students in the appropriate Basic Skills in English (BSE) course. Given that the various Faculties at SEEU have different requirements in terms of students’ knowledge of English, minimum scores from 300-400 points are required. There are not absolute guidelines for the admission of students based on Pre-TOEFL, so in practice, SEEU may choose to vary these requirements in the light of demand. It allows the gradual introduction of teaching in English in the third year of the first cycle, and in the second cycle in Business Administration and Computing, with some availability of teaching in English in Law (Public and Private International Law including European Law) and Public Administration (related to accession to the European Union). This implies a strategic restructuring of basic and special purposes English courses.

9. Conclusion

Issues of language are of fundamental importance to the different communities which make up countries in the SEE Region. By preserving and protecting their use in higher education while opening up possibilities for students to learn English as a medium of international communication, institutions can enhance the prospects for employment and personal development of their students. However, it is necessary that laws recognise this. While the current Kosovo-UNMIK and draft Bosnia & Herzegovina legislation place no obstacles in the path of these developments, there is a long way to go before either country is in a position to realise them. By contrast, the Macedonian law is still somewhat restrictive and arguably needs further refinement if the goals established by SEEU are to be fully achieved and disseminated to other parts of the Macedonian higher education system.

SEEU indeed provides a model, but the model is difficult to replicate unless both legal and economic conditions allow. And I end as I began: the three elements: good leadership, local support and adequate financing, are essential to the success of any enterprise of this sort. In my view, any form of ‘imposed solution’ will not work.

Endnotes

- a OECD: SEEU: Report of a Feasibility Study (2004).
- b European Universities Association (EUA): Report of Institutional Review of SEEU (2005).
- c CIA World Factbook 2005: Macedonia.
- d This followed meetings between the Rector and other SEEU staff with the relevant officials of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg,