

The Bulgarian educational system and evaluation of the ISCED-97 implementation

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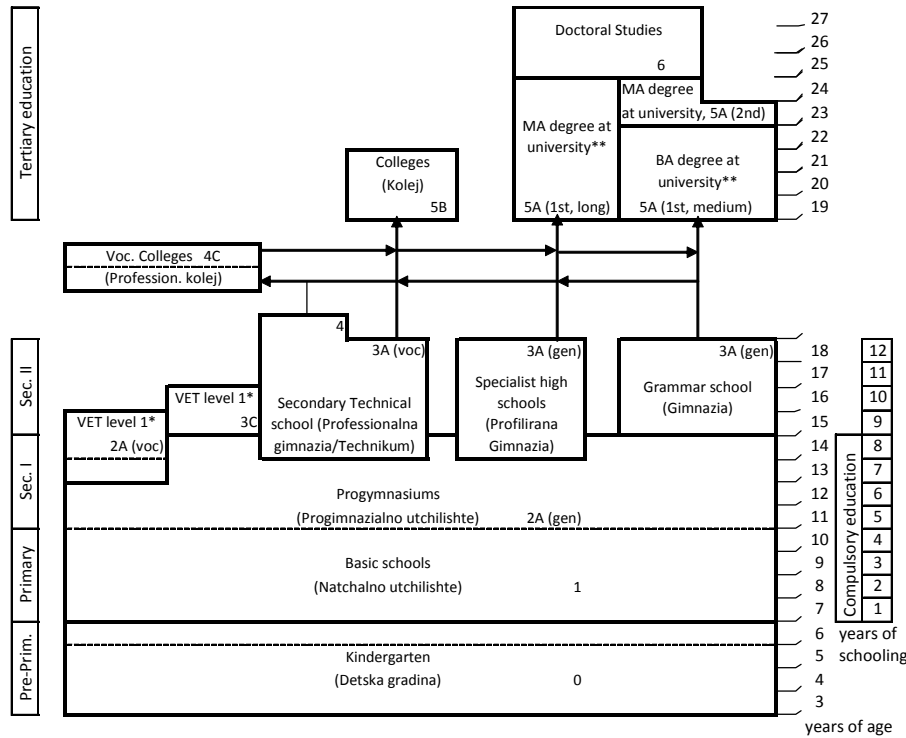
1 The educational system in Bulgaria

School education is compulsory from age 6/7 to age 16. It comprises basic education (*osnovno obrazovanie/osnovno obrazovanie*) (years 1 to 8) which is divided into: first stage – (*natchalen etap/nachalen etap*) (years 1 to 4, ISCED level 1) and second stage (*progimnazialen etap- progimnazialen etap*) (years 5 to 8, ISCED level 2). Basic education can be obtained at state, municipal and private schools. It is free of charge with the exception of private schools. There is a single curriculum for primary education which is compulsory for all pupils from years 1 to 4; moreover, in these years teachers work with one class. After successful completion of year four, a certificate (*удостоверение за завършен IV клас*) is issued. The certificate includes the annual score in the subjects studied in year four, as well as the score obtained in the chosen/optional subjects.

Lower secondary education (*progimnazialen etap/прогимназиален етап*) (years 5 to 8) lays the foundations for studying the basics of different sciences and at the end of this education pupils should have acquired such skills. A certificate of basic education (*Svidetelstvo za zavurcheno osnovno obrazovanie/Svidetelstvo za zavurcheno osnovno obrazovanie*) is issued after the successful completion of year eight. The certificate includes the annual score obtained in the subjects studied in year eight, as well as the scores obtained in the chosen subjects. A pupil passes from basic school to secondary school without having to pass an entrance examination, by using the basic school certificate. Entry into profile-oriented schools (e.g. mathematic or language oriented school) after completing their course in year 7 or 8 (language schools, school of mathematics, technical schools, etc.) is on the basis of entrance examinations. In the academic year 2001/02 the number of public schools was: 368 primary (grades 1–4), 22 lower secondary (grades 5–8), 1,829 basic secondary (grades 1–8). There were 55 private general schools. The net enrolment rate in the primary education is 96.4%, in the lower secondary 84.2%.

Secondary general education (*sredno obchto obrazovanie/средно общо образование*, ISCED level 3A [general]) covers pupils from years 9 to 12 (13) and is again free of charge with the exception of private schools. It is provided by: (1)

Figure 1. The Bulgarian educational system



* professional qualifications mainly aimed at adults.
 ** additionally requires passing of an entrance examination.

secondary comprehensive schools (SCS), which cover: school grades 1 to 4; pre-secondary school grades 5 to 8; and secondary school level – grades 9 to 12; (2) specialised secondary schools, i.e. profiled gymnasia,¹ (grades 8 to 12); (3) secondary schools, i.e. gymnasia, (grades 9 to 12). In 2001/02, 160 upper-secondary schools (grades 9–12), 393 secondary comprehensive schools (grades 1–12) and 40 secondary comprehensive schools (grades 5–12) were operating. 67% of students in the age group 15–19 continue their post-compulsory education, 29% (about 40% of all students with compulsory education) in gymnasia and 38% (about 57% of all students with compulsory education) in vocational or technical schools. After successful completion of the last year of secondary school and passing the compulsory matriculation examinations, a Diploma of completed secondary education (*Diploma za sredno obrazovanie*/Диплома за средно образование) is issued. Holders of secondary school leaving qualifications (*Diploma za sredno obrazovanie*) are enti-

¹ Public opinion considers the profiled gymnasia to be the elite, and the education they provide to be of high quality.

tled to continue their education on a higher educational level (university and non-university), without restriction as to the choice of a higher education establishment. The secondary school leaving qualification gives also access to the labour market.

Secondary vocational education (*средно професионално образование*) is provided in vocational training schools and/or technical schools, i.e. *technikum* or *vocational gymnasium* since 2003/04 (ISCED level 3A [vocational], covering grades 8/9 to 12). Graduates receive a secondary education diploma and a certificate for second- or third-level vocational qualification (vocational theory and practice exams). Estimates are that many of the students from this type of school continue with higher education.

There are also vocational training schools (from grade 6 or 7) offering three-year training programmes (ISCED 2A vocational); vocational training schools (from grade 9) offering up-to four-year training programmes (ISCED 3C) and vocational training schools offering two-year training programmes after completed secondary education (as a rule ISCED level 4C). Upon completion of vocational training schools students can continue in other types of secondary schools in the case of 2A (voc) and 3C schools and in the university in the case of 4C.

In 2004/05, vocational education was carried out in 19 art schools, 459 vocational gymnasias, 5 vocational schools and 17 post-secondary vocational colleges. There also existed 43 private VET schools. The completion of secondary vocational education is certified with a school leaving certificate for a successful completion of secondary education and a certificate for professional qualification, issued upon completion of vocational training and granting the right to practice a profession. Certificate for secondary specialised education (*Диплома за средно специално образование*) as well as a certificate for professional qualification (*Свидетелство за професионална квалификация*) are issued.

Vocational education and training which is provided through sandwich-type training, specifically apprenticeships, are not a common practice in Bulgaria. The theoretical and practical part of the apprenticeship is the responsibility of the employers. The training is provided in the company's training centres (this is rather seldom) or in the schools of the formal vocational training on the request of employers.² Education/training establishments are: state and municipal training centres, company training centres (*професионални училища/professionalni utchilishta*), vocational schools and vocational colleges (*професионални колежи/professionalni koleji*). Company training centres (*професионални училища*) organ-

² There is an opinion that Bulgarian VET curricula are highly job-specific and still prepare students for jobs that no longer exist. Such schools are often in poor financial shape: their equipment is outdated, salary payment for staff are irregular, and utility costs are high.

ise training as follows: three years after grade 6 (13 years of age), two years after grade 7 (14 years of age) and up to four-year courses after grade 8 (15 years of age). Students who finish schooling after the level of basic education with different levels of vocational qualification do not earn another educational level but only different vocational skills. Students receive a certificate for first, second, third or fourth-level vocational qualification, which gives access to different professions.

Vocational colleges (*Професионални колежи*, ISCED level 4C) organise post-secondary vocational training with duration up to two years after completion of secondary education. Graduates receive a certificate for fourth-level professional qualification, whereas continuation to higher educational levels is possible on the basis of students' secondary diplomas. Experience shows that youth who do not pass university entrance exams usually go to such colleges.

Holders of secondary school leaving qualifications (*Diploma of Secondary Education*) are entitled to continue their education on a higher educational level (university), without restriction as to the choice of a higher education establishment. 35% of the age group 19–24 was enrolled in tertiary education in the year 1999/2000. The proportion of school leavers going on to tertiary education is even higher – 60%. There was a 40% increase in student numbers in tertiary education between 1990/1991 and 1999/2000, with the main surge occurring between 1990/1991 and 1996/97. Only about 10% of all students are enrolled in private institutions.

Admission to higher education institutions is based on successful entrance examinations. The type and number of these examinations are determined by the higher education institutions and are closely linked to its respective profile. In compliance with the Bologna process, important amendments to the Higher Education Act became effective. Thus a model comprising under- and post-graduate levels has been introduced since 2004. The undergraduate level comprises the *Specialist in...* (ISCED 5B), as well as the *Bachelor's degree* (ISCED 5A), while the postgraduate level gives the possibility to students to choose between *Master's degree* (ISCED 5A), which gives additional knowledge and skills and better chances at the labour market, and *Doctoral programmes* (ISCED 6) where predominantly young researchers are trained.

The 1995 Higher Education Act introduced the non-university type of higher education provided by colleges (*колежи*, ISCED level 5B). They offer a three-year programme for vocationally-oriented education in various fields with a view to obtaining the degree of Specialist in [*subject*]. They are mainly incorporated within the structure of the universities. They may also be independent, provided they fulfil the compulsory academic and material requirements. According to the Higher Education Act, University education institutions in Bulgaria are *университети* (universities), *специализирани висши училища* (specialised higher education institutions), *институту* (institutes), *академии* (academies), etc. There are also colleges which are non-university type of higher education institutions. In 2001/02, there were in

total 90 establishments for higher learning, including private ones. 37 state higher education institutions were functioning in the country, training specialists for the degrees of *бакалавър* (Bachelor, ISCED level 5A), *магистър* (Master, ISCED level 5A) and the scientific educational degree *доктор* (Doctor, ISCED level 6). There were also 42 state colleges, 5 private universities and specialised institutions and 6 private colleges. Universities provide a wide range of specialization in at least three or four basic fields of study (humanities, social and natural sciences, management, engineering and architecture, etc.) and cover a considerable number of scientific areas.³ A university can also carry out preparation in one or two basic fields of science and culture. In this case the university's specialization is reflected in its name. Specialised higher schools (academies and institutes) carry out scientific activities and education in basic fields of science, arts, sports and military science. Their names denote their area of specialization. The structure of higher education comprises the following degrees: (1) first degree – at least a four-year programme ending with a Bachelor's degree; (2) second degree – at least a five-year programme or one/two years after the Bachelor's degree ending with a Master's degree; (3) third degree – at least a three-year programme after covering the Master's degree or four-year after covering the Bachelor's degree, ending with a Doctor's degree.

2 Remarks concerning the application of the ISCED-97 in Bulgaria

The methodology of collecting information on education in Bulgaria is based on the ISCED-97. Some peculiarities of the implementation of the ISCED-97 for measuring educational enrolments could be mentioned. Pupils that are in preparatory class before first grade are classified in the ISCED 1 group as the programme for their studies is closer to the elementary (basic) education than to the one in kindergarten. The programme is devoted to the study of Bulgarian and mathematics, aiming at better preparation for elementary school. Pupils in class 8, accepted in the special (language, arts, etc.) and professional secondary schools after enrolment in grade 7, are classified in level ISCED 3A as this class is a part of the special secondary or professional school programmes. Pupils in vocational schools accepted after enrolment in grades 6 and 7 are classified in level ISCED 2A, while pupils from professional schools accepted after class 8 are classified as ISCED 3C.

In the case of Bulgaria, the lack of differentiation within secondary education between technical and general studies (i.e. between 3A general and 3A vocational) does not allow analysing significant gender, regional and educational quality differences. Of importance are also the differences between Bachelor and Master Stud-

³ It is interesting to note that during the years of student expansion, there was a massive influx into the Educational science and Economics.

ies, which are currently hardly reflected by the ISCED-97. This differentiation is recent and the majority of the students till two years ago were all having Master degrees; but with regard to the future it is relevant to differentiate between Bachelor and Master Studies. These two groups are significant in size and are put in one category, while the 5B group is a separate category although there are only few students in it.

3 Educational attainment and enrolment in Bulgaria

During the period 2000–2004, the educational structure of the population aged 25–64 continued to improve following the clear-cut tendency towards an increase of the share of the population with higher and secondary education together with the decrease of the share of people with primary and lower education only. The relative share of the population with higher education (college and university) increased from 18% in 2000 to 22% in 2004 and the share of those with upper secondary education remains the same – 50%. Parallel to this the relative share of persons with primary and lower education decreased from 32% to 28%. This means that 72% of the population of working age (25–64 years old) have secondary or higher education. More detailed statistics on the various educational stages are presented in the following paragraphs.

3.1 General education (GE): primary through upper secondary education

In the school year 2004/05, according to the statistical information (NSI, 2005) there are 2,657 general education schools. Out of these, 291 are primary schools, 1,763 are basic schools, 21 lower secondary schools, 167 secondary and 415 combined schools (SES). In comparison with the previous school year, the total number of general schools decreased by 39, out of which 36 were in rural areas.

During 2004/05, the number of students is 758,000, of which 163,500 were in rural areas. In comparison with the previous school year, the number of students in general education decreased by 4.8%. In comparison with 2000/01, the number of students in GE has decreased by 12.6%. For primary and pre-secondary education, this reduction is 22.4% and 14.8% respectively. For secondary education there is an increase of 17.6% due to the prolonged term of education and increased enrolment in this type of education by young people of this age.

Recent data (NSI, 2005) show that in 2000/01, 69.9% of the students in GE study a foreign language, and this proportion increases to 87.3% in 2004/05. The greatest interest is towards English which is studied by 74.7% of the students who study foreign languages.

In 2004, 77,600 students graduated from basic education and 33,000 from lower secondary in the general education schools.

During 2003/04, 23,100 students have left GE without finishing it, of which 19,200 left basic schools. One should not consider them as having left the education once and forever though. It is possible that they will continue in another school or in the next year, as education is compulsory until the age of 16. The largest share of students leaving school is for family reasons (47.1% of all leaving students). The portion of those who interrupted their education as they do not want to study is considerable (24.5%).

As of 1/10/2004, there are 56 private general schools in Bulgaria. Out of these, there are 5 primary schools, 24 basic and lower secondary, 23 upper secondary schools and 4 combined schools. Only 0.8% of the total number of GE school children study in private schools.

Students with a chronic illness, handicapped children and students in an underprivileged social position (permanently or temporarily without parents and families) are studying in 127 special schools. These are in total 13,300 pupils.

3.2 Vocational education and training (VET)

The distribution of vocational schools in Bulgaria meets predominantly regional needs. Some of the schools offer the same vocational fields as those needed in enterprises. More than half of all vocational schools are situated in the bigger towns.

The system of VET prepares students for the labour market by creating conditions for acquiring vocational qualifications (BNO, 1998; 1999). From 2004/05, students from VET get only a secondary education diploma if they do not take a state exam for acquiring a degree of vocational qualification.

Bulgaria faces two main challenges with regard to VET: (1) the implementation of the VET Law adopted in July 1999, which complements the Public Education Act; and (2) the 'harmonisation' of its VET system and its national needs with those of the European Union. The key issues are:

- decentralisation of the VET system;
- optimisation of the VET school network;
- co-operation between VET and the labour market;
- efficiency and quality of VET;
- sustaining VET reform.

Priorities are to update VET standards, and to further develop assessment and certification. With regard to employment and social affairs, the objectives set by the Bulgarian government for human resource development and labour market policy correspond well with the priorities identified by the European Commission.

3.3 Tertiary education

As a whole, tertiary education in Bulgaria is characterised by a steep rise in the numbers of students in higher education, from 120,000 in 1990 to 258,000 in 2000 and an increase in the interest to study (Boyadjieva, 1998; Brunner, 1999). There are 145,489 students in state and 21,270 in the private universities in the academic year 2004/05. Among those, 74,269 and 10,880 respectively are males. Additionally, in the academic year 2004/05, there are 49,648 students in state universities in the extra-mural mode of education and 2,711 in the distance mode of learning. The respective numbers for private universities are 16,015 and 1,812. The total number of students in the academic year 2004/05 is 214,400, and 96.3% of them are Bulgarian citizens. The total number of students enrolled in the four education qualification degrees – specialist, bachelor, master and doctor is 237,900.

During the academic year 2004/05, the number of universities and specialised higher schools were 43, of which 7 were private. In the structure of students by field of education, the highest relative share is that of the students in the field of Business and Administration (24.0%), followed by Engineering and Engineering Trades (16.5%). The share of students is lowest in the Life Sciences (0.9%), Environmental Protection (0.8%), Veterinary (0.7%) and Mathematical Sciences (0.5%).

15.3% of all students are studying in the seven private universities. In comparison with the previous academic year, their number has increased by 12.8%, and in comparison with 2000/2001, the increase is 28.7%, with a constant increase being observed since then.

By mode of attendance, students are distributed in the following way: 70.6% are regular students, 27.3% have opted for extra-mural education and 2.1% do distance learning.

In 2004/05, the number of foreign students has increased by 331 persons in comparison with the previous academic year. Their number remains comparatively constant since the academic year 2000/01. The highest share of foreign students studying in Bulgaria comes from Macedonia (39.6% of all foreign students), followed by the students from Turkey (14.9%) and Greece (11.1%).

The number of newly enrolled students who are Bulgarian citizens for the academic year 2004/05 is 38,000 or 736 persons more than the previous year. Among these students, the greatest share is of those who have graduated from general secondary education (64.0%), followed by the ones graduated from secondary technical schools (33.5%).

In 2004/05, 41,700 students have graduated with the degree of “Bachelor” or “Master”. The relative share of Bulgarian students who have graduated is highest in the fields of Business Administration (29.2%), Social and Behavioural Sciences

(15.5%), Engineering and Engineering Trades (12.5%) and Teachers' Training and Education Sciences (8.5%).

During the 2004/05 academic year, education for acquiring the degree "Specialist in..." is carried out in 10 independent colleges, of which 9 are private, and in 40 colleges in the structure of universities. According to the field of education, the highest relative share is Business Administration (25.1%), followed by Engineering and Engineering Trades (21.1%) and Health (16.7%). In 2004, the Specialist degree has been acquired by 3,800 students. Among graduates, 24.6% are in the field of Health, followed by the field of Engineering and Engineering Trades (21.2%) and Business Administration (14.8%).

As of 31/12/2004, 5,079 doctoral students are being trained in Bulgaria. In comparison with 2003, their number has increased by 5.1%. By mode of attendance, Ph.D. students are distributed in the following way: 57.1% regular doctoral students, 23.9% in extra-mural training and 19.0% are independent. The highest portion of doctoral students is in the field of engineering studies (20.3%), followed by the ones of Business Administration (12.4%) and Humanities (11.7%). In 2004, a doctoral degree was acquired by 392 persons of whom 199 were women (50.8%). Their number is highest in the Humanities (15.6% of the total number of graduates), followed by those who acquired a doctoral degree in the field of Engineering Studies (14.0%), Business Administration (12.8%) and Physical Sciences (11.7%).

Table 1. Net enrolment rate of the population by level of education⁴ in the periods 2000–2005

ISCED	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005
0	66.8	73.6	74.2	74.6	73.6
1	96.3	98.5	99.8	100.0	99.7
2A	82.4	83.1	83.9	84.2	84.2
3A, 3C	64.7	68.3	74.9	77.1	77.3
4C	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
5B	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.6	3.1
5A	23.0	22.8	23.9	24.1	25.8

Source: NSI (2005): 116.

Generally, Bulgaria's economy is characterised by fluctuating economic growth with increasing GDP, low inflation rate, decreasing manufacturing output, negative

⁴ Group rates are calculated in per cent of enrolment by levels in age groups 3–6, 7–10, 11–14, 15–18, 19–20, 19–21, 19–23; 7–15 years to number of population in the same age groups.

foreign trade balance, and increasing amounts of foreign investment. The development of the labour market is characterised by restructuring of branches and companies, privatisation, liquidation of companies and new business start-ups. The recent expansion of the private sector indicates a promising dynamic, but does not compensate for the increase of unemployment caused by a shrinking public sector. Small and medium-size enterprises have a substantial employment share – 41% – but are not yet sufficiently efficient in the current economic conditions. While the service, construction, tourism and information technology sectors are in good shape, chemical industry, timber processing and textile production are in decline.

4 Special features

Bulgaria is characterised by steep declines in birth rates, which means that by school year 2006/07, there are 31% fewer children in grades 1–4 and 23% fewer in grades 5–8 in comparison with the previous school year. Between 1999 and 2010, the number of 5- to 14-year olds is expected to decrease by 336,000 and the number of 15- to 25-year olds by 273,000 (National Statistical Institute). The economy will have to recruit from the adult population, requiring Vocational Education and Training institutions to train adults; which is in fact listed as a priority in the National Development Plan (2000–2006). These changes are of major concern in the Ministry for Education and Science (MoES), and underpin its school optimisation policy.

Another significant characteristic is the low participation rate after grade 8 (only about 67% of the age cohort), and high drop-out rates especially among ethnic minorities. Overall, drop-out is officially estimated at 6–7% during the compulsory phase of education; real figures are likely to be higher, but even at 6% it means that there are 45,000 children not in school that should be. Officials at the MoES and the local inspectorates do not seem to be very concerned, and frequently state that drop-outs are ‘mostly Roma’ (Kolev et al., 2000). But the law on compulsory education applies to *all* children in Bulgaria, of *any* ethnic origin; moreover, statistics and the team’s own data indicate that the problem is not confined to Roma children. The issue needs to be taken much more seriously, analysing the school environment, the content and process of instruction as well as the social context, and any unnecessary barriers should be identified and removed insofar as possible, certainly through grade 8.

4.1 Co-operation between VET and the labour market

The Unemployment Security and Employment Incentives Act (UEIPA, adopted in 1997), the Vocational Education and Training Act (VETA, adopted in 1999) and the Labour Code constitute the main regulative framework for joint activities of VET

and the labour market. This framework includes initial and continuing training, as well as retraining for the labour market. The MoES, through its VET system, provides training and retraining for adults in vocational schools and vocational high schools, which have to be financed by the trainees. Besides the VET schools there is a large sector of public, private and NGO-provided training.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policies (MoLSP), through its National Employment Agency and its local labour offices, addresses training for unemployed persons who have a firm job offer. They also provide training for workers expected to be made redundant due to industrial restructuring. Although youth unemployment is a major problem in Bulgaria, there are no special training programmes for young unemployed.

The MoLSP also provides regional programmes for employment. These include training measures related to regional employment needs (e.g. infrastructure build-up, promotion of self-employment, micro-projects for professional qualifications, etc.). A joint human resource development strategy has been developed between the MoES and MoLSP and included in the Bulgarian National Development Plan (NDP) to respond to the skills needs of Bulgaria's market economy.

4.2 State and private schools, and educational attainment

According to their primary source of funding, schools are classified as 'state' or 'municipal' schools. State schools, which include special needs and vocational schools, are funded directly from the MoES or other relevant ministries. Municipal schools are funded from three sources: (1) a block grant to the municipality from the Ministry of Finance for social services, including education; (2) a share of the municipal tax revenues; (3) extra-budgetary funds that are raised by the schools themselves.

State schools – except those that take part in a 'delegated budget' pilot programme involving 104 schools – do not manage their funds themselves. Services are provided and paid for by the municipality; salaries are paid centrally by the municipality; and maintenance of buildings is done and paid for by the municipality, too. Very little money is being spent on teaching and learning materials. While 70% of the budget goes to pay salaries and 12% to pay for utilities (mostly heating), only 1% is spent on school libraries and teaching materials.

According to the Law of Public Education (Article No. 26), instruction is provided in the following types of schools:

Table 2. School types

1.	Junior – grades 1–4
2.	Middle – grades 5–8
3.	Primary – grades 1–8
4.	Secondary – grades 9–12
5.	Specialised secondary – grades 8–12
6.	Comprehensive – grades 1–12
7.	Vocational training schools – from grade 8 or 9 through 12
8.	Vocational schools – from grade 6 or 7 offering a three-year course; or from grade 9 offering courses of up to four years; or after secondary education acquisition, a two-year course
9.	Sport schools
10.	Art schools
11.	Special schools for children with special educational needs (SEN)

One of the strengths of Bulgarian education is that the school system is capable of providing schooling for the vast majority of children up to the age of 16. The school network created in socialist times has been maintained, and there is no lack of schools or teachers. However, true equality of educational opportunity is not simply a matter of provision; it has four main components – equality in access to, survival in, treatment during, and life chances as a result of, education – and not all children are ‘equal’ in all four.

Nevertheless, Bulgaria has managed to maintain pre-1989 levels of pre-school enrolment (62% of the 2–8 age group), and statistics show that access to grades 1–4 is virtually universal (gross enrolment rate stands at almost 100%). However, gross enrolments at middle (grades 5–8) and secondary levels (9–12) decrease to 87% and 68% respectively. This is particularly worrying for grades 5–8, which are still part of compulsory education.

Bulgaria has made positive efforts to improve the living standards and educational opportunities of minorities (Kostova and Giordano, 2005). The parliament ratified the *‘Framework Convention for Protection of National Minorities’* in February 1999, and many NGOs and other agencies are active. There is, however, no explicit national strategy for education of minority groups, and conditions, especially for Roma, are still far from equal. Small-scale discrimination against Roma continues in daily life. The literacy rate among Roma is considerably lower than in the general population (Ringold, 2000). In general, fewer Roma children attend kindergarten, and many Roma children start their primary schooling late, e.g. at age 8 or 9. There have also been reports of declining school attendance among all Bulgarian children,

but particularly among Roma. As for secondary school, only 6% of Roma completed secondary education compared with 40% of the total population (Ringold, 2000; Kostova and Giordano, 2005). These 1997 figures probably reflect the crisis of 1997, but once children have dropped out of compulsory education, they will not find it easy to get back in.

5 Concluding remarks

The application of the ISCED-97 certainly has a positive impact with regard to international comparisons in the field of education. The Bulgarian side is contributing to the development of the classification applying it to the data on education in the country in a precise way. However, the need to achieve a classification with a high degree of comparability of categories over countries contributes to a significant level of generality and this has as a result some negative implications, particularly the lack of differentiation within upper secondary education (vocational and general studies) and within university education (BA and MA).

An important problem is also the influence of the ISCED-97 on sociological research. In order to have sociological data comparable to the statistical office data, recent empirical research applies the ISCED. Due to its generality, data needed for analyses on education and other social relations is either not collected or if collected it is recorded only according to the ISCED categories. As the latter are broad, the possibility for a better understanding of the various educational systems and social relations is lost. It is therefore very important that detailed national classifications are not entirely replaced by the ISCED-97.

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