THE INFLUENCE OF SEGREGATED EDUCATION ON SECURITY AND STABILITY IN POST-CONFLICT BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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Abstract:

More than 20 years after the war, Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided geographically, politically and culturally along ethno-national lines. The public education system represents a key arena in which nationalism and ethnic divisions are visible. The phenomenon of "two schools under one roof" is one example of this, whereby students from one ethnic group have little-to-no contact with those from a different one. This paper examines post-conflict education and its influence on the reconciliation process. The prime goal of the paper is to provide added value to our understanding of security and education in post-conflict societies, not only by analysing their education systems, but also by debating how education can be a key factor in creating a cohesive, integrated and safe post-conflict society. Within the empirical section of the paper, the views of Bosnia-Herzegovinian youth on the issues of education, peace & security and reconciliation will be examined.

Keywords: security, education system, Bosnia and Herzegovina, reconciliation, post-conflict societies

Introduction

Although nearly 23 years have passed since the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, nationalism and ethnic tensions have continued to be a major facet of society. The three dominant ethnic groups – Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats – still live on the edge of a past they have refused to abandon for years, and this situation will not change for as long as they identify themselves with nationalist parties.[1] Therefore, many researchers, scientists and diplomats have raised questions about the

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[1] Put together under the tutelage of international community representatives in the aftermath of the November 2000 general elections, the ten-party coalition known as the Democratic Alliance for Change has governed the larger of Bosnia & Herzegovina's two entities and led the state-level Council of Ministers since early 2001. With the intention of its sponsors and members to sideline the three nationalist parties that had fought the 1992-95 war and ruled their respective pieces of BiH thereafter, the Alliance was also expected to undertake thoroughgoing reforms and to provide

stability and survival of this post-conflict state (Ashdown and Holbrooke, 2008; McMahon and Western, 2009; Rettman, 2010; Inzko, 2015).

The 2016 elections, according to many observers, reflected deep and irreconcilable divisions at the political level. The illegal, even previously forbidden, referendum in the Republika Srpska and the suspension of voting in the municipality of Stolac (the first such case since elections have been implemented by the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina) illustrate the complexity of the political situation. One of the more recent examples of such observations is the statement of General Michael Rose[2] in the British House of Lords:

> "While it's obviously clear that the Bosnia war was, in the Balkans war, probably the most violent of all the conflicts that took place at that time, I don't think it's still fully appreciated by the international community including, of course, ourselves, that the linkage between that war and the problems that are facing the Western Balkans today are very close indeed, and that many of the problems that exist today were generated by the way that war was ended. If we accept the many reports that we can read, both in, for example, the Senate Committee of Foreign Affairs, a recent one they made in May, our own parliamentary inquiries, the European Union stabilisation reports then I think we would all agree that today in Bosnia we see a rising trend of xenophobia, racial tensions, continuing corruption – evidence to meet the standards of good governance required by the European Union – a rising element of radicalization, particularly amongst the Muslim communities and of course the country, because of the reluctance of the Bosnian Serbs to sign up to the dream of Dayton, which was a single nation, the country still is as fragmented I think as ever, and is actually at risk for being a failed state".[3]

Violent protests on economic issues that took place in February 2014 show another face of insecurity in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In these events, it was disturbing that, for the first time since the war, violence was considered a legitimate way of expressing dissatisfaction with the government. Valentin Inzko, the High Representative of the European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina, said, in the wake of the protest, that the international community fully understands the frustrations and complaints that demonstrators expressed throughout the country through these protests: "These protests should lead as soon as possible to a constructive dialogue between government and citizens in order to resolve concrete problems that citizens face in order to help the country move forward in the direction of Euro-Atlantic integration." Inzko also stressed that competent authorities and other leaders should work together to overcome current problems:

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proof that implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords might yet produce a viable state. See more at: https://www.crisisgroup.org/bs/europe-central-asia/balkans/bosnia-and-herzegovina/bosnias-alliance-smallish-change, visited on November 15, 2017.

[2] Commander of UNPROFOR from 1994 to 1995 in Bosnia and Herzegovina

[3] See more at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M62yMBXt0wE&app=desktop, visited on November 15, 2017.

"These protests must not be misused for political purposes to strengthen ethnic divisions in the country. Corruption, high unemployment rate and a lack of economic opportunities are problems that affect all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina."[4]

The situation on the political scene and the division in society shows that, on the other hand, the political leadership did not show readiness and commitment to overcome them. In such a political context, building a society that will be based on European civic values, and in which the rights and obligations of individuals are not shaped by ethnicity, seems an impossible task. Bećirević (2016: 9) also states that for a sensitive Bosnian society, with a history of genocide and mass violence, nonviolent extremism represents a major threat, causing a fear of others and otherwise producing distrust and insecurity among all members of society. Ethnocentric policies greatly contribute to the creation of such an atmosphere, where ideas of absolute division are propagated by the followers of such policies. On the other hand, the Ministry of Security's 2016 Annual Report on the State of Security in Bosnia and Herzegovina – which outlines the most pressing international, regional, and domestic/internal challenges and security risks facing BiH – says that hate crime is on the rise in comparison to previous years.

The State is described as "burdened with internal problems of a political nature, which pose a serious danger to society, politics, and security and general stability in the country."[5] According to the Hate Monitor[6] for 2017, the most common prejudice acting as a basis for the committing of a hate crime was nationality or ethnicity, while offensive graffiti and verbal attacks are the most frequent types of incidents. This is supported by a study titled *Kako opažamo druge etničke skupine i njihove članove* (*How we perceive other ethnic groups and their members*) whose results have shown that pronounced nationalism among members of one ethnic group results in an idealized image of one's own ethnic group and negative stereotypes of and social distancing toward other ethnicities (Puhalo, 2011).

The public education system is one of the key areas in which nationalism and ethnic divisions are highly visible. Ethno-territorial division of the educational system means that one ethnic group dominates most schools, including its curriculum. In some cases, particularly where municipalities are more heterogeneous, the phenomenon of "two schools under one roof" has led to students having little or no contact with those in another group. They learn almost exclusively about the dominant group's narratives, history, culture and religion.

On the other hand, the importance of education for the development of a democratic society is well recognized, because the knowledge that a person acquires during the educational

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[4] See more at: http://www.ohr.int/?p=31883, visited on November 15, 2017.

[5] See more at: http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/info2017.pdf, visited on November 15, 2017.

[6] The Hate Monitor is a graphic representation of hate crime data collected by the OSCE in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, in addition to reported incidents, it also contains information about the reactions of the judiciary, local authorities and civil society to acts of hate crimes. In 2015, according to OSCE data, at least 146 incidents were reported to the police in the state that were initially considered to be motivated by prejudice. The most common type of incidents were offensive graffiti (24 percent), followed by verbal attacks (21 percent), damage to religious buildings / desecration of graveyards (19 percent), highlighting offensive content symbols (18 percent), property damage (14 percent) and physical violence (11 percent). See more at: https://www.osce.org/hatemonitorbih, visited on November 18, 2017.

process develops their own character and personality, enables them to think critically, to conclude, analyse, predict, solve their own problems, and the problems of others as well (Gudjons, 1994; Giesecke, 1993; Slatina, 1998; Mougniotte, 1995, etc.). Education should, in fact, strengthen the individual in defence against indoctrination, manipulation or any other type of abuse of humanity in an effort to achieve political, ideological, religious, or other goals. There are many examples of educational and knowledge abuse in the world for purposes that go against the humanization of life, or democratization of societies.

Methodology

The broad aim of this research was to answer the question: What are the consequences of the educational system on security and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina? The answer to this question was found in many domestic and foreign sources. Different qualitative research methods have been used for the purposes of this paper. Within the theoretical part, a content analysis method was used, while focus groups were used for the empirical part.

In November 2017, 30 students took part in research activities, through five focus groups conducted over a five-day period, with six students per group. This research included first year students at the University of Sarajevo who come from different parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their views on the education system, reconciliation and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina were taken into consideration. They were chosen for the very reason that they had just finished high school and that they had no memories or experiences from the previous war. Focus groups were audio recorded with the permission of participants, and then transcribed in full and analysed using content and discourse analysis.

Education in Post-Conflict Societies

Education in post-conflict societies has always been a double-edged sword. It can be a tool in the hands of nationalists who can use it as a means to create inter-ethnic tensions and violence. On the other hand, education can be a potential instrument for promoting inter-ethnic solidarity, respect for the human rights of liberty and tolerance, and thus can contribute to long-term social stability and security (Fischer, 2006; Beckerman and McGlynn, 2007; McGlynn et al., 2009). Such a principle is applied in Rwanda: After the Rwandan Genocide, the Rwandese government placed a heavy emphasis on efforts to reconstruct the nation and create social cohesion to prevent a new outbreak of conflict. Namely, the government aimed at fighting any form of genocidal ideology or the spread of a shared belief, because it was one of the main factors in enabling the genocide. In that sense, education has been seen as a powerful tool that could help in the process of reconciliation and the fight against any division of the Rwandese population (Mafeza, 2013). It is important to note that one of the main factors that led to the genocide in Rwanda was the restriction of access to Tutsi schooling for children and the teaching of a specific historical narrative that celebrated and favoured Hutus (Des Forges, 1999). However, today the Rwandan Peace Education

Programme (RPEP) promotes social cohesion, positive values – including pluralism and personal responsibility, empathy, critical thinking and action to build a more peaceful society. Kamboly (2007) argues that fostering common civic education is the most effective method in preventing future genocide. Post-genocide Rwanda uses education as the main tool for correcting biased perceptions of its socio-political history and providing accurate representations of the causes of genocide (Mafeza, 2013).

Also many countries around the world are becoming acutely aware of the importance of education for national security. For example, the Nigerian Daily Sun (2013) announced that the former Nigerian Minister of Education, Ragayyat Rufai, recognized reform of the education system as a solution to the country's national security threats. Also, the Republic of Croatia's National Security Strategy (2007) states: "Education has one of the most important roles in preserving the Croatian national identity, and the development of a curriculum will adequately deal with Croatian historical, cultural, linguistic, architectural, natural and other heritage. Croatian national and cultural identity will be observed in the context of the European community of nations, languages, history, tradition and identity, which will enable citizens to be equally capable of communicating in such a community. Appropriate efforts will be invested in order to protect the identity of minorities living in the Republic of Croatia."[7]

When it comes to education in a multicultural but divided environment after or during an extended conflict, as in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, then "the link between education, peace and security is even more pronounced" (Clarke-Habibi, 2005).

It is also important to emphasize that education is one of the vital sectors to be reformed by regional countries, using the Council of Europe's expert knowledge to promote pluralism and to combat persistent ethnic polarization and discrimination (Council of Europe, 2012: 7). Considering the above, in terms of the BiH education system in the context of the peace and security maintaining process in the region, as well as within Bosnia and Herzegovina itself, it is highly justified.

Segregation in Bosnia and Herzegovina's Education System

Education has especially suffered in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is not just about the physical destruction that occurred during the conflict, but also political, ideological and nationalist pressures and attitudes that emerged subsequent to the end of the conflict. Nationalism[8] is often

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[7] On the basis of Article 81 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Parliament adopted the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Croatia at its session on July 14, 2017 (See more at: http://www.uvns.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/nacionalnasigurnost/Strategija%20nacionalne%20sigurnosti%20RH.pdf, visited on November 18, 2017)

[8] The essence of nationalism as an ideology is the politicization of culture, that is, its fundamental identity of the collective "we" and the individual self. The concept of nationalism is based on the idea that the individual does not exist without collectivity, which is individually "I" impossible without a collective "we" (Kapo, 2012). Nationalism is a worldview or ideology, according to which in relation to a people of one nation, the attitude towards the nation is more important than any other element of personal or group identity, and from any other relation of loyalty. In addition, they often

manifested through the call for protection of human rights, particularly by invoking the protection of group rights, such as the right of a group to study in their own language, have public support for cultural preservation, the right to cultural autonomy, and protection of the identity of the group. The educational system is the area where these rights can be determined and where groups can seek both cultural and political power in relation to other groups. This is particularly noticeable through attempts to control the facts of the past, curriculums, textbooks, street names, public symbolism, etc. (Low-Beer, 2001; Torsti, 2004, 2009).

When it comes to Bosnia-Herzegovinian society, it must be borne in mind that this is a post-conflict nation and a society devastated by war, and a society that has a continuous inheritance of a permanent ideological tyranny of the ruling structures. Also, a very important fact related to all of the lands of the Former Yugoslavia, and therefore also to Bosnia and Herzegovina, is the fact that every generation has experienced war and suffering in their lifetime.[9] Due to this fact, the question of nationalism is a rooted ideology, which has left behind a materially and spiritually disorganized society. Most educational institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina have been reduced, in terms of function, to "units of ideological reproduction" (Madacki & Karamehić, 2012). On the other hand, as previously mentioned, schools transfer culture from one generation to the next, while at the same time being considered "important social control agents that encourage children to learn and adapt to socially-expected norms and values" (Browne, 1992: 310).

The education system of Bosnia and Herzegovina is characterized by diversity and frequent nationalist conflicts between the three ethnic groups or "Constituent Peoples". The Dayton Agreement and the position of education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially in the Federation, make this country somewhat paradoxical: While education around the world is increasingly approaching the concept of communion and centralization, in Bosnia and Herzegovina it remains fragmented and spanned by principles of separation and differentiation (Russo, 2000; Bozić, 2006; Nellis, 2006; Clark, 2010, Madacki and Karamehić, 2012); a reflection of the high level of ethnic division within the state and the decentralized political system.

The unusual state structure created by the Dayton Peace Agreement[10] has had several negative effects on education. A recent study states that "from the outset, the Dayton Accord

consider their nation more advanced and more positive than all others (Skoko, 2009).

[9] The area of the Balkans, taking into account the geographical, ethnic, cultural and historical characteristics, is a very complex multiethnic, multilingual, and multicultural area with a very tubular past and even more complex present (Pašalic-Kreso, 2008). Mesihović (2011) states that "the pre-cursed curse" that followed them never allowed these countries to come to full capacity. Conflicts, riots, suffering, anguish and fighting marked the security of this region, and as the author states, "this is a world filled with internal fears, frustration and complexity, and in which extraordinary effort is required to remain a man, and even greater effort to become a hero. It's hard to bear, it's hard to live, but it's hard to die in the mountains and plains of the Western Balkans."

[10] The Dayton Peace Agreement, formally ending the war on the territory of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was initialled in the Wright-Peterson Airbase in Dayton, Ohio, in November 1995 and signed in December of the same year in Paris. This agreement establishes the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina as the political axis of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian, not only state, but also universal, reality. This agreement also ended the process of reintegration and disintegration of the country; society is allegedly totally divided in the framework of forced unity, because the war ended without winners and victors (Kapo, 2012).

created a decentralized, asymmetric and defective education management system that completely ignored the unity of education policy, common goals in education, shared values, positive and patriotic feelings for the country and the state" (Pasalić-Kreso, 2008). The Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is an integral part of the Dayton Peace Agreement, namely its Annex IV, defines that education is not the competence of the state.[11] The institutional picture of the education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina reflects the state organization and the constitutions of the Entities, Cantons, and the Statute of the Brčko District, based on which educational competences are legally defined. In practice, this means that there are as many as thirteen ministries dealing with the education sector, and that primary and secondary schools work according to three different curriculums.

One of the key objectives for the three ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina is to preserve their own separate languages and linguistic communities through the education system. The differences between the post-war languages of Croatian, Bosnian, and Serbian (all of which were known under the collective term Serbo-Croatian before the war) are very minor (Greenberg, 2008). Linguists estimate that the difference between them, in terms of vocabulary and grammar, is less than 5%, less than the difference between American English and British English (Fischer, 2006: 313). Numerous scientists examined the controversial language policy in post-war Yugoslavia (Pupavac, 2003, 2006; Bugarski and Hawkesworth 2004; Greenberg, 2008). One linguist illustrates the political use of language in this way: "Citizens of these post-conflict societies consider that in the language they speak, they define their place in society and mark their ethnic identity and even their political orientation" (Greenberg, 2008: 159). Scientists have made an explicit link between language rights, specific language identities, and ethnic divisions and conflicts. Language is seen as an essential part of a community's identity and self-esteem, which is, however, considered crucial to ensuring coherent interethnic relations and the prevention of violent conflicts. However, the treatment of Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs as separate linguistic communities has a tendency to encourage ethnic division and social exclusion[12] (Pupavac 2006: 61).

According to Branković and Arapović (2010), the basic characteristics of the situation in the education sector of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or the key negative trends, can be summarized as follows: (1) A large number of laws regulating the education sector; (2) A high degree of politicization that is present in the education system, both in management and curricula; (3)

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[11] The Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Article III, paragraph 1, defines the competences of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The following matters are under the jurisdiction of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina: (a) Foreign policy; (b) Foreign trade policy; (c) Customs policy; (d) Monetary policy as provided for in Article VII; (e) The funding of institutions and international obligations of Bosnia and Herzegovina; (f) Immigration, refugee and asylum policy, as well as the adoption of regulations on this; (g) Implementation of international and inter-entity criminal law regulations, including relations with Interpol; (h) Installation and operation of common and international communication devices; (i) Adoption of regulations on transport between entities; (j) Air traffic control (See more at: http://www.dei.gov.ba/o_bih/default.aspx?id=49&langTag=en-HR, visited on December 28, 2017)

[12] Social exclusion is treated as a multidimensional and dynamic process in which an individual or groups of people withdraw from social relationships, which leads to the prevention of their full participation in the normal activities of the society in which they live (Silver, 2007).

A high nominal share of education funds to GDP, but also insufficient levels of funds for quality education; (4) Completely ignored scientific research as part of the educational process (there is no legal framework that regulates this important part of the education process); (5) Lack of adequate educational standards; (6) Curriculum and programs not being in line with practices of the countries of the European Union; (7) Obsolete equipment, lack of skilled personnel, etc.

Namely, the problems that arise in Bosnian-Herzegovinian education are multiple. First of all, during the post-war mass return, returnees in many places faced prohibitions in terms of access to their children's schools. The temporary solutions that followed were access to returnee schools housed by the school buildings. However, local authorities blocked attempts to further integrate into a new environment, leading to the formation of organizational units, known as two schools under one roof. However, this type of school is only one of the problem indicators that occur throughout the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Curriculum, school environment and practice, in many or all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, enable the school to largely or exclusively take into account the national group of subjects. In the majority of such cases, parents are forced to choose between the assimilation of their children in local schools or transporting children to a distant school with another major national group. For parents who do not have these opportunities, the introduction of an alternative curriculum and textbook for a national group of subjects was enabled after the signing of the Interim Agreement on the Satisfaction of Special Needs and Rights of Returnee Children in 2002. However, an opportunity to study national subjects is largely only offered in certain places with high numbers of returnees (with the additional exception of Brčko District). Despite an insistence in the Provisional Agreement on finding lasting solutions for all children, educational authorities have so far not consolidated their efforts to fulfil this obligation (OSCE, 2012).

Many international institutions have analysed this issue and made various recommendations (ECRI, OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNDP, etc.). However, the situation has remained unchanged, which is also evidenced by the most recent European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) report on the current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ECRI, 2017).[13]

Regarding the education sector, which should play a fundamental role in overcoming inter-ethnic tensions, the ECRI (European Commission against Racism and Intolerance) noted that none of its 2010 recommendations has been implemented and that the situation remains unchanged in general, with the Brčko District being an exception. Even despite legal obligations, as well as previously undertaken obligations to integrate education, public schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina have not yet been organized as multicultural, multilingual, open and inclusive institutions for all children. Ethnic segregation, based on a politicized presentation of education in the mother tongue, is still present.

The emergence of "two schools under one roof" is the most obvious form of this problem. Despite prior recommendations of the ECRI to resolve all remaining cases of such schools,

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[13] See more at: https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Bosnia_Herzegovina/BIH-CbC-V-2017-002-ENG.pdf, visited on on December 30, 2017.

and the decision of the Supreme Court of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in November 2014 on the same issue, the authorities informed the ECRI that this practice is still being maintained in several schools (about 10%) in Central Bosnia and Herzegovina-Neretva Cantons in the Federation (ECRI, 2017). The separation of school children from Bosniak, Croat and Serb classes in mono-ethnic schools is still a common practice throughout the country, both in the RS and in the Federation, and no steps have been taken to end it, despite ECRI's 2010 recommendation on this issue.

Based on the above, it is noteworthy that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the one hand, this problem is represented by schools that operate on the "two schools under one roof" principle. On the other, there are problematic mono-ethnic schools that do not provide children and young people with an opportunity to become acquainted with the traditions, religions and cultures of their peers. Also, in most cases, minority populations belonging to any ethnic group face major problems within the education system. The ECRI report is just one in a series of those related to this topic that underline just how critical this problem is. However, the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina pay no attention to such recommendations, and therefore no concrete steps have been taken toward the abolition of such practices.

On the other hand, in a society that has certain continuity of rejecting or refusing to accept "otherness", it is very difficult to change such heavily-ingrained attitudes. The best example is the status of Romani in Bosnia-Herzegovinian education.[14] The Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted the Law on the Protection of the Rights of Members of National Minorities in 2003. The law states that Bosnia and Herzegovina will protect the position, equality and rights of 17 national minorities present on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina: Albanians, Montenegrins, Czechs, Italians, Jews, Hungarians, Macedonians, Germans, Poles, Romani, Russian, Rus, Slovak, Slovenian, Turkish and Ukrainian people. The law is a key document for minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina because it gives them the right to protect their cultural, religious, educational, social, economic and political freedoms, needs and identities. The Roma are the largest national minority and the most marginalized group in Bosnia and Herzegovina in social, economic and political terms. In post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Roma face several difficulties in implementing their fundamental human rights guaranteed by the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Particularly worrying are the rights in terms of ownership, access to social protection, education and employment. According to the Ministry of Human Rights (2013), in their Report on the Implementation of the Decade of Romani Inclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina, key barriers that limit the chances of and access to quality Romani education are extreme poverty, changes in places of residence, and the insufficiency of financial resources at the State level to realize all the measures planned in the Action Plan on Romani Education. Namely, at state level in 2012, as well as in 2013, no funds were allocated to support the realization of any measure of the Revised Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the Educational Needs of Roma. While the relevant ministries

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[14] According to the OSCE Mission to BiH, as of 2014, there were a total of 35,644 Romani in 7,225 families in our country. Of these, there are 2,837 families lacking adequate accommodation, of which 736 are classed as homeless (Special Report on the Status of Romani in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2014).

of education allocate budgetary resources, these are still not sufficient to support the educational enrolment of all Roma children.

Most often, schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in a large part or even exclusively, can meet the needs of members of the (local) national majority, both through the curriculum and scholastic environment, as well as through everyday educational practices. This creates a very serious situation for Bosnia and Herzegovina, a post-war state with more people and more faith, where everyone should be equal in terms of educational opportunities. The breaking of barriers between children and the removal of discriminatory action is of great importance for the wellbeing of children and youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as for the foundation of a future in which everyone can attend education and be educated in a friendly and safe environment.

The latest available European Commission Progress Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina (2016) on its path to the European Union states that Romani are still the most vulnerable minority in the state and live in a direly disadvantaged situation. The number of school dropouts and unemployed among the Romani is still very high, and access to the labour market remains difficult. Also, the Report states that no progress has been made regarding measures to preserve and improve the Romani language, culture and history. The Romani language was not offered as an elective course, nor is there any alternative for this language, in any school in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In March 2016, the Joint Commission on Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH adopted a resolution proposing 8th April as Day of the Romani People and 5th November as Day of the Romani Language. However, the extent to which such a decision will improve the situation of the Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains to be seen.

Findings

Despite all constitutional and legal obstacles, the possibility of establishing integrated education has been demonstrated in the example of the Autonomous District of Brčko. There are no more divided or mono-ethnic schools in the District; instead, they have turned to joint teaching of children from different ethnic communities. Teachers in Brčko District attend training sessions to enable students and teaching staff to use each of the three official languages. The ECRI in its Report, however, states that in 2014, during discussions with education authorities of Republika Srpska and various Cantons of the Federation, it noticed a strong and politically motivated rejection of the idea that the education system of Brčko District can be seen as a model for future integration. It is fair to say that integration is not the goal of nationalist parties. This has been confirmed by a respondent who stated: "They [local authorities] did not want to abolish the two schools under one roof in Vitez, even after the Supreme Court ruling, because they are divided by divisions. While the divisions exist, the Muslims will vote for the SDA[15] and the Croats for HDZ[16]." (Respondent A, Focus group 2, 7th November, 2017).

[15] The Party of Democratic Action (Bosnian: Stranka demokratkse akcije or SDA) is a conservative Bosniak political party in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
[16] The Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnian: Hrvatska demokratska zajednica Bosne i

Outside the Brčko District, positive steps taken by some schools, such as the Mostar Gymnasium, are largely limited by the existing legal framework for the education sector that maintains the structure of separate classes in the Federation and RS based on language, as well as ethnicity. The Gymnasium in Mostar has made genuine efforts to improve the situation, not only by means of an administrative merge (one director, a unified teaching staff, one student council and one parent council), but has organized common activities for students, as much as possible, such as art projects, sports, festivities and school trips.

However, the devastating fact is that, instead of separate schools being abolished, the authorities seek to extend discrimination to other schools. This problem was especially expressed in the summer of 2016, when the Government of the Central Bosnia Canton tried to divide students in Jajce.[17] However, the students rebelled. This is the first case in which students raised their voices against division. Ivica Janković, a student at the secondary vocational school in Jajce, stated in an interview with Al Jazeera Balkans: "We do not want to be divided into Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats. We want to go together to school."[18]

Post-conflict societies are ones that are faced by various security challenges in the process of transition and reconciliation. Such security challenges are largely and causally related to past warfare. Therefore, it seems very important to respond in a timely manner to all such challenges that can jeopardize the process of reconciliation and peace building.

What is especially worrying and burdening upon the Bosnian-Herzegovinian reality is the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina has made minimal progress in terms of post-war and social reconciliation. The consequences of such a situation are major problems associated with power, the rule of law and democratic accountability.[19] On the other hand, in the focus groups conducted in November 2017, the following statements of the students of the University of Sarajevo imply support for the aforementioned:

Hercegovine or HDZ BiH) is the largest political party of Bosnian Croats.

[17] At the beginning of summer 2016, the Government of the Central Bosnia Canton made the decision to build another secondary school in Jajce in order to achieve conditions for the ethnically-segregated education of high school students. Nevertheless, it seems that the pupils defied the elected politicians, and rebelled against the government's decision, sjowing that, for once, activism could win in Bosnia and Herzegovina. (See more: "Mladi pobijedili sistem: U jajcu neće biti odvojenih škola ", Dnevni avaz, 14.8 2016. http://avaz.ba/vijesti/teme/250153/mladi-pobijedili-sistem-u-jajcu-nece-biti-odvojenih-skola, visited on January 07, 2018.

[18] See more at: http://balkans.aljazeera.net/video/srednjoskolci-protiv-novih-podjela-u-jajcu, visited on January 07, 2018.

[19] In the 2015 OECD Report titled "States of Fragility 2015, Meeting Post-2015 Ambitions", Bosnia and Herzegovina is included in a group of 50 of the most unstable states in the world. To measure instability, the OECD proposes a model that consists of five measures: violence; access to justice for all; effective, responsible and inclusive institutions; economic inclusion and instability; capacities for prevention; and adaptation to economic, ecological crises and disasters. The report is fully accessible at: http://www.oecd.org/dac/states-of-fragility-2015-9789264227699-en.htm, visited on January 26, 2018.

"In my school there were not many students from other ethnic groups, and we would somehow find a common language with them." (Respondent B, Focus group 2, November 07, 2017).

"In my school, fights between students were often based on ethnic hatred. Once I witnessed a fight between Bosniak and Croat pupils. After talking with the director, parents and pedagogue, everything calmed down." (Respondent A, Focus group 1, November 06, 2017).

"It has become normal for people to insult on an ethnic or religious basis in our country. If that were not the case, there would have been no conflict. This is what we have become used to and we do not care." (Respondent A, Focus group 3, November 08, 2017).

According to Perry (2015), there are several reasons why the education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been neglected in the challenge of creating thoughtful young people dedicated to Euro-Atlantic values: "(1) The fragmentation of the system grounded in a commitment to maintain the narratives of narrow party and ethno-national group interests; (2) The system largely relying on rote memorization and teaching from the text-book which does not foster intellectual development, analytical thinking skills, critical media literacy and civic citizenship; (3) Ethnicization which promotes an "us" vs. "them" mentality in a post-war region that has experienced little genuine political and social reconciliation; (4) The introduction of religion into school programs, that focused on doctrinal religious instruction, rather than on inclusive, non-dominant approaches and education; (5) External efforts to support reforms have failed to address the root causes and problems in school curricula, particularly in the national identity focused subjects." Several student statements confirmed the above. However, one of the most remarkable comments was:

"I have to speak in terms of "us" and "them", because I do not know otherwise as a result of state dividing us. The school, too. I cannot talk about community when it doesn't exist." (Respondent C, Focus group 2, November 07, 2017).
Also, one of the students coming from a small town in Republika Srpska stated, on the topic of introducing religious education in schools:
"I think that high schools should introduce religious education, but only for our own faith, since only Serbs live in our town, and we only have churches. I think that the population would have a repulsion towards the idea that their children learn about other religions." (Respondent B, Focus group 3, November 08, 2017).

In addition to the school, learning processes in primary social agencies – the family – create a never-ending history for generations that have never experienced this past, nor have memories of it. Images of war, heroic fighting and defence of their territories are projected without any development of critical thinking, without asking questions and demanding answers. Students who

participated in this study were born five or more years after the war ended, but their attitude to the war is almost identical on all three sides. Two of the respondents pointed out:

> "My parents forbade my love with a Serb. Especially my father who participated in the defence of Sarajevo. All Serbs are guilty to him." (Respondent A, Focus group 4, November 09, 2017).
> "When I go anywhere in Republika Srpska, I feel strange. Nobody looks at me or touches me, but the feeling is bad." (Respondent A, Focus group 5, November 10, 2017).

If deeper analyses of previous statements were made, we could begin to talk about a certain level of indoctrination that starts from early childhood and continues through school. This type of ethnic extremism, in an already shattered, post-conflict Bosnia-Herzegovinian society, can experience a transformation into violence.

In the analysis of the security risk that the Atlantic Initiative and the Democratization Policy Council conducted during the period of Spring-Autumn 2011, a number of factors in Bosnia and Herzegovina were assessed that influenced the potential for inter-ethnic violence and the resumption of armed conflict (Azinović, Bassuener, & Weber, 2012). In this context, it seems particularly interesting to analyse some of the most important reports on the state of security in Bosnia and Herzegovina, considering those that were created by the executive Bosnia-Herzegovinian authorities and those coming from the European Union and the international community, as well as those coming from academia.

The first in a series of reports that directly dealt with the assessment of the potential for the renewal of ethnic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the one mentioned above. Some of the most important areas that can lead to the escalation of ethnic violence and the continuation of the crisis that emerged in the 1990s, are claimed by the author to be as follows: nationalistic political rhetoric and hate speech, both by political elites and by the media; weak capacities of state institutions; the economic crisis and economic polarization of society, which can lead to social unrest; a security sector that lacks uniqueness and coordination across all systems, but especially the police; a judicial system in which political influence has been proven on several occasions; young people who express their frustrations in football matches, as well as through juvenile delinquency, hate speech and hate crimes; a returnee population who realize their rights in rare situations without interfering with the security services; and Islamist radicalization and terrorism. What is lacking in this analysis is that Azinović et al. only referred to Islamist radicalism, while inadvertently neglecting other radical ideologies that undeniably pose a threat to the security of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its citizens.[20]

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[20] The gathering of members of the Chetnik Ravnogorski Movement in Višegrad each March is just one of a series of such comparable examples.

The aforementioned Ministry of Security's 2016 Annual Report on the State of Security in Bosnia and Herzegovina, among other things, underlined the following two challenges for the security of Bosnia-Herzegovinian society:

- High unemployment rate, which contributes to the increase of general poverty and social stratification, which manifests through public protest and other public dissatisfaction events. We should neglect neither the fear nor despair of existential threats, nor do the individual manifestations of violent extremism within the frame work such protests.
- Existence of those types of extremism aimed at endangering territorial integrity Bosnia and Herzegovina, provoking national, racial and religious hatred, strife and intolerance, freedom and rights of man and citizen, citizens' disturbance, and the prevention of return refugees and displaced persons.

Also, an analysis of the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina in July 2014 by the International Crisis Group states that: "While the physical scars of the 1992-1995 Bosnia war have healed, political agony and ethnic tension persist. Real peace requires a new constitution and bottom-up political change."[21]

Conclusion

If the current situation in the education system of Bosnia and Herzegovina were to be summarized, it could be concluded that education in Bosnia and Herzegovina does not function toward social integration, but, according to Perry (2015), is instead a mere "continuation of war by other means". The current ethnically determined and segregated education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a consequence of a near past that has been created and guided with the goal of ethnic crystallization and determinism. The famous Bosnian intellectual and writer Ivan Lovrenović claims that politicians in education only see the symbolic value: "In Bosnia and Herzegovina, education is only a means of achieving a certain party and nationalist policy which, as such, has no humanitarian or social values" (Lovrenović, 2005). Although it is an extremely effective tool for human development, education can also promote ideas, attitudes and behaviours that form the basis for the intensification of conflict. The systematic analysis of educational systems from the perspective of security studies is an insufficiently developed field.

Restoration of the education system is a very important element in the reconstruction of society itself following an armed conflict, humanitarian disaster, or political transition. The Education for Reconstruction report (Philips et al., 1998) relies heavily on the experiences of the European reconstruction after the Second World War. It also provides case studies on educational reconstructions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda. Within the report, a distinction is drawn between physical reconstruction of school facilities and the ideological reconstruction related to democratization, confidence building and psychological awareness.

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[21] See more at: https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/balkans/bosnia-and-herzegovina/bosnia-s-future, visited on February 15, 2018.

Although only the pessimistic statements of the respondents are presented in the paper, this does not mean that no positive opinions were put forward. Namely, when speaking about the current situation at the University of Sarajevo, the respondents spoke about socializing with members of other groups as something very positive for them and their perceptions. This may be a sign that young people should be given the opportunity to get to know each other and socialize with members of other communities, in order to understand that they have plenty of common interests, regardless of ethnic group affiliation or belonging.

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