



HORIZONTAL FACILITY FOR WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

Strengthening the Protection of National Minorities in Serbia

Report

**on curricula and standards provisions as far as the information to be provided
about the national minorities in the Republic of Serbia**

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1. Introduction: Mandate, scope, main questions, key terms and sources

1.1. Mandate

The joint initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Union “Horizontal Facility for Western Balkans and Turkey” aims at assisting beneficiaries in South-East Europe and Turkey to comply with Council of Europe standards and the European Union acquirements in the framework of the enlargement process. Its activities are based on the conclusions and recommendations of the Council of Europe’s monitoring bodies. One of the objectives of this initiative is to “raise awareness about national minorities, their rights and promote tolerance”.¹ According to this objective the expected result is to enhance the capacity of the authorities to ensure an appropriate presentation of national minorities in education and to increase the knowledge of the general public on national minorities in Serbia.² Consequently, the following report commissioned within the framework of the mentioned action, aims at assisting the Serbian authorities in improving educational background necessary for the change of general attitude of general public toward national and other minorities in the society as a whole. The approach to the analysis of current curricula and standards in primary (compulsory) and secondary education is based on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (particularly the Article 4. Paragraph 2³; Article 6 Paragraph 1⁴; Article 12 Paragraph 1⁵), The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and Explanatory Report (particularly the Article 7.3 on *Promotion of mutual respect and understanding between linguistic groups*⁶ and Article 8.1. on *teaching of the official language(s) of the State without prejudice*⁷), as well as other Council of Europe recommendations, primarily for the history teaching.⁸

¹ <https://rm.coe.int/strengthening-the-protection-of-national-minorities-in-serbia/168071039c>

² Ibid.

³ The Parties undertake to adopt, where necessary, adequate measures in order to promote, in all areas of economic, social, political and cultural life, full and effective equality between persons belonging to a national minority and those belonging to the majority. In this respect, they shall take due account of the specific conditions of the persons belonging to national minorities.

⁴ The Parties shall encourage a spirit of tolerance and intercultural dialogue and take effective measures to promote mutual respect and understanding and co-operation among all persons living on their territory, irrespective of those persons’ ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, in particular in the fields of education, culture and the media.

⁵ The Parties shall, where appropriate, take measures in the fields of education and research to foster knowledge of the culture, history, language and religion of their national minorities and of the majority.

⁶ The Parties undertake to promote, by appropriate measures, mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country and in particular the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to regional or minority languages among the objectives of education and training provided within their countries and encouragement of the mass media to pursue the same objective.

⁷ With regard to education, the Parties undertake, within the territory in which such languages are used, according to the situation of each of these languages, and without prejudice to the teaching of the official language(s) of the State: to make arrangements to ensure the teaching of the history and the culture which is reflected by the regional or minority language.

⁸ Recommendation Rec(2001)15 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on history teaching in twenty-first-century Europe; Recommendation 1880 (2009) History teaching in conflict and post conflict

1.2. Scope

The curricula and standards that are subject of the analysis and report are described below:

- curricula and standards for Serbian language and literature (1st -8th grades elementary school; 1st -4th grades gymnasium);
- curricula and standards for History (7th-8th grades elementary, 3rd-4th grades gymnasium and VET schools);
- curricula and standards for Geography (6th-8th grades elementary school, 2nd -4th grade gymnasium);
- curricula for The world around us (1st -2nd grades elementary school);
- curricula for Nature and society (3rd -4th grades elementary school);
- curricula and standards for Visual Arts (curricula and standards for 1st-8th grades elementary school; curricula for 1st -4th grades gymnasium) ;
- curricula and standards for Musical arts (curricula and standards for 1st -8th grades elementary school; curricula for 1st -4th grades gymnasium);
- curricula for Sociology (1st year gymnasium);
- curricula for Constitution (1st year gymnasium).

1.3. Current state of affairs

The education of minorities is adequately covered by the *Law on Education* in the Republic of Serbia (2017). The aims embedded into the law are also widely defined and applicable to the proclaimed values and attitudes inherent to democratic society.⁹ Specifically the Article 8 in Paragraphs, 13-16 address different issues that relate to the minorities as well, e.g. developing a sense of solidarity, understanding and constructive cooperation with others and cultivating friendship; developing competencies for understanding and respecting the rights of the child, human rights, civic freedoms and the ability to live in a democratically organized and just society; development and respect for racial, national, cultural, linguistic, religious, gender, gender and age equality, tolerance and respect for diversity; and especially „developing personal and national identity, developing awareness and feeling of belonging to the Republic of Serbia, respecting and nurturing the Serbian language and mother tongue, tradition and culture of the Serbian people and national minorities, developing interculturality, respecting and preserving national and world cultural heritage.“ The Article 9 dedicated to the outcomes of the education in general, in Paragraphs 11 and 15 aims at the respect of human rights, cultural and social diversity, as well as active participation in societal processes and activities. The Article 110 of the *Law on Education* deliberately prohibits the discrimination „based on race, skin colour, ancestors, citizenship, migrant status or displaced person, nationality or ethnic origin, language, religious or political beliefs, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, wealth, social and cultural background, birth, genetic features, health status, developmental disabilities and disability, etc.“ Within the Article 112 the legislator predicted the prohibition of any kind of discriminatory or offensive behaviour towards the child, the pupil that insults someone’s reputation, honour, or dignity.

It is important to stress that the right of minorities to be educated in their own language and in school subjects essential for nurturing their identity and culture, constituted by the Law on

areas; Recommendation CM/Rec(2011)6 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on intercultural dialogue and the image of the other in history teaching.

⁹ Article 5 refers to the education on the language of minorities allowing members of national minorities to be educated in their own language and script, bilingually as well; Article 7, Paragraph 3 inter alia highlights the respect for the human rights and rights of every child, pupil and adult and respect for human dignity.

Education (Article 5) does not provide necessarily the recognition, participation and respect of minorities within the society. Therefore it is crucial to raise awareness among the most of population about their presence and role in the society and mutual state, their participation and contribution and participation in the state and society in the past and at present. It is crucial to create sensitivity for the respect of everybody's human rights and develop competences for intercultural dialogue. The need for this kind of action comes out of the condition that "the perception and understanding of Serbia as a multicultural and multilingual society seems not to be present in most part of the society at least outside of the AP of Vojvodina."¹⁰ Based on these findings the commissioned analysis focused on the selected curricula and educational standards crucial for the change of perception, the respect and acceptance of ethnic/national diversity and establishing adequate social cohesion in the Republic of Serbia. The main focus is put on the presence and general social visibility of national minorities, who consist according to the population census in 2011 16.7% of the overall population, within the framework of the system of education¹¹.

It is notable that some normative documents e.g. standards for the subject history developed by The Institute for the evaluation, accepted by the National Council for Education and Ministry of Education, Science and Technological development of Republic of Serbia, are based on and refer to the specific recommendations on history teaching adopted by committees, or Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe.¹²

1.4. Key terms and sources used for the analysis (reviewed documents)

a) Key terms

Aim - a general, widely defined statement that determines the desired learning outcomes. It could be defined on general level (the Law), or specific (for the subject, grade, or teaching unit).

Tasks – concrete educational activities that lead to the fulfilment of the aim. The tasks belong to the former concept of education and are integral part of the curricula. By the introduced changes within the new concept of curricula design they are replaced by the outcomes.

Outcomes - clearly defined claims about everything that pupil is expected to know, understand, do, show or apply at the end of a particular period in which the educational process lasts (time, class, grade). Outcomes are defined concretely and easily verifiable. By achieving outcomes, pupils gradually reach the standards that are planned for the end of the education cycle.

Subject curricula/program - is a document that consists of four parts: aims, tasks, or outcomes, the content planned to be achieved during a school year, and the instruction for the implementation of the program as the closing section. The **instruction for the implementation** is not standardized on

¹⁰ Report on the use of minority languages in relations with the public authorities in the Republic of Serbia, Prepared by Francesco Palermo, September 2017, Council of Europe, p.5.

¹¹ <http://pod2.stat.gov.rs/ObjavljenePublikacije/Popis2011/Nacionalna%20priпадnost-Ethnicity.pdf>, p.21 (03.03.2018.)

¹² Општи стандарди постигнућа за крај општег средњег и средњег стручног образовања и васпитања у делу општеобразовних предмета за предмет Историја, ЗВКОВ Београд 2015, 49.

general level. The instruction is an important part of the curricula, since it provides guidelines, and specific didactical strategies or information, not always identifiable in the content of teaching units.

Theme - a cluster consisted of several teaching units that make up a coherent educational entity.

Teaching unit – a single educational component that elaborates in detail certain phenomena or topic regularly organized to be learned or lectured during one school class.

Educational standards - measurable strictly defined and fixed descriptions of knowledge, skills and abilities that pupils need to achieve at the end of a particular education cycle. They are systematically and according to school plan developed throughout the entire education cycle so that they can eventually be used as a measure of the outcome achievement, i.e. achievements of pupils.

Standards are defined for each subject in compulsory education but not for every subject in secondary (the third cycle). The standards are structured from **domains** (areas/matters of specific school subject) within the subject. Each domain is consisted from numerous **descriptors**, which represent concrete knowledge, skills or abilities that pupils should perform or show at the end of the educational cycle. The standards are formulated on three levels (basic, medium and advanced). Basic level should be achieved by, at least 80% of pupils, medium by 50% and advanced by 20%.

Competences - unified and applicable knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes that train pupils for a quality life in society. They are built throughout the entire education process. Taking into account the lifelong learning strategy, the key competences are further upgraded after the end of formal education. The competences are divided into several groups: subject (general for the whole subject and specific that aim at precisely outlined and grouped skills, knowledge and values that lead to accomplishment of general competence); Cross-curricular defined to enable holistic approach in education and improve cohesion between different school subjects grouped around certain functional issues;¹³ Key or lifelong learning (eight) competences adopted by European Parliament and Council,¹⁴ but also included in the Law on Education of the Republic of Serbia.¹⁵ Among them, competence no. 6 (**Social and civic competences**: ability to participate effectively and constructively in one's social and working life and engage in active and democratic participation, especially in increasingly diverse societies.) relates directly to the issue of diverse societies. For the analysis, and especially follow up recommendations is very important Article 59 of the Law on Education that emphasizes the importance of the National Frame of education as the broad strategic document that gives guidelines for the compulsory and secondary education but also for the structure and development of subject curricula.¹⁶

Cycle - The elementary and secondary education consist from three educational cycles. The first one encloses grades 1-4 of elementary education, where certain school subjects are, following the developmental and cognitive abilities of the pupils, structured as integrated (World around us, Nature and Society). The second cycle encloses grades 5-8, is structured in a way that school subjects fully relate to the specific sciences, social studies and humanities (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, History, and Geography) and encircles the elementary (compulsory) education. The third cycle relates to the secondary education. Some of the standards and curricula are analysed according to this division.

¹³ Embedded into the Law on Education in the Article 12.

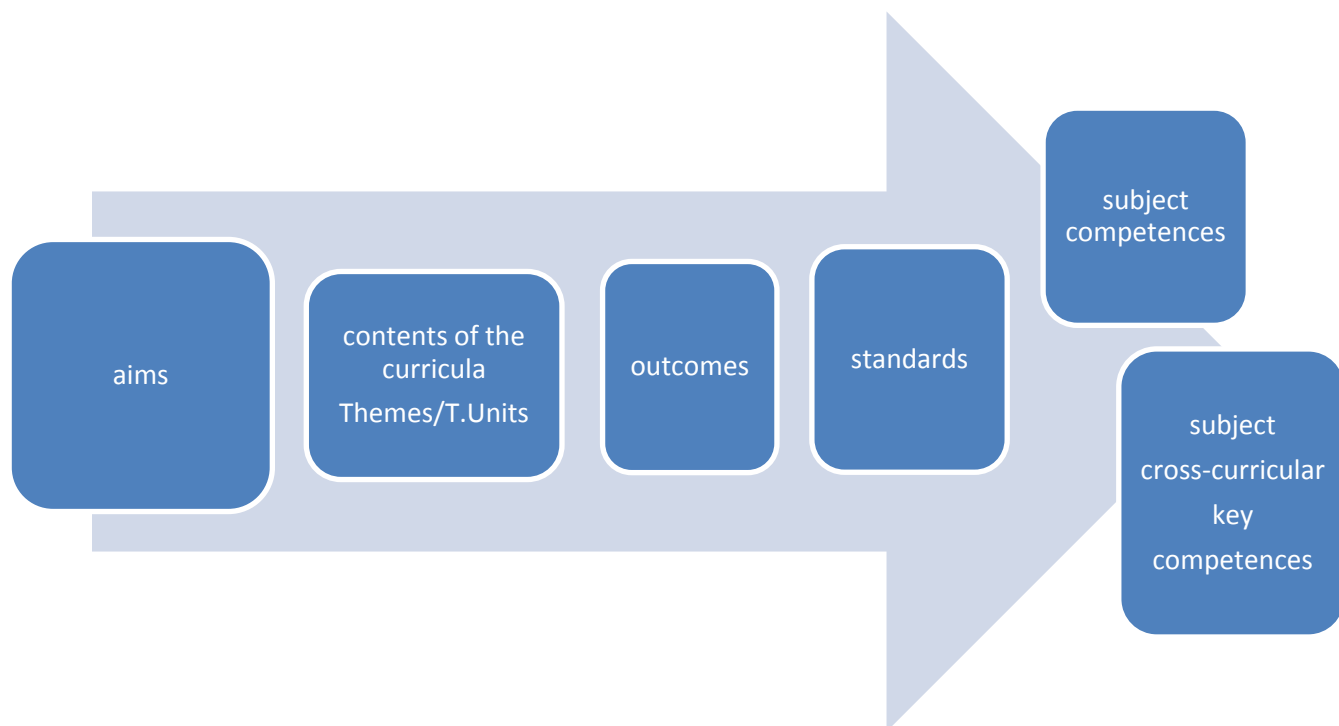
¹⁴ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32006H096>

¹⁵ The Article 11 of Law on Education

¹⁶ In the previous Law on Education of the Republic of Serbia (2013) the Article 74 articulated educational standards as the wider framework for deriving the subject curricula.

b) Structure and sequences in the process of education

The relation between specific sequences in the process of education (the graphic)



Explanation of the graphic

The aims of the education in general, and each subject specifically is set as the starting point, the guideline for the whole educational process. The accomplishment of the aim is concretized over the set of tasks, or measurable outcomes that should enable verification of the gained knowledge, developed skills or abilities and attitudes, planned by the curricula and embedded in the aim (of education and subject concurrently). The specific structured information, data, examples and sources enclosed in the curricula create the substance of the each school subject. The content of the curricula serves as the means for reaching planned outcomes and attainment of wider aim. The outcomes are used to quantify the gained knowledge, skills, abilities or attitudes at the end of lesson, theme, or grade. The standards as the instrument for testing at the end of educational cycle (end of compulsory education, or end of secondary education) provide on the state level measurable and concrete information what level of knowledge, skills and abilities pupils have acquired. The standards (if aiming at right issues in particular school subjects) could offer illustrative example of the level of knowledge scheduled by the curricula, and developed skills at certain age group in the whole state. The final exam at the end of compulsory education organized for the all pupils in Serbia (small Matura) is designed and structured according to the educational standards. Tests for the final exam are translated into languages of national minorities.

By achieving outcomes, educational standards and aims, pupils are simultaneously and continually developing either subject, cross-curricular or key competences that empower them to act and participate in everyday societal activities, typical or unexpected circumstances.

Unlike the outcomes and standards, competences are open and limitless. Pupils and later citizens can permanently improve, upgrade and develop the level of their competence in different fields of life mainly defined by the Key competences.

c) The Sources

The analysed sources on which this report is based are: curricula of particular subjects, accompanying educational standards, and selected subject competences.¹⁷ The list of the analysed subjects (and the selection of grades included in the examination) was agreed with the representatives of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological development of the Republic of Serbia. The chosen subjects are: Serbian language and literature, The World around Us, The nature and society, Visual arts, Musical arts, History, Geography, Sociology, and Constitution. Data from teachers' manual *Key terms for the subject History in primary (compulsory) education* is enclosed to this report.¹⁸ The majority of the reviewed material consisted of the old curricula structured according to the principles of previous educational framework that includes aims and specific tasks for each grade. The exceptions are curricula for the 5th grade which are designed to introduce the new concept based on aims and outcomes (which have replaced the tasks) that should relate to the educational standards. All subject curricula that will be revised in the future will follow the concept of education based on the learning outcomes. The old concept, still in use will be replaced successively from September 2018 (1st grade; 5th grade of elementary schools).

During the analysis of the sources in certain situations it was difficult, when not specifically addressed to the issue of minorities, to distinguish the features related to the history, culture or identity of national minorities from general overview and general formulations regarding the human rights or societal diversity. In some cases the information contained in sources about the national minorities were entwined with the matters related to the neighbouring states and nations. Since the history of national minorities living today in the Republic of Serbia is, due to historical context, overlapping with the history of bordering states and region, it was difficult to distinguish and make clear division between these two phenomena – history of national minorities and history of neighbouring states.

This report will be complemented with a report containing the research to what extent and how national minorities are represented in Serbian textbooks.

2. Results/findings of the analysis of chosen subjects for the compulsory education

2.1. The curricula for elementary schools

¹⁷ The analysis also refers to the new curricula for the 5th grade (in use from September 2018) which became official on 30 October 2017 after publishing in the Official gazette ("Sluzbeni glasnik").

¹⁸ *Кључни појмови за крај обавезног образовања Историја*, Приручник за наставнике, Завод за вредновање квалитета образовања и васпитања, Београд 2008.

2.1.a. The First cycle:

The introductory statement, as the purpose of the curricula for the First and Second grade put in focus the key competences for the lifelong learning, including the development of cultural literacy and those attitudes that promote the respect toward the other, pupils are encouraged to build and nurture their identity, interests and they are enabled to take the active and responsible participation in democratic, economic, social, cultural life in the society.

The introductory part to the program includes general aims and tasks of which only one is directly referring to the issue of minorities (e.g. task no. 5 aims at development of belonging to the own nation and state of Serbia, the cherishing of “Serbian tradition” and culture, as well as the tradition and culture of *national minorities*.) Several tasks (no. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12) are indirectly addressing the issues that might include the rights of minorities, and particularly attitudes toward them in wider social, cultural and educational context (e.g. respect of children, human and citizen rights; accepting values of joint life, respect of pluralistic values and fostering personal system of values and attitudes rooted in the respect for the diversity and benefit for everybody, and last but not least the development of interest and openness toward “the culture of traditional churches and religious communities, as well as ethnic and religious tolerance, strengthening the trust among children and preventing behaviour that constrain someone’s right to be different”).

a) Serbian language and literature

The aim of the programme for the first and second grade doesn’t tackle the issue of minorities. Besides gaining basic skills in writing, reading and verbalizing thoughts, one of the components of the aim includes reading/learning selected literary works from Serbian and world written heritage. The general tasks, as functional descriptors within the subject, are defined without any ethnic, social or intercultural reference. Only the last two tasks (no. 20 and 21) are addressing general attitudes in terms of “work accordingly to humanistic values, truthfulness, solidarity and *other moral values*” (No 20) and the last task (No 21) targets “the development of *patriotic feelings* among pupils, and the education in the spirit of peace, *cultural relations* and cooperation among the people.”

In the instructions for the implementation of the program for the second grade the direction for learning the Latin script is formulated only within didactical framework, without any cultural context or explanation who, i.e. which national communities, ethnic minorities in Serbia are using Latin script as primary. There are no concrete tasks, or contents that are referring to the national minorities or development of intercultural dialogue, communication or competence.

The aim for the 3rd and 4th grade is more or less the same as for the first and second. It does not highlight any intercultural dimension except the need to read and interpret literary works from Serbian and world literary heritage. Within the list of general tasks of learning Serbian language and literature, one specific addresses the attitude, i.e. showing respect, toward cultural heritage and need for its cherishing and further improvement. The rest of the tasks remain the same as in the lists developed for the 1st and 2nd grade.

The whole section of the program is dedicated to languages of certain national minorities. This part considers exclusively students who are members of a particular national minority. It does not have intercultural dimension, and does not influence the development of intercultural competence of pupils belonging to the majority.

b) The World around us

Aim and tasks are cumulated in huge cluster of statements specifying knowledge, abilities and skills which enables pupil's cognitive, physical, social and creative development. Among them it is stated that pupils should develop attitudes and values of the milieu in which they grow up, as well as those of wider social community (it is difficult to establish whether this part of the aim has any recognizable connotation related to the acceptance and respect toward other ethnic communities and national minorities). Another part of the same aim envisages interactive social activities that encourage pupils to "develop their individuality" but also to respect the diversity and rights of the "other", learning at the next stage, to live together. The implementation of learned would "create responsible attitude of pupils toward themselves and world around them, including successful integration in modern flows of life."

Among operative tasks for the First grade (7) only one is aiming at "the creation of responsible attitude toward oneself, surrounding and respect of the other" without any specification on gender, confessional, social or ethnic background.

Analysing the contents, the curricula for the first grade includes the theme *Me and the Others*. The creators of the program planned 10 lessons for learning this specific matter. The theme targets the issue of diversity on general level, but the titles of teaching units listed in the program (specific topics for learning) show only the space and potential for multicultural approach, recognizing and accepting the diversity including cultural differences. The contents of this theme deal with general phenomena, like indulging own needs and emotions respecting the needs and emotions of the other; groups of people in surrounding and my place within (family, relatives, neighbours, peers, fellow citizens, etc.). The teaching unit *Holidays and customs*, doesn't specifically name whether it involves only Serbian holidays and tradition, or the tradition and customs of national minorities in Serbia as well. The topic Children rights with particular target on respect of diversity and the rights of the "other" should include the awareness about the existence of national minorities and their presence in Serbian society. In the second grade the theme *Where people live* is planned to be learned in 15 lessons. Two topics could indirectly include the issue of minorities (Life in the community; Principles of behaviour in the group). Both teaching units are focused on the relations and acceptable ways of communication, the role, rights and responsibilities of individuals within the group. The approach to the issue of customs, traditions and holidays is elevated to another level, by comparison between practicing the tradition in the past and today.

Approach to teaching this subject according to the instructions for the implementation of the program is twofold. It supports explicitly formulated aims as guidelines and implicit aims constructed upon the structure of the program and different approach to topics and contents. Formulated in such a way aims allow the holistic upbringing of pupils "simultaneously increasing their intellectual abilities and practical skills, values and attitudes." The authors of the instruction

declared that the implicit aims should be implemented through specific functional tasks and activities that could lead to development of attitudes from the field of ecology, health, technology and democracy (and that should implicitly include the respect and acceptance of diversity and therefore national or any other kind of minority or different group).

c) The Nature and the Society

General aim of the subject that is actually continuation of the subject *The World around us*, is that pupils should become familiar with natural and social surroundings and develop abilities for responsible life in that kind of environment. Among nine tasks of the subject three, broadly defined, tasks could be indirectly linked to the development of certain competences and attitudes related to the matter of our interest. Task no. 2 aims at developing basic terms about natural and social environment; task no. 6 instructs integration of empirical and scientific knowledge into the system of terms from the field of nature and society; no. 8 adopting civilization legacy and learning the possibility of their preservation, rational use and upgrade.

On the list of functional tasks for the 3rd grade two of them could, if they are properly contextualized, lead to the acceptance of diversity and different groups without prejudices: no. 8 understanding and valuing similarities and differences among individuals and groups; no. 10 developing responsible attitude toward self, surrounding and cultural heritage.

Contents of the program cover different themes from the field of social sciences and humanities. The theme *Our heritage* develops elementary historical and critical thinking including the nurturing of historical heritage. Within this theme one subtopic is *Then and now* in which pupils should learn about the personal and social environment including. The teaching units in this subtopic cover determination of closer and farther past within the family, school, place of birth, and place of living. Even though not specified this teaching unit could be differently taught taking into account socio-cultural setting where pupils live. It has been explained in the instructions for the implementation that children should actively connect with tradition through different material objects presented in ethnological and ethnographic exhibitions. This instruction is also given without any direct suggestion about multicultural aspects of the matter.

The second teaching unit *My hometown/homeland and its past* (cultural and socio-political) deals with issues of everyday life, but also traditional holidays, celebrations, dances...). The third teaching unit *Characters from our folk poems, stories, fairy tales*, refers to the historical and topographical dimension. The way the title of this teaching unit is formulated leaves dilemma to whom the pronoun "our" in ethnical term denotes. The last one *Famous people from our community/district*¹⁹ should introduce to the pupils those people who left important trail in the society, culture, education, science. It is not particularly mentioned, but this teaching unit leaves space for the introduction of the people of different ethnical origin and members of national minorities important for certain community. It is also unclear whether "our community" has local or general-state connotation.

¹⁹ It is difficult to translate precisely the term "kraj" from Serbian language, used in the curricula since it has various meanings, from local to more regional. It is not clear what authors of the program have considered, therefore this analysis refers to two terms which could be closest to the proper meaning.

In the instructions for the implementation of the program authors are not specific what they consider by learning “own” cultural heritage, material and spiritual tradition, especially if we take in consideration multicultural social setting.

The last theme in this, social, part of the program *Human activity* introduces several teaching units that might include the issue of multicultural society and phenomenon of national or any other social, gender, cultural minority. The teaching unit *Population of our district/region/state* has specific focus on similarities, differences and cohabitation. It is stated in the instructions for the implementation of the program that teachers should stress the necessity for obeying the rules in society, and especially respect of differences that allow people to live together. Another teaching unit *Children’s rights, rules in the group* highlights knowing, respecting and living according to the rules in the group/society. It is not indicated that this topic raises awareness about the minority rights as well, but that issue could be, if adequately contextualized, one of the main learning outcomes of this lesson.

In the 4th grade within the theme *My homeland/country as the part of the World*, pupils learn geographical position and historical development of Serbian state including the population. Since the program has been adopted before 2006 and is still in use, it considers the position of Serbia within the federal state Serbia and Montenegro. Specific teaching unit *The Population of Serbia* contains the natural flow of population, but also the structure considering age, education, linguistic, national and religious components. This teaching unit is the crucial in informing the pupils belonging to the majority about different groups in the whole society, including national minorities. Another teaching unit *Creating democratic relationships* allows pupils to learn regulations and relations between the state and citizens, ensuring the equal rights for all. This topic could also tackle the issue of minorities, and their rights, although it is not specifically denoted in the program. Particularly important is the teaching unit *Preservation of national identity and embedding into the world cultural heritage*. Authors have planned this topic for nurturing national identity, but also promoting tolerance and raising awareness of belonging to multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-confessional world. The last but not least topic in this section is *We are the children of one World* where pupils are introduced to the Convention of child rights and institutions like UN, UNICEF, Council of Europe, etc. In the instructions for the implementation authors are underlying the significance of this topic that should develop the sense of belonging to the Republic of Serbia to each pupil no matter of ethnic, national, or confessional background.

The theme *Look into the past* introduces basics of historical thinking, knowledge of chronology, orientation in time and space. It includes historical overview of Serbian nation and state within the teaching unit *The History of the Serbs*. The historical framework includes the period that starts with the migration of the Serbs in the early middle ages, with the instruction that pupils should be informed about the most important events from the national (Serbian) history. The instruction specifically mentions The First and the Second Serbian uprising against the Ottomans at the beginning of the 19th century. The contextualization with the global history is planned to be accomplished over the content from the history of the 20th century (First and Second World War). It is suggested that historical sources should be included in the teaching process as the tool for creating the objective overview on the past.

The program does not refer to the history of the members of national minorities, or their relations with Serbian people in the past. In the instruction for the implementation authors stressed that teachers, when teaching about medieval history, should focus on “the life of the people in the middle ages on the territory of Serbia.” It is not certain whether they thought about the territory of Serbian state in the past or within the current boundaries, since the modern and historical phenomena (state) don’t correspond. The other instruction is that pupils should get to know important events from “the national past”. It is not precise whether the national connotation considers only Serbian element, or it might refer to other nationalities/national minorities living in Serbia today. The instruction does not explicate what and how teacher should teach this topic in multi-ethnic or multicultural classroom, if the accent is put only on national component of majority.

d) Musical arts

Among aims of learning Musical arts no. 3 is directly pointing at development of sensibility for musical values through introduction of art tradition and culture of *own and other nations*. According to that the task no. 4 of the subject, prescribes introduction of traditional and artistic music of own and other nations.

Among operative tasks for the second grade, no. 4 are generally consisted of music performances, folk and traditional singing and artistic music, dances/plays. The contents of the program contains in general, performing of music, singing folk / traditional and artistic music. In the instructions for the implementation of the program it is advised to bind with the contents of other subjects, e.g. World around us, and particularly topics on holidays and customs, birthplace and motherland. In the instruction for the implementation of the program one of the main ideas is that the teacher take care of inclusion of children’s singing or performance of folk songs, adequate songs of *other nations*, as well as songs of contemporary composers. In the list of recommended songs and tunes for singing/listening two that are singled out belong to national minorities (Dances from Zeta, and Wallachian dance). In the 3rd and 4th grade within the list of functional tasks are performing and listening to the musical works of composed and folk music. It is not indicated if the authors of the program have scheduled any specific folk tradition, beside Serbian (there is no reference to folk tradition of other national minorities in Serbia in the first cycle of education). Among recommended songs for singing one is from Montenegro. At this point it must be stressed that this program dates from the time of joint state Serbia and Montenegro which disintegrated in 2006.

e) Visual arts

The aim of the subject is to encourage and develop creative thinking of pupils and their actions in *accordance with the democratic determination* of society and profile of the teaching subject. Among 11 tasks planned for this subject 2 are indirectly reflecting upon social issues. The task no. 3 envisages creation of conditions for understanding the laws of nature and, vaguely formulated - social phenomena, which might include respect of diversity and acceptance of national minorities. On the other hand, the task no. 8 specifies creation of interest and need for visit of exhibitions, galleries, museums (which could show and collect artistic treasure without any ethnic, or cultural definition) and preservation of the cultural heritage (that might include the cultural tradition of own and other nationalities, both material and non-material heritage). In the section Contents of

the program, one instruction advises teachers “to make the choice of art works and cultural monuments according to the contents of the program.” Since it is not precisely defined, it stays unclear whether cultural monuments and art works include those of national minorities or not. Furthermore, it has been advised to teachers to combine the play as the education method with the selected contents in order to create the conditions for “pupil’s emancipation”. It is again not clear if emancipation considers the liberation from biased beliefs, prejudices and stereotypes, especially toward “the other”. Although included in the program the topic *Heraldry* does not connect pupils with the coat of arms of state or any nation. Instead it is linked with computers, marketing (brands), logos, etc.

In 3rd grade among functional tasks, one is dedicated to the creation of conditions for the raising awareness about the need for preserving the natural as well as cultural environment. Although it is not specified *cultural environment* should include diverse cultural heritage without exception. The theme in the program *Art works and cultural monuments* directly addresses cultural heritage. Although not clear at the first glance the theme *Ornaments* is represented in instructions for the implementation of the program as the potential instrument for the development of intercultural competences. Although is the emphasis put on visual and artistic and not cultural substance, the authors of the program stressed that this theme could be used for introduction of some artistic and ethnographic heritage from close socio-cultural surrounding. Even though it is not explicitly put in the program, in some multicultural settings this topic could include diverse cultural heritage belonging to national minorities.

2.1. b. The Second Cycle

a) Serbian language and literature

The program is restructured and redesigned according to the new format. The tasks are replaced by educational outcomes. Broadly defined aim of the subject outlines the significance of the language in the national culture and construction of national identity. The authors declared that among other matters, the focus should be put on reading and interpreting literary works from Serbian and world heritage. Consequently, this could enable introduction of literary works belonging to the cultural heritage of national minorities as well. The outcomes are defined to support the development of critical thinking but also fostering “national values” and “nurturing Serbian cultural and historical tradition”. The contents of the subject referring to the Serbian and former Yugoslav cultural and linguistic framework promote mostly Serbian authors. The only place in the program where teachers could add other works and writers is part of the reading list, where is recommended to include one author from the local milieu, and this could have intercultural dimension only within the multicultural communities.

In the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade the curricula for Serbian language and literature still contain the old structure and includes the general aims and tasks that were adopted for the first cycle. The list of functional tasks per class (6th, 7th, and 8th) does not contain any that could lead toward the introduction of cultural, literary or linguistic tradition of national minorities in Serbia. The reading list contains some authors belonging to nationalities minorities in Serbia today (e.g. Ferenc Molnar, Ana Frank). Although not directly addressing to the issue of national minorities, the functional task

no. 2 in the program for the 8th grade advocates pupils to develop positive attitude toward dialects (of Serbian language) from different parts of Serbian cultural space. This could lead to the introduction of different cultural and linguistic traditions in Serbia or region, where people belonging to the Serbian nation are in the legal status of national minority in bordering countries.

Among many titles on the reading list for the 8th grade there is a collection of novels of writer Ivo Andrić. One of the novels (not listed in the program, but usually used for reading and analysis by teachers) „The Children“, vividly explains intercultural dimension among the children and moral dilemmas toward the peers belonging to different national or religious communities. In the theme *Linguistic culture*, one of the contents includes the topic *Discussion* that should engage pupils in the debate about objective and biased approach to information and propaganda. This topic could include the attitude toward “the other” including the national minorities.

b) Geography

Aim of the subject suggests that learning geography should enable pupils to create “real and correct image of the World as the entity” and specifically “the place and the role of our state in the world”.

The list of general tasks of the subject consist of 16 descriptors. No. 7 focuses on creating knowledge about basic terms on population, settlements, economy; no. 8 understanding the influence of natural and social agents on the development and placement of the population, settlements and branches of economy; no. 11 introducing the role and significance of international organizations for solving economic, social, cultural and humanitarian issues in contemporary world; no. 14 developing tolerance, national, European and world identity.

The specific tasks for the 6th grade also include descriptors that might refer to the perception and image of the national minorities in the Republic of Serbia. No. 5 is related to the general task no. 7; no. 9 in relation to general task no. 11; no 13. advocates that pupils should have the feeling of belonging to the own family, nation and culture, to know the tradition and participate in its preservation; no. 14. To know and respect the tradition and identity of other nations, communities and social groups. The last one is the only task that is directly and actively creates the affirmative attitude toward “the other”, including national minorities.

Within the contents for the 6th grade, the theme *Regional geography of Europe* contains the subtheme *The countries on the Balkan peninsula*, where pupils should get the basic knowledge on geographic, natural and socio-economic position of Serbia and other countries in the region. The instruction for the implementation of the program advises teachers to highlight the necessity for cooperation between the countries and “all integration processes in the region, Europe and world, as well as the need for the respect of diversity and tolerance at all levels”. This instruction is particularly important since it refers to different groups of the society, including national minorities.

The program for the 8th grade is dedicated to the geography of the Republic of Serbia. The functional tasks include specific activities and skills that are important for raising awareness about the rights and social position, participation and cultural tradition of national minorities in Serbia.

The task no. 3. Instructs pupils to “implement gained knowledges in everyday life in order to understand and follow socio-geographical phenomena, processes and relations in our country, on the Balkans, in Europe and the world”; no. 7 “to own the sense of social belonging and commitment to own nation and culture, and therefore actively contribute to protection and cherishing of national and cultural identity.” This task still does not support any intercultural dimension and expresses only self-respect and ethnocentric position, no matter if it belongs to the majority or minority. No. 8. “to develop mutual respect, as well as cooperation and solidarity between the members of different social, ethnic and cultural groups contributing to the social cohesion.” This task is the one that actually supports intercultural dialogue and relations, with specific result in implementing actions that affirm diversity, but also cohesion within the society. The task no. 9 “to support processes of international integration of “our” state” actually reinforces the European perspective of accession and consequently this system of values based upon the respect of human rights and diversity.

Analysing the contents of the program for the 8th grade several themes are singled out. The theme *Population and the settlements in Serbia*, expects that pupils should learn about the basic demographic terms and phenomena, but also the structure of the population in Serbia (biological/gender, national/ethnic, cultural, educational, socio-economic, religious). In the instructions for the implementation of the program authors have underpinned that this matter could be associated with similar topics from other school subjects. The aim of this correlation is “raising awareness about necessity of common life of different nations”, which brings into the focus the members of national minorities and ethnic communities in Serbia. Teaching unit *Nations and ethnic communities in Serbia* is devoted to learning about different ethnic groups that make national minorities in Serbia. The theme *Native/local geography* enables pupils to learn different aspects of life and features of local environment and social milieu (includes population and economy). This theme could be particularly informative about the life, customs and participation of minorities, but only in multicultural areas. Although the theme *Serbs outside Serbia* deals with the Serbian diaspora it could be used as the model for invert perspective regarding the national minorities in Serbia that have motherland somewhere else. The last theme *Serbia in modern integration processes* should provide the explanation and point out the significance of accession to EU, as well as regional cross-border cooperation. The specific accent could be put on the position and status of national minorities in Serbia and region according to European standards.

d) History

In the analysed curricula for 7th and 8th grade of the subject History, there are not many references to national minorities. The particular historical issue of joint life in the common state of Yugoslavia, between two world wars, and after the Second World War makes this task more difficult, vague and it is, by final outcomes, partly inaccurate.

The aim is directed mostly to construct functional skills, critical thinking and competences. Inter alia learning history should help pupils to develop historical consciousness and humanistic education. Finally the main idea is to create national and European identity as well as the spirit of tolerance. Even though, according to task of learning history, pupils should understand historical events, processes and phenomena in national and wider general framework, the issue of national

minorities as the part of national, regional or even global history is not mentioned as distinguished and important phenomenon.

The functional tasks for the 7th grade include general guidelines, inter alia learning about the development of civil rights and freedoms during the period of Modern history. Contents for 7th grade is divided into two domains: general history and national history/of Serbs (beyond state borders). The reflection upon other nations belonging to national minorities in Serbia today is integrated into "hidden" curricula within the themes *Serbian people under foreign rule from 16th till 18th century* (Habsburg and Ottoman Empire) and *Serbian states Serbia and Montenegro in the period of Modern history*. In the instruction for the implementation of program it is stressed that teachers should add content to the program from local history, which could clarify and bring closer to the pupils historical and cultural heritage of their local region. Specific instruction is given to the teachers from the schools where teaching is held in languages of national minorities. It is advised that teachers could widen the additional content related to the history of particular national minority. It has been underlined that teachers in these situations should use different sources, teaching materials to improve the knowledge of pupils belonging to the particular national minority about their past, but also about the surrounding where they live. Unfortunately it is not advised how to implement this concept in multi-ethnic classes and multicultural milieu. It is also omitted to use this teaching model in the schools where teaching is held in Serbian and where greater part of pupils belong to Serbian ethnic majority.

In the 8th grade functional tasks do not tackle the history of national minorities explicitly. Having in mind the complex history of the Western and central Balkans in the 20th century it is difficult to distinguish sophisticated shades of national identity that was constructed within the historical existence of Yugoslavia as the shared state. Task no. 6 envisages that pupils should learn about cultural and scientific achievements on Serbian, Yugoslav, European and global level in the period from the end of 19th until the end of 20th century; no. 7 "pupils should understand that national history is integral part of global history", allows teachers to reflect upon regional history as well, including complex inter-ethnic relations in the region.

The theme *The World at the end of the 19th and beginning of 20th century* introduces social and cultural history. Although not mentioned in the program, with the proper contextualization, newly introduced terms like nationalism, racism could be explained with the examples from close experience of pupils in the common socio-cultural framework.

The theme *The Kingdom of Yugoslavia* encloses teaching units *The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes from 1918 till 1929*, *Yugoslavia from 1929 till 1941* and *Yugoslav cultural space* tackle different national issues within Yugoslav context between two world wars. Common political, social, economic and cultural issues including Serbian-Croatian relations in the eve of the Second World War, are in the focus of this section. However there is no specific mention in the program of different complex national identities from that period that reflect upon present ethnic/national setting in the region, especially Republic of Serbia. The theme *Yugoslavia in the Second World War* deals also with the consequences of the war and includes the issue of Holocaust and genocide, but without deeper elaboration. The last theme *Yugoslavia after the Second World War* covers different aspects of politics, economy, and social life in the post-war period. In several teaching units, authors of the program planned pupils to learn about constitutional, national, religious

matters as well as the issue of political freedoms in socialist country. National minorities are not specifically mentioned as the important subject in this section of program. The last teaching unit *Social crisis and the defeat of Yugoslavia* includes the dissolution of country, civil wars, emergence of new states, and consequences of the conflict. The sensitive national questions and position of national minorities whether in Serbia or any other country constituted after the break-up of Yugoslavia is not particularly mentioned in the program.

e) Visual arts

The aim for the 5th grade, besides the development of creative thinking and esthetical criteria, denotes that pupils should develop positive attitude toward artistic and cultural heritage of own and other nations. This intercultural aspect is not further developed within the outcomes that create the core of newly structured curricula.²⁰ Within the theme *The Form*, the contents that corresponds to the topic *Artistic heritage* and especially as subtopic is *Heritage of ethno/folk culture*. Thus, evoking the intercultural dimension and allowing different immanent ethno/folk artistic traditions to be introduced in the teaching process, the only concrete example given for the fulfilment of this subtopic relates to the Roman monuments in Serbia. However, in the instruction for the implementation of the program it is stressed that pupils should learn to distinguish mutual influences between the arts and society. The theme *Visual communication* contains the outcome that aims at understanding of the importance of cultural heritage. It was not further developed through specific contents. Unavoidable contents, according to program, should be the most important art works from the world cultural heritage, and especially cultural heritage created on the territory of Serbia. In the 6th grade the only sacred cultural heritage that is included in the program belongs to the Christian tradition. The list of recommended painters and artists also include artists of different ethnic origin. Among them are two Macedonian (Lazar Menoski, Ordan Petlevski) and one Jewish artist (Ignjat Job) from the Yugoslav cultural heritage.

In the 7th grade one functional task aims at the introduction of the value of cultural monuments and own cultural heritage. This task supports creating the general notion about the cultural heritage, and fosters ethnocentric perspective. The theme *Arabesque* is the only one that refers to the Islamic cultural heritage. The idea behind this theme is “understanding the differences between cultures, as well as continual changes in nature, that reflects upon the attitude toward own artistic heritage.” It is stressed that this theme should educate the pupils about “the impact of other cultures, namely from Syria, Egypt and other Islamic cultures.” Nevertheless, in the section *General selection of art works and cultural monuments*, authors of the program chose not to enlist any monument from Ottoman Balkan heritage, nor any existing oriental monument from the territory of Serbia (region of Raška, Kosovo and Metohija*²¹, etc.), or former Yugoslavia. Within the section *Free activities*, it is recommended that teachers could introduce “theoretical education about cultural heritage of nations and *nationalities*, etc.”²²

²⁰ These curricula will be implemented from the 1st September 2018.

²¹ “This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence”.

²² This formulation “narodi i narodnosti” here is translated nations and nationalities, is the legacy of Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, and considers the constitutional nations, and *national minorities*.

d) Musical arts

Aim of learning this subject in the 5th grade besides the development of affiliation for the musical arts, is to create responsible relationship toward preservation of musical heritage and culture of own and other nations. Within the themes *Listening to the music*, or *Performing music*, pupils are directed to listen and perform also folk tunes and songs of Serbian and other nations. One specific content instructs listening to the folk and composed art works inspired by the folklore of nations and nationalities (the same formulation of the description like in the program for Visual arts). The list of compositions intended for the choir singing includes the works from several composers belonging to the common cultural Yugoslav or Balkan setting, from today's perspective belonging to national minorities (Zoltan Kodalj, Hungarian composer, Josip Kaplan, Croatian composer, Georgi Dimitrov, and Svetoslav Obretenov, Bulgarian composers). Similar tasks and contents are intended for 6th, 7th and 8th grade. In the 7th grade the theme *The Music on the territory of Serbia* mostly refers to the Serbian musical heritage (folk music and customs, spiritual orthodox tradition, etc.). The list of recommended musical works for singing and playing is consisted predominantly of Serbian folk, religious and patriotic war (Balkan wars and I world war) songs and musical compositions. Nevertheless one separate section ***Songs of national minorities*** is devoted to the musical heritage of national minorities. This section includes one particular song from Hungarian, Albanian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Slovak, Rutherian and Roma musical heritage. In the 8th grade one learning outcome encourages pupils to analyse the relations between the ways of performance of folk music with specific context of folk's life. This social dimension of music should suggest the connection of folk music with other cultural habits or customs. Unfortunately this outcome does not further develop sensibility for the respect and reception of diverse cultural heritage.

2.2. The standards for the end of the first and the second cycle of education

a) Serbian language and literature²³

In the group of standards for Serbian language and literature for the second cycle several descriptors are directly addressing the issue of discrimination and national minorities. In the domain *Written expression* on the basic level, the descriptor SJ. 1.2.9. foresees that at the end of the educational cycle, pupils should develop linguistic tolerance and negative attitude toward linguistic discrimination and language of hate. Within the subdomain Folk and literary language the descriptor SJ. 1.3.19, also on basic level, assumes that pupils should know elementary data about the languages of national minorities in Serbia. The descriptor SJ.1.3.20 predicts that pupils should have created positive attitude toward dialects (own and dialects of the other). It is not clear whether this descriptor indicates positive attitude only toward Serbian or languages of national minorities as well.

²³ The standards for this subject are separated for the First and for the Second cycle. In the first cycle not the single one descriptor relates to the issue of our interest.

b) The Nature and the Society

The domain of the standards *Society* contains several descriptors that might relate to the issue of diverse society and role of groups in that kind of society. The descriptor PD.1.5.1 expects that at the end of the 4th grade pupils should know which social groups exist and who their members are. It is not explicitly said that this standard, formulated for the basic level, specifically includes national minorities as defined group as the part of society in general. The next one PD. 1.5.2 predicts that pupils should know elementary rules of behaviour in the family, school and municipality. This might include the respect for the diversity and relations within the society. Within the same domain, but on the medium level, PD.2.5.1 predicts that pupils should know the roles of different social groups and their members. PD. 2.5.2 aims at rights and commitments of the members in different social groups. National minorities are not particularly mentioned, and it is not clear whether this descriptors are considering their social position and rights. The advanced level of the same matter, formulated through the descriptor PD.3.5.1 further develops cognitive dimension of the knowledge about social phenomena. Accordingly, pupils should understand the common characteristics of social groups and differences. The descriptor PD. 3.5.2 advocates that pupils should understand that the rights and commitments of the members of social groups complement each other.

The domain of standards *The State of Serbia and its past*, only on basic level within the descriptor PD.1.6.3 sets that pupils should know basic components of the Serbian state, including the territory, boundaries, capital, symbols and population. Presumably, under the category population, pupils should name national minorities.

c) Geography

The standards for Geography do not directly deal with the issue of national minorities. The domain *Social geography* on basic level contain the descriptor GE 1.3.1 that pupils should have elementary notion about the population and settlements noticing their spatial position. It is not specified whether the notion about the population considers necessarily the diversification among the population, i.e. national minorities as the part of the population. The standard on the medium level GE. 2.3.1 foresees that pupils should distinguish and explain the migrations of the population as well as structures within the population. It is again, not precise whether the named structure includes the national minorities.

The domain *Regional geography* contains on basic level descriptor GE.1.4.1 pupils should recognize basic natural and social characteristics of Serbia. This standard should include the knowledge about the national minorities as the integral part of Serbian society. On the medium level descriptor GE.2.4.1 foresees that pupils should describe natural and social characteristics, naming the geographic regions in Serbia.

d) History

In this particularly important subject none of the standards is directly related to the issue of national minorities or diverse social groups. This might be the result of the specific structure of the standards for history which are not content orientated. However, descriptors aiming at the development of critical thinking could include contents that are related toward national minorities, particularly in the situation where they are depicted through stereotypes or negative propaganda. E.g. descriptor on medium level IS.2.2.5 pupils should recognize the bias in interpretation of historical persons, events and phenomena. On advance level IS.3.2.7 pupils should express the attitude and opinion about the interpretation of distinguished historical phenomena and identify the type of bias (manipulation, propaganda, stereotype, etc.).

Taking into account the concept, the structure and absence of concrete contents in the educational standards for the subject history in compulsory education, Institute for the evaluation of education in cooperation with the academics from the University of Belgrade and University of Novi Sad during 2007 created an expert team to define substantial key terms that would fit and fill the vacant structure of standards. As the outcome of the project, the Institute published teacher's manual, *The Key Terms for the end of compulsory education, History*.²⁴ The group of authors, based on the extensive survey done by history teachers, created the catalogue of key terms for the subject history. Two key terms, *People* and *Nation* are distinguished from the list as important. In further elaboration through the grades, in the 8th grade, authors have derived the term *National minority in Yugoslavia (Serbia)*, planned to be adopted on the basic level, within the historical context of the curricula.²⁵ Following ethnic groups are classified as *nations* in Yugoslavia (Serbia): Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Montenegrins, and Muslims (Bosniaks), while the group of national minorities is consisted of: Germans, Hungarians, Albanians, Slovaks, Rutherians, Romanians, Bulgarians, Italians, Roma.²⁶ The term Nation derives the term identity and psychological and political communion. The terms Religion and Church derive sub terms Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and Confucianism. All listed confessions except Buddhism and Confucianism are planned to be learned as the terms on basic level (at least 80% of pupils should learn the specific terms). Within the category *People* for the 7th grade, authors have chosen to include the components: language, sense of belonging, collective historical experience, the space, etc. The term nation is derived and represented as the sub term, defined by identity.²⁷ Since the historical terms with historical meaning and background listed in this publication are overlapping with the modern context, the present list of nations (including e.g. Croats, Muslims, Macedonians, etc.) must be properly contextualized in today's social and ethnic milieu.

e) Visual arts

Within the standards for Visual arts only the domain *The role, development and difference in visual arts*, could indicate indirect approach to the issue of diversity. The descriptor LK.2.3.1 planned for

²⁴ Кључни појмови за крај обавезног образовања Историја, Приручник за наставнике, Завод за вредновање квалитета образовања и васпитања, Београд 2008.

²⁵ Рр. 48

²⁶ Рр. 48

²⁷ Рр.41

the medium level, defines that pupils should locate selected art works in the historical and social context. Although it is not formulated that this could consider cultural heritage as the contextual framework, it might be linked to different cultural traditions and ethnic communities, national minorities as well.

f) Musical arts

This subject through domains *Knowing and understanding*, *Listening to the music* and *Musical performance* tackles folk musical cultural heritage. The descriptor MK.2.1.3 on medium level predicts that pupils should analyse the relationship between the ethno music with specific context of folk's everyday life. Since it is not specified what kind of folk tradition this standard aims at, it could be, but not necessarily, implemented to different cultural traditions in Serbia, region, or world. The descriptor MK.3.2.3 planned for the advanced level, expects that pupils should be able to analyse the musical examples and discover the relations between the distinguished musical characteristics and origins including the implementation of different forms of musical folklore. Descriptors MK.1.3.1 and MK.1.3.2 relate to children's singing and performing, folk and popular compositions. Taking into consideration the curricula for Musical arts, the list of folk songs and compositions include the musical heritage of national minorities too.

3. Results of the analysis of chosen subjects for the third cycle

3.1. The curricula for gymnasium and VET schools

a) Serbian language and literature

Aim of the subject has general educational purpose. However, the tasks are very descriptive and targeting the issue of linguistic diversity and respect of different cultural identities and traditions. Task no. 8 is universal and aims at accepting humanistic values; task no. 9 refers to the development of national identity and sense of belonging to the state of Serbia. Already next one, no. 10 specifies that pupils should respect own mother tongue, nurture the tradition and culture of Serbian nation, but also the tradition and culture of national minorities, ethnic communities and other nations. Task no. 12 aims at developing competences for life in multicultural society; task no. 13 is very direct and requests that pupils should "show respect toward racial, national, cultural, linguistic, religious, gender, sexual, and peer equity, develop tolerance and respect of diversity." Task no. 14 concerns the matter of language and promotes the idea of improving the culture of linguistic communication, and the respect of other languages and cultures. The contents of the curricula addresses the issue of linguistic diversity and ethics within the domain *Language* and theme *Standardized language* through the principle of linguistic equity and linguistic tolerance in the 2nd grade. In the 4th grade authors have included the topic of relations between the language, culture and society, considering the relationship between the language and social categories, multilingualism, and attitudes toward the language itself. Among the authors included in the

reading list some of them belong to Slavic and Yugoslav cultural heritage, but also the heritage of national minorities (Marin Držić, Ivan Gundulić, etc.)

The instruction for the implementation of the program in the section *Literary language*, teachers should focus on development of certain attitudes about Serbian literary language, linguistic policy and tolerance in Serbia.

b) Geography

The aim of Geography in gymnasium inter alia refers to developing of knowledge and skills needed for understanding of “contemporary reality of the world and developing moral values, tolerance, respect and belonging to multi-ethnic, multilingual and multicultural world.” The aim as it is defined in a broad way is to integrate the regional and local multi-ethnic, multilingual and multicultural dimensions that are denoting the national minorities in Serbia. Few tasks are also referring to the issue of cultural and ethnic diversity. Task no. 4 addresses general knowledge about the nature, population, settlements and economy in Serbia; task no. 6 directly aims at fostering “the sense of social belonging to the nation and culture, contributing to the preservation and nurturing of national and multicultural identity.” Although partly ambiguous this task should enable pupils to accept the concept of multicultural society and setting where they live. Task no. 7 supports proactive approach where pupils should “develop cooperation and solidarity between the members of various social, ethnic and cultural groups.”

In the 2nd grade pupils are getting the knowledge about different phenomena related to our matter, but only on general level. The theme *The population and settlements* include the structure of population on global level, racial and ethnic composition, etc. The teaching unit *The Cultural and life standard of the population*: raises issue of education as a condition for increasing life standard and highlights the dependence of the cultural and life standard of the population. The theme *Political-geographical, demographic and economic characteristics of different regions in the World*, includes European geo-political space. The content of the teaching unit *The population and culture of European nations* includes the information about the ethnic origins and background of European population, but also the phenomena like the migrations, cultural regions, density, etc.

The 3rd grade is dedicated to the natural and social geography of the Republic of Serbia. In the introductory part pupils are supposed to learn about the dissolution of Socialist Yugoslavia and creation of new states on the grounds of former country. The fourth theme *The Population and the settlements* begins with selective and biased historical overview. The authors formulated the contents using the pronoun “our”, e.g. Teaching unit: Settling of our territory (before the migration of Slavs; migration of Slavs on the area of Serbia; period after the First World War until today). It is evident that authors have made the time gap that amounts approximately 1500 years. The whole historical period between the migration of Slavs and the beginning of 20th century, which is important due to the high fluctuation of different ethnic groups and nations on the territory that today belong to Serbia is left out from the program. These omitted contents make understanding of the multicultural and multi-ethnic constitution of Serbian population today more difficult. The second teaching unit within this theme deals with the population politics, migration, population numbers, density, etc. The third teaching unit *The structure*, reflects upon the cultural, educational

aspect, as well as ethnic and confessional structure of the population in Serbia. This section is crucial for the issue of learning about the national minorities in Serbia within the subject Geography.

The last theme Regions in Serbia, also supports learning about national minorities through specific regional features, e.g. "Raška visija", where besides physical geographical and natural characteristics, pupils are getting information about cultural and historical landmarks, population and settlements, touristic and cultural centres, etc. This theme includes seven regions, including those famous for its multi-ethnic or multicultural milieu.

c) History

The Curricula for the Gymnasium

The aim of the program in gymnasium is roughly replicating the aim from compulsory education. Besides developing critical thinking skills, understanding of contemporary world in local, regional and global framework, it also aims at understanding the concept of multiculturalism, developing tolerance and the culture of dialogue based on arguments, as well as importance of nurturing cultural-historical heritage. The tasks are reduced and universal. E.g. task no.3 pupils should understand that national history is the integral part of regional, European and global history; task no. 6 pupils should be able to recognize different interpretation of the same historic events (introduction of multiple perspectives that can include national, ideological, religious standpoints, etc.). In the curricula for the 3rd grade (social studies and linguistic program) the authors are not directly implying that the history of national minorities should be taught. However, in the themes *Serbian people under Ottoman rule (16th – 18th century)* and *Serbs under Habsburg and Venetian rule (16th – 18th century)* the relationship between the Serbs and other nations/ethnic communities must be explained. The theme *National movements on the Balkans from 18th until seventies of the 19th century* contain the topic on national liberation movements that include the uprisings and liberation ideas from Greeks, Bulgarians, Hungarians, and Romanians. The topic *Serbs in Habsburg monarchy*, taught within this theme, deals with the content that could reflect upon intercultural, and interethnic relations within the Habsburg Empire (the participation in the revolution 1848/9, military frontier, and political life, etc.) However, it is not clearly suggested that the history of other nations once living in Habsburg, i.e. Austro-Hungarian Empire (from 1867), and today representing the national minorities in the Republic of Serbia should be lectured as the integral part of this teaching lesson.

In the 3rd grade of the nature-mathematic program and the 4th grade of social studies-linguistic program pupils are similarly to the end of compulsory education predominantly learning the history of the 20th century. The exception is the teaching unit *The Constitution of Serbia and Montenegro as independent states* that deal with liberation processes in the Balkans at the end of 19th century. On the local level the historical framework is set within the Serbian and Yugoslav state structure. The theme *The Kingdom of Yugoslavia* within the teaching unit *The New state* should include the information about "the process of unification, geographical space and society, frontiers, geopolitical surrounding and enemies." Although it is not explicitly suggested, the reference to the society should include learning about the ethnic structure that formed the new state. The parts of

the history of today's national minorities (Croats, Bosniaks, Hungarians, Germans) is taught within the context of Yugoslav political framework in the teaching units *Political and national conflicts (1935-1939)*. Another teaching unit that deals with sensitive national historical issue is *The Yugoslavia at the beginning of the Second World War: internal reorganization and changes in the international position of the state (1939-1941)*. It is hard to enclose these historical phenomena under the issue of national minorities, since some of today's national minorities were constitutional nation in common state. Taking into account sensitive historical inter-relations between Serbs and Croats, the issue of Holocaust, genocide in "Independent state of Croatia", the role of some members of national minorities as well as Serbs, in collaboration with the Axis powers during the war, the theme *Yugoslavia in the Second World War* is particularly delicate and complex to teach. Its sensitivity if not properly distinguished from the current state affairs could reflect upon the perception of national minorities in the Republic of Serbia today, and lead to the acts of discrimination rooted in long gone unresolved historical inheritance and biased stereotypes. The theme *Yugoslavia after the Second World War*, deals with the internal national troubles and challenges in Socialist Yugoslavia that led to the dissolution of the state in violent and bloody wars.

The instruction for the implementation of the program, like in the elementary schools advises introduction of complementary topics from the history of homeland/local community, that enriches pupil's knowledge and notion about historical and cultural heritage of their milieu. This instruction is particularly important for establishing intercultural dialogue in multicultural environments, as well as development of tolerance, acceptance of cultural and ethnic diversity. This section includes the suggestion that in gymnasiums where pupils are taught in mother tongue of national minorities teachers can expand the program with the additional content related to the history of specific minority.

The Curricula for the VET schools

The curricula for the VET schools are divided in two programs. The first one is for three year schools where history as a subject is learnt for one year (focus on national history), and the four year schools, where it is learnt two years (general and national history). The aim and tasks are formulated as in gymnasium. The difference relates to the formulations of certain content. E.g. within the theme *Serbian people from the end of 15th until the end of 18th century*, within the teaching unit *Serbian people under the Habsburg and Venetian rule*, specifically denotes the ethnic structure of the Habsburg Empire, that has been omitted in the program for gymnasium. However, this concept of learning about or analysing ethnic diversity is not implemented on the Ottoman Empire. This content leads to the deeper understanding of multi-ethnic and multicultural social setting that was the foundation for later intercultural relations between the Serbs and other nations, today living as national minorities in the Republic of Serbia. The themes and topics of the curricula are almost the same as the curricula for the gymnasium, but more compressed and reduced. In this report it should be underlined that only the cultural aspect of living in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and Socialist Yugoslavia can reflect the contribution of national minorities in everyday life. The political topics like the political crisis in the inter-war period or late 20th century are barely mentioned through unresolved national question, creation of the Banovina Croatia, genocide and Holocaust, Kosovo* issue.

In the four year VET schools the theme *The Serbs and their surrounding from 16th until the middle of 19th century* includes teaching units *The Serbs and the neighbouring nations under the Ottoman rule and the creation of the nation states*, where pupils should learn about the conditions in which Serbs lived in the Ottoman Empire (other subjects of the Ottomans are not mentioned), uprisings, autonomy of Montenegro, “national movements of Greeks, Romanians, Bulgarians, etc.” Several themes and topics correlate to the topics planned for gymnasium or the program for three year VET schools. The curricula for four year VET schools do not contain any other more descriptive or insightful approach to the history of national minorities or their participation in the Serbian history, or state.

d) Sociology

The extensive aim does not refer to the issue of minorities explicitly. Nevertheless, understanding the concept of modern society, and learning about the development and contradictions, specific social phenomena, structure, and participation in democratic multicultural society, should imply learning societal position and role of minorities. The tasks defined for the subject are as general as the aim. Task no. 3 declares that pupils should develop abilities for the responsible citizen role for the proactive life in democratic and humane society. The task no. 4 aims at accepting the values and construction of autonomous system of values according to the basic principles of justice, truth, freedom, honesty and personal responsibility. Particularly important are tasks no. 5 that enables pupils to develop personal and national identity in the spirit of multiculturalism, the respect and preservation of national and world cultural heritage and task no 7 that fosters sensitivity for the social inequality (economic, educational, gender, ethnic, global, etc.)

In the compulsory contents of the program two (maybe three) themes include teaching units that refer directly or indirectly to the issue of national minorities. The first one is Social structure and social changes, where pupils should learn about the groups, organizations, stratification, mobility, and particularly the relations between the society and population. The second is the theme Basic domains of social life, including culture, religion, ethnical aspects of society, ideology, etc. The sections of the theme concerning the ethnical aspects, as well as culture, religion and ideology, should refer to the issue of national minorities. The last possible topic that could relate to the matter of our interest is Phenomena and problems of modern society, where pupils could analyse and elaborate concrete and exact modern challenges from their social surrounding and based on their own experience.

In the instructions for the implementation, authors have highlighted the importance of the theme concerning social inequity, and its functional dimension. The teachers are advised to discuss about the causes, forms and levels of injustice, discrimination as well as ways of possible reduction and extermination.

e) The Constitution

The aim of the subject is developing basic political culture and knowledge about democratic system, the position of citizen and his/her participation in governance and political life in general.

According to the aim specific tasks for this subject include different aspects of rights and obligations of the citizens and state. The task no.2 introduces constitutional rights and different legal instruments that allow citizens to actively participate in political process, and governance. As the part of the constitution, information about national minorities should be covered by this task. Task no. 4 insists that pupils should accept the values of human rights and democratic society. Task no. 5 pupils should foster readiness to act in the spirit and respect of democratic values. The rights of national minorities, as the part of human rights are integrated into the values of democratic society. The task no. 6 is particularly important since its accomplishment should enable pupils to understand the full complexity of life in the multicultural community and need for the mutual respect and the acceptance of differences. It unquestionably addresses the issue of diversity and targets the attitude of the whole population toward various minorities and groups in the society, including the national minorities. The task no. 7 elevates the task no. 6 putting it into active mode, where pupils should take active part in the life of community, initiate actions and take responsibility for personal decisions.

After analysis of the contents, one theme *The citizen, his rights and freedoms in the Republic of Serbia*, is singled out where compulsory topics include personal rights, political rights, **the rights of national minorities**, and the protection of listed rights. The instruction for the implementation of the program introduces the comparative concept in viewing the elements of constitution in the Republic of Serbia and other democratic countries. Using this method, pupils could individually draw conclusions about the normative regulations about human rights and their protection in Serbia and other democratic states.

f) Visual arts

On one hand the aim of this subject is to lead toward the development of socialization, empathy, tolerance, humanistic values, and skills of cooperation. And on the other, it is to form positive and responsible attitude toward cultural and artistic heritage. Specific tasks are defined on the general level and do not give much information. However, task no. 5 envisages that pupils should be introduced to the national and world cultural and artistic heritage, etc., developing responsible attitude toward the preservation of it. This broadly articulated task does not directly refer to the cultural heritage of national minorities, but it could include their cultural and artistic tradition as well. The task no. 8 should initiate pupil's interest for the art and visit to the cultural institutions. It is not explicitly said, but the museums and galleries, sites, could refer to those that exhibit, or represent the art and cultural legacy of national minorities.

In the contents of the curricula for the 2nd grade for the gymnasiums that organize teaching based on social studies and linguistic program, one theme *Art works and cultural monuments* refers to several cultural influential areas from medieval period. The only topic that enables development of sensitivity toward cultural heritage and tradition of "others" are preromanic, romanic and gothic art and Islamic art. The programmes in the 3rd and 4th grade do not specifically mention any kind of artistic or cultural heritage of national minorities. The only exception could be the wider framework of artistic legacy from 20th century on the cultural space of Yugoslavia. Teaching program for the natural sciences and mathematic course do not include topics related to Islamic art. In the instructions for the implementation, authors of the program explained that the introduction of

artistic works from national and world cultural legacy could influence the creation of positive and responsible attitude toward cultural and artistic heritage and its preservation. This universal statement does not directly reflect the issue of national minorities as the part of the society.

g) Musical arts

The aim is formulated in ambiguous manner. It aims at educating pupils to identify basic attributes of arts and cultures analysing elements of musical art works. According to the aim, pupils would be able “to notice the differences and similarities between our and other traditions and cultures in the field of musical arts.” It is unclear what the authors meant by “our” tradition and culture in terms of belonging and identity. This formulation probably directs on Serbian national tradition and cultural heritage. The contents of this subject for the 1st grade of gymnasium mostly include ancient European and Judeo-Christian musical tradition. The confusion concerning national identity promoted in the aim follows in the content of the program. The pronoun “our” is once again used in the part of the program related to the renaissance music, this time for the composers who do not belong to the Serbian musical tradition (Franjo Bosanac, Andrija Motovunjanin). This kind of inaccuracy emerged probably due to copy/pasting the part of the program used in Yugoslav cultural context.

In the curricula for the 2nd grade of gymnasium, program for social studies and linguistics in the section Romantic movement in Serbia is included Josef Schlesinger, Czech composer of Jewish origin who lived in Sombor. The program for natural sciences and mathematics contains in the similar list composition of Enriko Josif, Serbian composer of Jewish origin.

3.2. The standards for the end of the third cycle of education

a) Serbian language and literature

In the domain *Language* one specific descriptor on the basic level requires concrete but universal knowledge and attitude toward the language as phenomenon. SJK 1.1.1 plans to examine whether pupils at the end of the learning cycle have gained knowledge about the language, developed the respect of mother tongue and other languages, and identifies stereotypical attitudes toward the language. Even more explicit are descriptors in the domain *Linguistic culture*. One descriptor SJK 1.3.3, from the group of basic standards, demands that pupils should use arguments and exchange opinions on the topics from literature, language and culture, and inter alia listen to the other opinions and accept them during own argumentation. Although very general, this descriptor enables pupils to develop capacity for accepting differences, and diversity in intellectual but also cultural sense. Another similar standard that examines the built system of values and attitudes SJK 1.3.7 requires that pupils should evaluate the text from the position of objectivity, manipulation, and detect the language of hate, discrimination and have negative attitude toward socially and emotionally harmful communication and ideas. Within the domain *Literature*, on the advanced level, over the standard SJK 3.2.9 pupils should by reading the Serbian and world literature develop

linguistic, literary and cultural and national identity. This descriptor does not include the issue of national minorities, but laterally, through reading of world literature could develop the sense for cultural diversity.

b) Geography

The standards for Geography are divided into several domains. The domain *Social Geography* is related to the issue of the structure of population. Pupils should on basic level, according to the standard GE 1.3.3, be able to describe demographic development and structures of the population in the Republic of Serbia and the countries in the region. The standard GE 1.3.4 “emphasize understanding of crucial terms like transition, integration, globalization and their impact on the challenges in the Republic of Serbia and the countries in the region”. Within the same domain, but on the medium level, pupils should be able to explain contemporary problems of the mankind (e.g. conflicts, violence, unemployment, famine, discrimination, etc.) and suggest possible solutions. The listed descriptors have universal significance and directly relate to the data, status and position of national minorities in Serbia.

The domain *National geography and regional development* include standards related to the issue of minorities. On the basic level GE the descriptor 1.4.4 instructs that pupils should “name natural and cultural goods of the local environment, Republic of Serbia, and understand the need for their preservation and improvement”. The cultural goods unquestionably include the cultural heritage of national minorities too. On the next, medium level, pupils should be able “to describe historic and geographic agents and evaluate their influence on social and economic flows in the Republic of Serbia and countries in the region”. Even though it is not explicitly mentioned, it is impossible to exclude the role of other nations and ethnic communities in the historic, social and economic processes in Serbia. On the same level the descriptor GE 2.4.4 elevates the standard GE 1.4.4 on higher level. According to it pupils should be able “to describe natural and cultural goods of the local environment, Republic of Serbia, and take actions for their protection and improvement”. This standard puts pupils in proactive role and encourages them to become active participants in different processes in the society.

c) History

History standards as the measuring instrument for the expected educational outcomes and developed skills and competences of the pupils at the end of the third cycle are structured in three domains Historical knowledge, Research, interpretation and presentation, and Historical foundations of modern society.

History as the school subject closely correspond to the cross-curricular competence no. 7 from the list of Cross-curricular competences designed by the Institute for the development of education and adopted by the Ministry of education, science and technological development, also prescribed within the new Law on education. The competence no. 7 Responsible participation in the democratic society aims at development of critical thinking skills and actions based on competent and responsible participation in the school life, as well as the society in whole. Particular stress is

put on the respect of the other persons and members of the society. The important statement is that activities of the pupils should lead “to protection and nurturing of human and minority rights, humanistic values and basic democratic values and principles.” This competence supports personal choices and fosters right to cherish and affirm different cultures, subcultures, traditions; the respect of equity of different groups their traditions and identities. It also highlights the prevention of marginalization and discrimination of own and other groups/communities.

General competence for the subject History aims at developing different skills of critical thinking, but also system of democratic values that “include the respect of human rights development of intercultural dialogue and responsible attitude toward cultural-historical heritage.” One of the explicit statements is that history teaching should prepare pupils for the life in modern democratic setting through the development of tolerance, skills for the debate and dialogue, and prevention of conflicts derived from historical substance. Within the subject two specific competences are defined to support the general and comprehensively aim at rethinking the connection between the processes and phenomena from the past and present (Understanding of history and critical relations toward the past and present) and valuing diverse society through accepting and respecting different identities (Understanding of history and modern identities as the basis for the active participation in the society). One segment of this specific competence on the basic level defines that pupils should engage into the intercultural dialogue relying on the past, identity and culture of own, but also other nations in Serbia, region, etc. Pupils should show the respect of human rights and different cultural traditions. It is planned that pupils on medium level should emphasize the analysis of prejudices, stereotypes and different means of propaganda in historical, but also contemporary sources of information, and “identify common political, social, economic, and cultural aspects of the past in region” which could lead further to the development of tolerant attitude toward “the members of other nations or religious groups in regional and internal Serbian context”, necessary for the prevention of conflicts. The advanced level pupils should develop this specific competence engaging the debate about the major topics from history, but contemporary challenges as well, following the principles of arguments, respect for different opinions and national, confessional, ideological or cultural standpoints, as the precondition for the valuable life in multicultural society.

Few concrete descriptors planned to be measured at the end of the educational cycle on the basic level (for 80% of pupils and more) in the domain Historical foundations of modern society, are closely linked to the sequences of forenamed general and specific competences aiming at development of tolerance and respect of the other, including national minorities. The descriptor IS.1.3.3 presumes that pupils should understand and show responsible attitude toward cultural-historical heritage of own and other nations; IS.1.3.5 Pupils should identify elements of intercultural relations, and recognize the values of the society that cherishes these values; IS.1.3.6 pupils compare historical and contemporary context of the respect of human rights and actively participate in intercultural dialogue. This descriptor directly aims at the intercultural dialogue between different national/ethnic groups including the relation majority-minority and minority-minority. The last one in this domain IS.1.3.7 aims at conflict prevention by gaining historical knowledge, developing tolerance, skills of dialogue and sensibility for recognizing the causes and the effects of conflicts. On the other hand in the domain The research, interpretation and presentation on basic level with the standard IS 1.2.3 on the basic level anticipates that pupils should recognize prejudices, stereotypes, propaganda and other ways of manipulation in

interpretation of historic phenomena in historical but also contemporary sources of information. On the medium level the same descriptor is upgraded in a way that recognition of prejudices, stereotypes, etc. is transferred to the analysis. Some standards are introducing the didactical concept of multiperspectivity that could relate to the issue of national minorities as well. In the teachers' manual as additional publication accompanying standards, teachers can find examples of teaching plans as the reference to the implementation of standards in everyday history teaching. One example is related to the issue of Holocaust but with wider set aims, like "understanding the consequences of prejudices and stereotypes; the responsibility of each individual and acceptance of differences in pluralistic society, etc." Among the key terms are antisemitism and discrimination.

4. Final results and Conclusions

The Article 7 Paragraph 3 as the general principle and the Article 8 Paragraphs 15, and 16, as specific aims of the Law on education (2017) prescribe educational preconditions that should foster the rights of national minorities as the part of multicultural inclusive society in the Republic of Serbia. The results of the analysis of the selected curricula, subject competences and educational standards, presented in this report, show heterogeneous situation regarding the presence and attitude toward the national minorities within the educational framework in the Republic of Serbia.²⁸

- It is important to highlight that official educational documents, namely standards and curricula (especially the tasks and teaching units) of certain school subjects, singled out in this report (the Nature and Society and Musical arts in the First cycle; Serbian language and literature and Geography in the second cycle, and Geography, Sociology and Constitution in the third cycle) directly relate to the issue of national minorities or their cultural heritage, and therefore represent positive trends or examples. Nevertheless, the mentioned components are not fully integrated into the consistent educational entity, or evenly/systematically dispersed through different relevant topics in the curricula (specific or general themes/teaching units). Analysis shows that, even though the determination of the legislator to include national minorities as an integral part in the documents is recognized, this intention is unclear due to vague and broad formulations of the curricula tasks or contents (particularly where the cultural heritage is defined with the pronoun "our/s", or when it is hidden behind general aims and comprehensive verbalisations).
- References to national minorities in elementary school curricula appear mainly in connection to music (except the subject The Nature and Society and partly Geography) and there is generally a limited number of minorities that are referred to (there is a longer list in music, but otherwise it is one Hungarian author, or someone from the former Yugoslavia). It is not necessarily a shortcoming that there is information in music, but there is a tendency to have a mainly "folkloristic" image of national minorities and this should be avoided.

²⁸ The detailed findings of the analysis are specified in those parts of the report where the examined documents and materials are explicated and evaluated.

- Certain important topics and teaching units e.g. *My hometown/homeland and its past* dealing with issues of everyday life, local traditions and cultural diversity, are probably intended to be the educational channel for developing intercultural competences and respect toward national minorities, or different cultural heritage. However, the problem that might emerge is when certain local community is not noticeably recognized as the multicultural and multi-ethnic. In the environment predominantly consisted from population belonging to the majority (Serbian national background) where the national minorities are not significantly present or visible in everyday social or cultural context and exchange, the aim and educational potential of this teaching unit is diminished. The educational challenge would be to use balanced and thoughtful approach to the local “homeland” identity or setting and expand it on the general social/state level.
- The full potential of the content relevant to the issue of national minorities is undervalued. It is not contextualized in a way to support the understanding of cultural diversity and its contribution to the development of tolerance and mutual respect in multicultural and multi-ethnic inclusive society. This deficiency could be illustrated e.g. the introduction of the Latin script in the curricula for Serbian language in the 2nd grade of elementary schools, or with the topic *Heraldry* in the subject Visual arts (in the same grade), where adequate intercultural contextualisation is lacking.
- Certain pertinent topics are left to be taught without specific instruction that should lead to development of intercultural competences of pupils, familiarization with the members of different ethnic/national groups, or simply understanding the concept of the “other” as the integral part of the today’s societal milieu. The example is the underdeveloped instruction to the topic *Holidays and customs* (The World around us) that has the great potential for the development of proclaimed system of values and skills for intercultural exchange at early stage of learning.
- The subject History is recognized as one of the most important for raising awareness about different insights into the past, including the position and perspective of national minorities. The recommendations of Council of Europe on history teaching, also recognize the role of history teaching in creating positive setting for sensitizing pupils to the new forms of cultural diversity, and especially “the development of the knowledge and skills needed to establish open, productive intercultural dialogue by enabling all future citizens to gain a perception and understanding of the history of **others**, and thereby better to perceive and understand their own.”²⁹ Accordingly, history curricula should reflect these issues as much as possible and governments should “take care to give history teaching its rightful place in curriculums, given its importance for the abovementioned reasons and also the growing interest in questions of history in the public opinion of most member states”.³⁰ The analysis of the curricula for subject History shows that the historical understanding and overview of the long-lasting history of the Serbian state in different chronological contexts, are fostered throughout the whole education from the 1st to the end of the 3rd cycle (in subjects The Nature and Society, History, and partially Geography). Even though defined as the crucial for structuring of national identity and respect of own and cultural heritage of the “other”, the group of identified subjects does not relate appropriately and satisfactorily

²⁹ Recommendation CM/Rec(2011)6 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on intercultural dialogue and the image of the other in history teaching

³⁰ *ibid.*

to the issue of national minorities living in Serbia today. The noncompulsory teaching manual *Key terms for the subject History in primary (compulsory) education*, obligatory but broad aims and universally defined descriptors of educational standards in compulsory and secondary education are not sufficient to make national minorities always visible as the integral and relevant part of the present-day society in the Republic of Serbia. The curricula for History mainly outline the Serbian perspective of the past within the national or global context, or give perspectives/insights of the most relevant international factors (“great powers”). This approach is expected and not unusual in history curricula design in general, but the conclusion is that the full insight into the process of creation of modern multicultural, multiethnic Serbian society and state is lacking, or not sufficiently transparent within the existing curricula content.

- Nurturing the national identity and raising awareness about the significance of cultural heritage as the crucial component of the identity are mainly expressed through inducing the sense of patriotic consciences and belonging to the Republic of Serbia, without taking into account the special characteristics of various national minorities living in Serbia today.

The conceivable proposals and suggestions for the improvement of identified deficiencies emphasised in this report will be explicated in the following recommendations document.

Gender considerations

Within the theme Literature and the list of literary works for reading in the first grade, among 26 titles, only 3 are works of female authors, and 4 belong to Serbian folk tradition. The listed writers are mostly of Serbian ethnical background, but also a part of Yugoslav cultural tradition. In the Instructions for the implementation of the program, the authors of the program are advising teachers to make correlation with another school's subjects, specifically The World around us, but only in the field of botany and zoology, not underlying any social and intercultural aspect. In the second grade among 35 titles from the list for reading, only 3 are works of female writers, and 9 titles belong to folk tradition. The proportion among female and male writers in the third grade is 4 vs. 23. This trend in favour of male authors threads throughout all programs for Serbian language and literature in compulsory education. The similar disproportion relates to the main characters in selected works who are predominantly male.

The structure of the curricula for the subject history, mainly focused on political events, phenomena and processes, logically refers to the male perspective of the past, since the role of women in the former societies was either lateral or left out from the main historical records. The imbalance existing in the curricula for Serbian language and literature also applies to history curricula. The vivid example is the content of the teachers' manual in elementary schools *The key terms for the subject History* (optional for the use in history teaching) that relates to eminent persons that could be included as the part of standardized texting. On the list of relevant persons learned in the 7th grade among 21 persons only 2 are women. In the same manual in the 8th grade among 92 persons listed from the field of politics none are female. On the list for the same grade, that includes culture and science from 47 persons, 7 are female.