

NON-ENROLMENT AND SCHOOL DROPOUT

A STUDY BASED ON A SURVEY OF CHILDREN
AND YOUTHS WHO DO NOT ENROL IN OR DROP
OUT OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

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December, 2011

ABOUT YERP

(Youth Employability and Retention Programme)

Dropout study was done for the purposes of YERP – Youth Employability and Retention Programme supported by the Millennium Development Goals' Fund (MDG-F) and financed by the Government of the Kingdom of Spain. YERP is jointly implemented by UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, IOM and UNV in partnership with the Ministry of Civil Affairs, Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, entity ministries of labour and education, Agency for Statistics of BiH, entity statistics agencies, employment services across the country, primary and secondary schools, municipalities and rural communities, individual companies and associations from the private sector and civil society organisations.

YERP interventions are designed in a holistic manner to address inter-related issues within education, the labour market and youth labour migration. YERP activities are complementary and implemented in a coordinated fashion.

Initiatives are built around a range of direct technical assistance, capacity building interventions and activities geared towards increasing the skills of young women and men in order to secure gainful employment.

Policy advocacy initiatives, aimed at providing policy makers with clear strategic evidence-based options make up a key component of each of the three set YERP outcomes.

Within this programme and based on its mandate in the area of development and the improvement of the quality of life of children, UNICEF is involved in the activities related to the education sector.

UNICEF leads and coordinates the educational component of YERP, namely Outcome 1: **Increased capacities within the education system and local communities to improve youth employability.**

The UNICEF component has foreseen the inclusion of a large number of activities relative to life skills, key competencies and career development components into the education system.

YERP education activities also include a report based on a survey on children and young people who do not enrol in or dropout of primary and or secondary education. A survey was successfully implemented in governmental institutions (the ministries of education, municipal departments for social activities/departments of education, centres for social work, employment bureaus and pedagogical institutes) and primary and secondary schools. All of these institutions observe the system of education from different perspectives and therefore it was important to record their opinions and positions in relation to these issues, in order to provide a comprehensive overview of the situation.

The Youth Employability and Retention Programme (YERP) aims to address the high level of youth unemployment and irregular migration by working closely with government, the private sector and civil society to improve youth employability in BiH, while providing new entry points to the labour market. Internal and external migration support will be developed to optimise the potential for migration as an individual employment seeking strategy that can alleviate local labour market pressures.

Attention to gender and minority issues is integral to the programme.

The Joint Programme also recognises the youth of BiH as a heterogeneous group and has built in the means to ensure adequate attention to the needs of various demographic groups. For the purposes of scaling up and replication, the programme includes a robust mechanism for monitoring and evaluation, using innovative methods to provide a clear picture of the progress towards the programme goals.

Executive Summary

Nowadays in Bosnia and Herzegovina there are a certain number of children who, for different reasons, do not attend primary school. It is reasonable to wonder how this can be and what the reasons are for these children not being enrolled in primary school, since primary education is compulsory in BiH. Some of the most frequent causes for non-attendance of primary school are described below.

- The economic situation in the whole country is very poor and this affects certain households to the point where a certain number of families are in such a poor financial standing that the parents are not able to finance their child's education.
- A certain number of children in BiH have limited access to school, because they live in remote isolated areas that are frequently without access to roads for motor vehicles. Such children have to walk as much as ten kilometres to school through difficult and sometimes even dangerous terrain.
- The lack of awareness and information amongst some parents concerning the need to educate their child is one of the factors behind the non-enrolment of children in primary school. This is particularly common amongst parents with low levels of education and intellectually disabled parents.
- Children with special needs, in particular developmentally challenged children or children suffering from a chronic condition through which they are forced to stay in hospital or at home, are groups of children who sometimes either do not enrol in or dropout of the primary education system.
- There are cases of returnee children not attending school because of inadequacies within the education system; language in particular can pose a problem in the case of these children if education is held in a language that is not their mother tongue.
- Another vulnerable group is comprised of children who have reached the age of fifteen but have not attended primary school. According to the law, they are to be educated in the system of adult education which implies special exams equivalent to primary school grade completion.
- Roma in BiH are particularly vulnerable. Roma children do not attend school for a number of reasons, most of which have already been identified above. Roma children do not enrol in primary school because, among other things, they do not exist in the eyes of the state authorities, because they do not have a birth certificate or any other identification document. This is frequently the fault of the parents, who do not see the need to register the birth of their children since they themselves are not registered and do not know how to register the birth of a child. Roma families often move and change their place of residence and thus do not feel the need to be tied to an area through documentation. High illiteracy rates in this section of the population result in a lack of awareness of the importance of education for child development. The third reason why this population reports

high rates of children who have not completed primary education is the lack of opportunities for education in their mother tongue. Their children have a poor knowledge of the languages of the three constituent peoples prior to enrolment in school and only start learning these languages in school, which adversely affects their academic achievements.

The imposing question is what the Government should do in order to reduce, as much as possible, the rate of children who do not complete primary education. First and foremost primary education should be actually, rather than only formally, free. This means the provision of textbooks, notebooks and stationary for every pupil as well as free meals and school transportation. Secondly, every child should be entitled to primary education in his/her mother tongue, in order to achieve an adequate education. Last, but not least, improvement in living standards would have a considerable effect on reducing the primary school dropout rate. A lack of money, for the basic means of living, greatly determines the priorities of every human being and brings the fight for survival to the forefront. Therefore, the need for education is unable to compete with such an order of priorities.

The problem becomes much more complex in the field of secondary education, which is not compulsory. Young people can choose not to enrol in or to dropout of secondary school without any direct consequences. However, there are indirect consequences that only become apparent later on when young people without qualifications enter the labour market. This problem has gained importance in BiH because the unemployment rates are very high, especially among young people. Young women and men thus encounter even more difficulties in their search for employment and organisation of a normal personal and professional life for themselves.

The most important factor is to promote education and encourage children and young people to seek education. There is no strong and stable country without educated people who are prepared to utilise the latest achievements and keep up with the best practices in the developed countries.

As part of the educational activities of YERP, a study based on a survey of children and youths who either did not enrol in or dropped out of primary and or secondary school was conducted. The survey was successfully implemented in governmental institutions (the ministries of education, municipal departments for social activities/departments of education, centres for social work, employment bureaus and pedagogical institutes) and primary and secondary schools, all of which observe the education system from a different perspective. It was therefore important to record their opinions and positions in relation to these issues if a comprehensive overview was to be achieved.

The research was conducted by Partner Marketing Consulting Agency with the purpose of identifying the main reasons for non-enrolment and school dropouts and presenting concrete recommendations for decreasing school dropouts targeted at various stakeholders: primary and secondary schools, municipalities and local communities, ministries of education, centres for social work, pedagogical institutes and employment bureaus.

The study was divided into the 6 sections listed below.

1. Introduction
2. Children and Young People who do not Enrol in or Dropout of School
3. Reasons for Dropping out of or not Enrolling in Primary and or Secondary School
4. Records on Out-of-School Children and Young People
5. Programmes to Reduce the Number of Out-of-School Children and Young People
6. Conclusion and Recommendations

1. **INTRODUCTION** – The Introduction outlines the main goals and objectives of the survey and the municipalities included in the survey.
2. **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO DO NOT ENROL IN OR DROPOUT OF SCHOOL** – The goal was to identify the groups of children and youths who are at greatest risk of non-enrolment or school dropout. The results have shown that the children at the greatest risk of non-enrolment and or dropout are Roma children, children from families in need, children of parents with a low level of education and children with special needs. In secondary schools the risk groups included youths who have been in conflict with the law, Roma youths, youths from families in need and youths with special needs.
3. **REASONS FOR DROPPING OUT OF OR NOT ENROLLING IN PRIMARY AND OR SECONDARY SCHOOL** – The reasons for not attending and or dropping out of primary school are most often of a financial nature, in particular the poor financial standing of the family, lack of parental support, distance from the school or lack of transportation arrangements for children living in rural areas. In secondary education non-attendance is closely connected to the following reasons: the financial standing of the family, distance from the school, lack of interest in continuing education and conflict with the law. The most frequent reason for dropping out of secondary school is conflict with the law, followed by a lack of interest in education and the poor financial standing of the family.
4. **RECORDS ON OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE** – The survey has shown that around a quarter of primary schools keep records on children who should be attending school but have failed to do so for certain reasons. During the enrolment process primary schools cooperate with the municipalities, pedagogical institutes and the statistics agency. Sixty percent of secondary schools keep records on school dropout, while secondary schools rely on data on the number of primary school graduates. A single database is essential in order to follow how many children enrol in secondary school upon leaving primary school and which children or what risk groups of children do not continue their education and

consequently fail to acquire a secondary school certificate.

Employment bureaus keep records according to the type of school and qualification level, so, for example, all young people who completed two grades of secondary school are registered with the bureau as having primary school qualifications. However, there is no database to identify such a category so that people in this group could be helped through being re-skilled, trained and through other means in order to enable them to enter the labour market sooner and as better workers.

The centres for social work maintain records on out-of-school children and youths based on information obtained indirectly through their work with families, from schools, local communities and reports from parents.

Pedagogical institutes (in the majority of cases) can obtain information on children and youths who have not enrolled in or dropped-out of school by approaching the relevant institutions. The survey has shown that there are no quality and comprehensive records and databases on children and youths.

In some ministries of education there are records on out-of-school children and youths, but a problem exists in relation to the failure of some Roma parents to register the birth of their children with the office of the registrar, so accurate data is usually missing.

- 5. PROGRAMMES TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE** – Prevention programmes in primary schools to reduce the number of children dropping out of school include individual sessions and financial and professional help. In secondary schools there are also individual sessions with the child, sessions with parents, financial help, professional help and the development of work plans.

Employment bureaus implement vocational guidance programmes in primary and secondary schools. Publications and brochures are also printed containing information for young people about “The Road to Employment”.

Centres for social work reported programmes such as counselling therapy aimed at motivating children to continue their education.

Pedagogical institutes reported programmes such as counselling sessions in primary schools on the importance of education.

The ministries of education that have prevention programmes implement such programmes in various ways. The respondent from the Ministry of Education of RS reported that professionals talk to parents, send call-ups, warnings and organise meetings with parents who have not enrolled their children. Those parents who do not enrol their child in school or do not return a child who dropped out of school are subject to minor offence proceedings. Since these cases involve individual reasons for dropping out of school the school works with the parents and the pupil with the assistance of professionals, such as a school psychologist or, if necessary, enrolls the child/pupil into special classes.

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SECTION 1:

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Introduction**
- 1.2 Report Methodology and Structure**
- 1.3 Education System in BiH**
- 1.4 Millennium Development Goals in BiH**
- 1.5 Millennium Development Goals in the Region**
- 1.6 Situation in the EU**

1.1 Introduction

Does every child in BiH have an equal opportunity to complete primary and secondary education? What happens when children/youths leave the school system prematurely? Who keeps records on such children? Are there programmes to prevent non-enrolment and dropout? How much attention is paid to this category of children/youths?

Even though primary education is compulsory and free for all children in BiH equal opportunities to complete this level of education are not available to everyone. Education affects the development of a child's personality, talent and mental and physical abilities to their full potential; it also influences the development of a respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the principles guaranteed under the UN Charter, development of a child's respect for his or her parents, cultural identity, language and general values and the values of the country in which the child lives as well as for civilisations different to his or her own and the development of respect for the environment.

In light of the above, every child should have the opportunity to receive the minimum level of education.

The main goals and objectives of the survey were as follows:

- identify the sources of information on children and youths who do not enrol in or dropout of school (the largest category, main reasons for dropping-out and non-enrolment);
- any programmes aimed at reducing the number of children and youths at risk of dropping out and preventing this phenomenon;
- any databases on the categories of children and youths that dropout of or do not enrol in primary or secondary school;
- identify the willingness of local communities to set up databases in places where there are none,

- collect information on networking and cooperation amongst the institutions competent for these issues.

The Municipalities where the survey was conducted were as follows:

Sarajevo, Gorazde, Zenica, Vitez, Bihać, Mostar, Livno, Odžak, ŠirokiBrijeg, Tuzla, Prijedor, Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Istočno Sarajevo, Trebinje, Doboj and Brčko.

These municipalities were proposed by UNICEF for inclusion in the YERP Project.

1.2 Report Methodology and Structure

Activities in this project were specific, since the agency employed almost all forms of quantitative¹ and qualitative² research.

The quantitative method of face-to-face interview was employed in the part of the project that included respondents from primary and secondary schools. During the interviews, or survey of these respondents, they were asked to fill in questionnaires independently, while our interviewers were present during the survey to, if necessary, provide clarification of the questions contained in the questionnaire.

Specific forms of quantitative research were also employed in fieldwork where institutional employees were interviewed. The instrument employed was a questionnaire from which questions were asked of the respondents. The respondents provided explanatory answers that corresponded to the qualitative method, so that we could use the results in qualitative form as a part of the fieldwork.

Interviews conducted with representatives of the ministries were planned as qualitative research, focus group, but due to the busy schedule of the Ministry employees we were unable to establish

¹ Quantitative research

Quantitative research refers to the systematic empirical investigation of social phenomena via statistical, mathematical or computational techniques. The objective of quantitative research is to develop and employ mathematical models, a theory pertaining to phenomena researched. The process of measurement is central to quantitative research because it provides mathematical expression of quantitative relationships. Quantitative research is used widely in social sciences such as psychology, economics, sociology and political science, etc. Quantitative methods can be used to verify which hypotheses are true. Views regarding the role of measurement in quantitative research are somewhat divergent. Measurement is often regarded as being only a means by which observations are expressed numerically in order to investigate causal relations or associations.

² Qualitative research

Qualitative research is a method of inquiry employed in many different academic disciplines, traditionally in the social sciences, but also in market research. Qualitative researchers aim to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviour. The qualitative method investigates the why and how of decision making, not just what, where, when. Hence, smaller but focused samples are more often needed and produce better answers and information than larger samples. Qualitative researchers may use different approaches when collecting data, such as the grounded theory practice, narratology, storytelling, classical ethnography or shadowing. Qualitative methods are also loosely present in other methodological approaches, such as action research or actor-network theory. Forms of the data collected can include interviews and group discussions, observation and reflection field notes, various texts, pictures and other material.

all contacts as planned. Thus the fieldwork was done only with respondents in charge of primary and secondary education in the form of in-depth interviews and one-on-one interviews. We were able to obtain additional documents from them, pertinent to the topics discussed and relative to this project, following such interviews with the officials competent for these two levels of education.

The survey was conducted in primary and secondary schools, employment bureaus, centres for social work, municipal departments of education, the ministries of education and pedagogical institutes.

1.2.1 Survey sample

	No. of respondents
Primary schools	91
Secondary school	87
Employment bureaus	15
Centres for Social Work	26
Municipal departments of education	15
Ministries of education	13
Pedagogical institutes	8
Total	255

In primary and secondary schools respondents were school principals and pedagogues, while respondents in other institutions were senior officers competent for the topics covered by the research.

1.3 Education System in BiH

The education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina is extremely complex and asymmetric. It is centralised in Republika Srpska (RS) and decentralised in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is the governmental body whose statutory competencies include, inter alia, coordination of activities in the education sector on the level of BiH and ensuring the fulfilment of the international obligations of BiH in this field.

The Ministry of Education and Sciences of the Federation of BiH performs administrative, professional and other activities and cooperates and coordinates the activities within the cantons. These activities include, but are not limited to, pre-school, primary and secondary education; education standards and norms, textbooks, the professional education and training of teachers, standards and norms for higher education, scientific research to improve education activities and standards for pupils and students. The cantons are responsible for the implementation of education activities and the education sector. They make budgets and allocate funds; the system is entirely decentralised down to the level of the municipalities, which allocate relatively limited funds for education. In some cantons the municipalities have the statutory obligation to cover the material, transportation and other costs of primary schools.

The Ministry of Education of RS is competent for the education system in RS, which has a clear structure and is managed at the entity level. Primary and secondary schools are financed at the entity level, through municipal budgets and other sources. Almost all costs of primary schools in RS fall under the jurisdiction of the Entity, while municipalities cover the cost of materials, transportation and other costs of primary and secondary schools.

The Department of Education of Brčko District is competent for pre-school, primary and secondary education and their financing.

Primary education in BiH is compulsory; in most schools it lasts for nine years but in some schools for eight years. It is free and provided to all children.

1.4 Millennium Development Goals (MDG)³ in BiH

The Global Millennium Development Goals are as follows:

- eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- achieve universal primary education;
- promote gender equality and empower women;
- reduce child mortality;
- improve maternal health;
- combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- ensure environmental sustainability;
- develop a global partnership for development.

MDG two pertains to achieving universal primary education. In BiH, albeit that universal primary education has almost been achieved, the percentage of non-enrolment keeps growing. Currently this percentage is estimated at 4% out of the total number.

Developmentally challenged children and disabled children face particular problems in acquiring an adequate education; the same applies to many ethnic minorities, although for different reasons. Almost 32% of primary school graduates (aged 6 to 15) do not continue their education in a secondary school. In addition, this number includes considerable disparity between pupils from poor and well-to-do households, so that 43% of the former and 23% of the latter group of pupils do not proceed to secondary school. This disparity becomes even greater in higher education where only 9.3% of students from poor families study at university, while this percentage is threefold in relation to students from wealthy families (27.3%). As a result of low educational levels poverty continues from one generation to the next.

A startling 31.5% of primary school graduates do not continue their education in secondary school. The reasons for this lie in poverty and poor academic achievement in primary school.

The school enrolment rate in BiH is comparatively high; it amounts to 94% of compulsory enrolment. Yet this rate is still insufficient for a modern European country striving for accession to the European Union. The objective of MDG two is that all boys and girls in BiH are able to complete primary school, which means a 100% enrolment rate in the basic primary education system by 2015.

³ MDG update report for BiH: undp.ba

1.5 Millennium Development Goals in the Region

The development priority of the second millennium development goal in Croatia is to increase the quality and efficiency of primary education and develop the knowledge and skills necessary for the development of pupils, completion of primary schooling with the aim to continuing education, regardless of ability, gender, religious, ethnic and or regional background or socio-economic status. In that regard, the following development goals are foreseen: to increase the number of pupils enrolled and increase the percentage of those who complete primary education.

In the school year 2004-2005, 96.2% of children aged 7-14 were enrolled in primary school in Croatia. In the same school year, 42.2% of those aged 19-25 were enrolled in secondary school.⁴

The problem of leaving school early in Croatia has not been thoroughly investigated. However, in 2007, in order to face the problem of the poor educational structure in Croatia and the growing number of dropouts, the Croatian Government announced the introduction of compulsory secondary education as a measure to improve human capital, increase economic competitiveness and reduce social exclusion amongst a large portion of the population caused by dropping out of school early.

1.6 Situation in the EU

In January 2011 the European Commission introduced a plan to reduce the number of young people dropping out of school. In the European Union more than six million young people dropout of school and training prior to earning a secondary school certificate. They are frequently unemployed and dependant on social welfare.

Leaving school early has an adverse effect on economic growth, the situation within society and represents a serious obstacle to the implementation of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy, which encompasses all strata of society. In the European Union around 14.4% of youths aged 18-24 dropout of secondary school; the plan is to reduce this percentage to 10%.

Change in educational policy alone cannot resolve this problem and therefore concrete steps such as adaptation to the situation at the state, regional and local level are required.

Prevention of early school leaving needs to start as soon as possible by supporting children in their learning and by avoiding conditions which may trigger early school leaving, such as making a pupil repeat a school year or lack of assistance for pupils who are not schooled in their mother tongue.

Cooperation amongst EU members states can help resolve this issue, in particular an exchange of information on the steps needed to reduce the percentage of young people leaving school early and the better use of European funds for this purpose.

“Reducing the rate of early school leavers in Europe by only one percentile would yield half a million qualified young people each year. Most EU countries have seen progress in reducing the number of young people leaving school with low qualifications, but more should be done in this field”.⁵

⁴ Croatian MDG 2

⁵ Source: EurActiv.rs

SECTION 2:

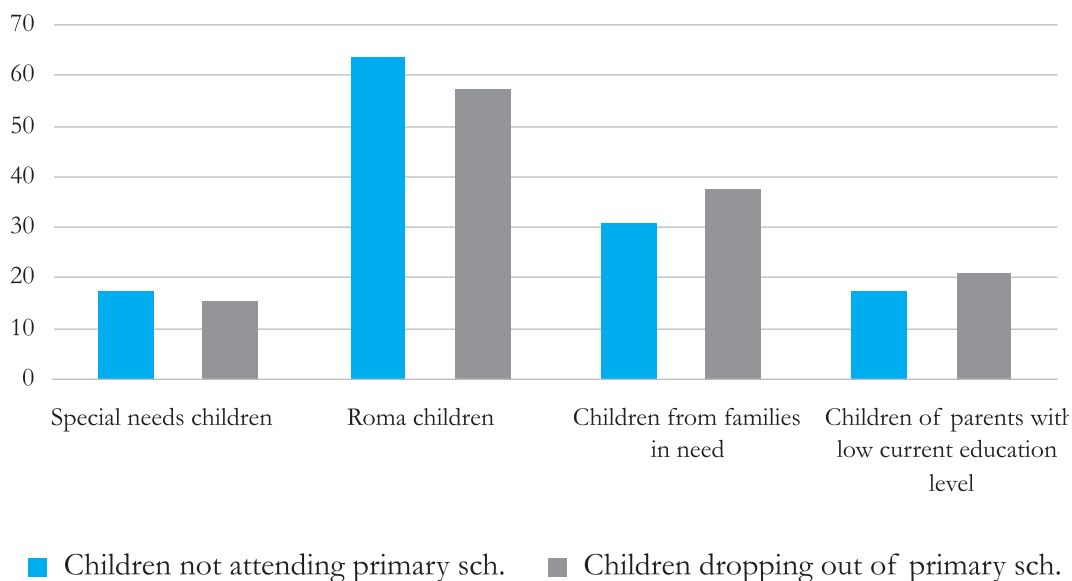
CHILDREN AND YOUTHS WHO DO NOT ENROL IN OR DROPOUT OF SCHOOL

2.1 Non-enrolment and dropping out of primary school

2.2 Non-enrolment and dropping out of secondary school

2.1 Non-enrolment and dropping out of primary school

Even though primary education is compulsory and free not all children who should be receiving primary education under the law achieve this in practice. The right to primary education in BiH is exercised by 94% of its children. Out of the total first grade enrolments 99% of pupils are promoted through to the fifth grade of primary school. Roma minority children are particularly vulnerable (according to some sources, a mere 15% of the Roma children, or even less, are in the primary education system) as are children with developmental disability and children with low education levels.



Similar results have been obtained in relation to the category of children who leave primary school and children who have never enrolled in primary school. Percentage-wise, Roma children are by far the most vulnerable category.

In September 2008 Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the Decade of Roma Inclusion. A part of the activities carried out in 2004 within the Decade of Roma Inclusion was the development of the “Action Plan on the Educational Needs of Roma and Members of Other Ethnic Minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina”, which is used as a national action plan for education.

The general opinion, given the lack of official data, is that a large number of Roma children dropout of primary school. The high percentage rate of 46.2% of Roma children who dropout of school obtained within this survey further reinforces this opinion. Since Roma education is considered one of the prerequisites for a successful solution to the problems related to this population group, the integration of Roma children into the regular school system should be resolved regardless of whether they are displaced persons or local residents. The education of

Roma, encouraging respect for different cultures, offering support to these communities and such like should be the guidelines for work and activities within our society.

Tradition, their way of life and the living conditions of Roma children result in many of them, especially girls, leaving school very early.

Children from families in need (most often in rural areas) are the second most vulnerable category. In addition to their poor financial standing, children lack means of transportation to school and often stay at home to help their parents around the house.

Children with special needs are also in a vulnerable group when it comes to non-enrolment and dropping out of primary school.

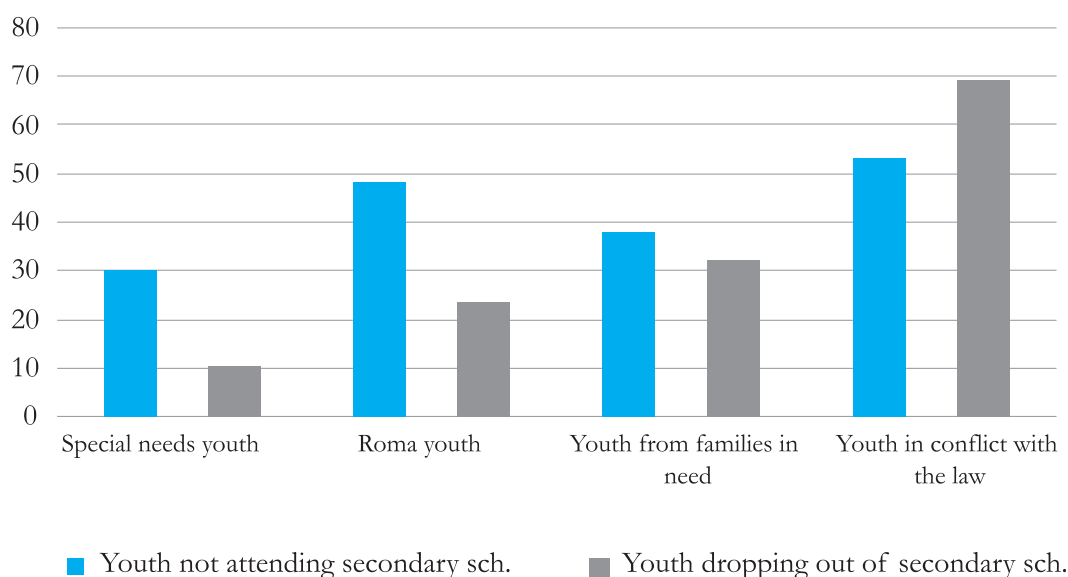
The results of this survey have shown that an insignificant number of children (only 2.2%) who are members of the other two constituent peoples not in the majority in a community dropout of primary school. Discrimination as the reason for dropping out of school was reported in only one primary school and described as unpleasant experiences caused by a child being a member of an ethnic minority in that community. Two schools reported that the reason why

children had dropped out of school was the decision of their parents who did not want their children to be schooled in a language that was not their mother tongue and did not want their children to be schooled in a community where their people were a minority.

The law stipulates that children aged up to fifteen who have not completed primary education cannot attend regular classes any longer and therefore should be provided with free classes and the possibility to take special exams. This is very rare and schools that implement such activities often receive scarce assistance. The primary school “Džemaludin Čaušević” in Sarajevo has on its own initiative started a project of part-time classes and courses for pupils of all ages. Over the past six years the school has received no financial support from the Canton Ministry of Education or the Municipality, which according to the Law in Sarajevo Canton is obliged to finance this form of education.

2.2 Non-enrolment and Dropping out of Secondary School

Secondary education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is regulated by the laws on secondary schools. Although, according to the current laws, secondary education is not compulsory for all primary school graduates, conditions should be provided for as many primary school graduates as possible to attend secondary school. Only in secondary school can children acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities that will guarantee their inclusion in the labour market. Secondary education results dictate the level of inclusion in the labour market and this is the main source of income on the one hand and allows for the continuation of education in college and or university on the other.



Young people at risk of dropping out of or not enrolling in school are in most cases young people in conflict with the law. One of the signs of this problem is truancy and a large number of absences.

In the majority of cases truancy is a consequence of deep and long lasting frustrations. Within contemporary educational and psychological literature truancy or absence from school is classified as a behavioural disorder. Statistics show that truancy or school absence in the EU countries occurs amongst 10-20% of the school population. Three-quarters of them are aged 14-16. In our country there are no statistics on truancy, even though experience has shown that this problem is present in Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁶

Roma youths who enrol in secondary school are at high risk of dropping out. Roma children have different traditions, customs and language to the three constituent peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina and are often subjected to mocking by other children because they are different. They often come from extremely poor families and lack the conditions for doing homework on time and fulfilling other school obligations. Children and youths are often not able to handle such pressure and choose the easiest way out, which in this case is leaving school.

⁶ Fundamental right to education - Save the Children Norway

The amount of official data on Roma enrolment in secondary and higher education as well as Roma enrolment rates at any level of education is very limited. According to a 2005 report by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, less than 15% of Roma children in Bosnia and Herzegovina were included in the schooling process. Yet the same report also notes that a gradual increase in Roma enrolment has been observed. Generally speaking, this lack of adequate information limits potentially effective activities in support of Roma education. A survey conducted amongst Roma by the NGO 'Let's Be Active' revealed that 80% of school age Roma children who do not attend school would like to attend school, which indicates that a poor economic situation and lack of education amongst parents constitute the main obstacles to Roman children exercising their right to education.

Reasons for Roma children dropping out of school include the following: lack of parental support (since parents do not think that their children should receive an education), early inclusion of children in various activities to contribute to the family budget, the poor financial standing of the family, the distance between home and school, early marriage and undeveloped parental awareness of the purpose of and need for education.

The 2003 Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education stipulates that the language and culture of any numerically significant minority living in Bosnia and Herzegovina shall be respected and represented in schools to the greatest possible degree (Article 8). However, there is no systematic monitoring or collection of data regarding the implementation of this provision, nor were there any judgments relative to discrimination against Roma. The adoption of an anti-discrimination law is pending.

The percentage of children from families in need who dropout of secondary school is also high. Budgetary allocations to such families are scarce and, according to some estimates, one year of secondary education requires between 2,000 and 3,000 BAM. Families with unemployed parents or only one employed parent generally have a low income and cannot provide these funds. Thus, parents cannot afford the continued education of their children.

The survey conducted for NHDR⁷ in 2007 has shown that young people who do not proceed to secondary school following completion of primary education are at risk of poverty (57% fall in the category 'poor'). Other risk factors include health problems, physical or mental disability and membership of minority groups, such as Roma, or the fact that young people are returnees to a certain area or region.⁸

The percentage rate of pupils who do not continue secondary education after having completed primary school in BiH is unsatisfactory, when compared to the situation in other European countries.

The World Bank has determined that only 73% of the population aged 16-18 attend secondary school, while a mere 57% of the total number of primary school graduates in one generation also graduate from secondary school, due to repeating grades and dropping out of school.⁹

The survey conducted by the civic association "Centre for Civic Initiatives" in late 2009 made the below estimates:

1. At least 1,000 children do not enrol in secondary school
2. At least 1,500 pupils do not complete the first year of secondary school
3. At least 2,500 pupils do not complete the second year of secondary school
4. At least 4,300 pupils do not complete the third year of secondary school
5. At least 18,000 pupils do not complete four years of secondary school
6. Around 20,000 young people in a generation do not graduate from secondary school on time, if at all, which amounts to around 15-20% of this section of the population

⁷ National Human Development Report

⁸ Social Inclusion in BiH; Human Development Report, 2007

⁹ Ibid.

SECTION 3:

REASONS FOR NON-ENROLMENT IN OR DROPPING OUT OF PRIMARY AND OR SECONDARY SCHOOL

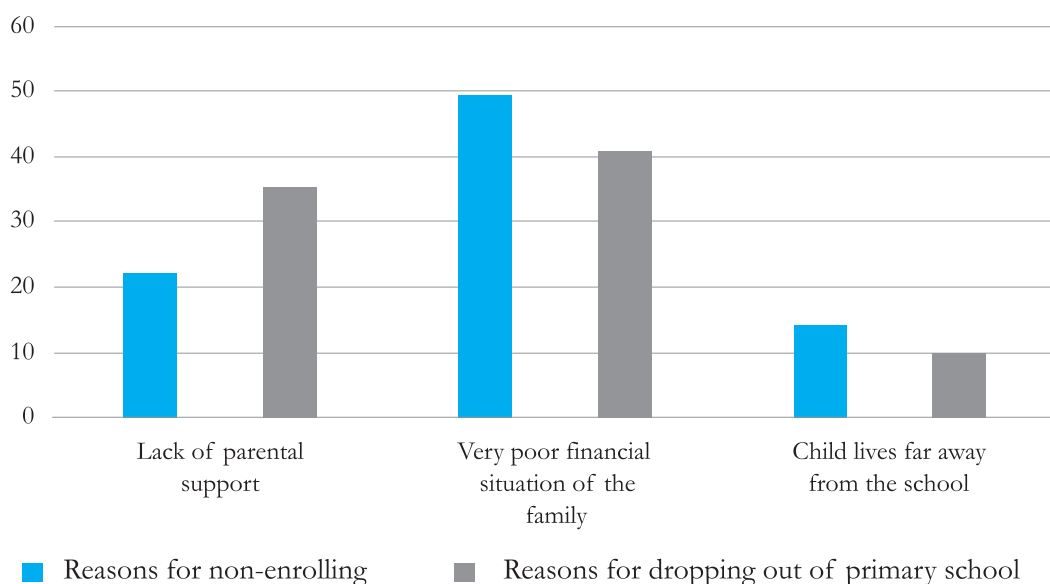
3.1 Reasons for Non-enrolment in and or Dropping out of Primary School

3.2 Reasons for Non-enrolment in and or Dropping out of Secondary School

3.3 Experiences in the Field

3.1 Reasons for Non-enrolment in and or Dropping out of Primary School

The most frequent reasons for dropping out of or not enrolling in school are the poor financial standing of the family, lack of parental support and the distance from the school. In addition, the following reasons have been reported: marriage or common-law marriage, dysfunctional family, bad company, conduct and poor academic achievement and grades.

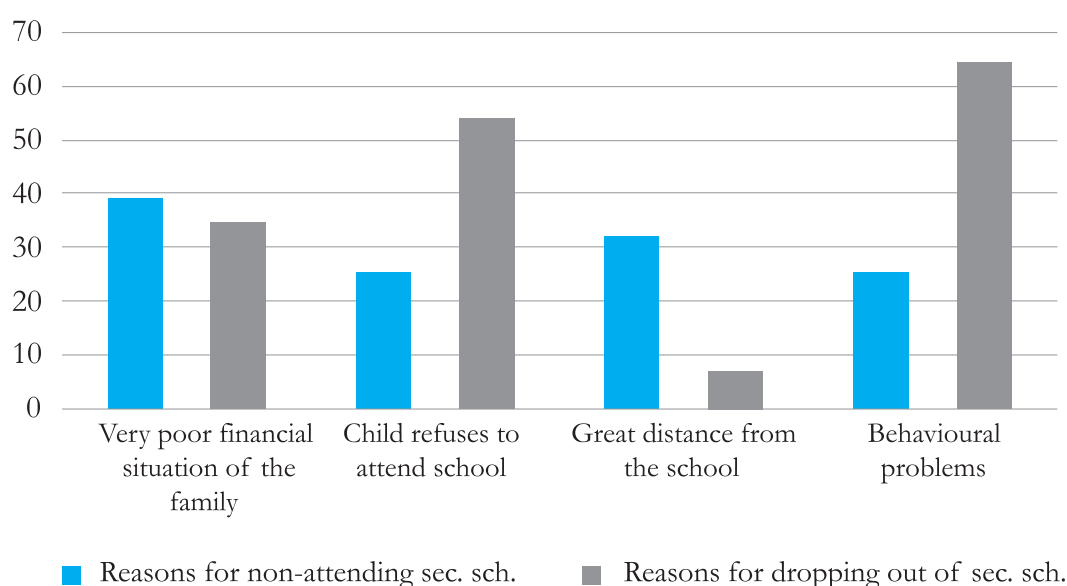


Once identified, schools tend to approach the problem of non-attendance differently. All schools inform their founders, namely the legal entity in charge of the establishment of the school (most often the municipality or ministry of education). In certain cases, particularly

those involving Roma families, all activities stop there. Others wait for a short period in order to determine if the non-attendance is caused by illness; thereafter, they inform the family in writing and usually seek a meeting with the family. Some school officers visit the absent child's home and conduct an informal inspection after which they may decide to approach the centre for social work to determine if the non-attendance is caused by poverty or special needs and what steps should be taken to rectify the situation. Other supplementary measures include informing the competent education inspector and filing of a minor offence report against the parents. Actual proceedings against parents are rarely instigated and many experts have expressed their doubts as to the effectiveness of such a measure, because it usually depends on whether other measures have been undertaken to assist the family.¹⁰

3.2 Reasons for Non-enrolment in and or Dropping out of Secondary School

It frequently happens that young people dropout of secondary school after they complete one or several years of secondary education. Reasons are individual and depend on the conditions in which a young person grows up, the family situation and the need for additional income to provide for the family's subsistence, lack of interest in school, inadequate approach of the school to a young individual faced with certain problems and similar. It is usually a combination of many factors that influences the young person to dropout of secondary school after attending it for a while. One way to solve this issue is to provide better conditions for such young people at the level of the school through an individual approach towards finding a solution to their problems and the introduction of an array of stimulating measures at the state level.



¹⁰ System deficiencies: enrolment in school and attendance of classes in Bosnia and Herzegovina: OSCE, December 2007.

Unstable economic and social conditions within the family and society as a whole often limit the opportunities for continued education, which results in the exclusion of individuals and groups from the system of education. The survey results have confirmed this.

Priority is given to providing a young individual with an environment that encourages his or her proper growth, development, upbringing, education and acquisition of the skills required for future independent life. In such a context, education becomes a *sine qua non*.

Considering the current situation in our society and the fact that unskilled and low-skilled workers have the highest unemployment rates it becomes obvious that investing in education is the safest formula for long-term social development.

Participation of youths in education plummets in groups older than 18. Entry into the labour market occurs around the age of 20. At the age of 25 only a small portion of young people receive education, without significant discrepancies by gender. Men are mostly at higher risk of leaving school prior to acquiring qualifications.

3.3. Experiences in the Field

According to the experience of professionals working in the centres for social work covered by the survey, the most frequently cited reasons for non-attendance of primary and secondary school are the poor financial situation in the family and growing up in a dysfunctional family.

Poverty is still most present in rural areas where, due to a lack of funds, young people most often stay at home after completing primary education and their chances for attaining better living conditions remain small. Roma also fall into the vulnerable group. Respondents reported that a certain number of Roma children do not enrol in secondary school because their parents do not encourage them to continue their education and expect young people and children to work.

SECTION 4:

RECORDS ON OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN AND YOUTHS

4.1 Records in Schools

4.2 Records in Relevant Institutions

4.1 Records in Schools

Almost a quarter of the schools covered by the survey kept records on the number of children who should attend primary school but for some reason have failed to do so. Generally speaking, this percentage is quite low; however, one must not neglect the fact that the respondents repeatedly reported that the school was not competent for the keeping such records. According to the data obtained from the respondents the pedagogical institutes are competent for the collection and dissemination of such data to schools, when necessary. Only somewhat more than one-fifth of primary schools kept records on the number of dropouts. Given the gravity of the problem, the percentage of schools that pay greater attention to this problem is low.

When enrolling children primary schools use information obtained from the municipalities, the statistics agencies or the pedagogical institutes. Secondary schools rely upon information from other schools on the number of primary school graduates.

Children in secondary school frequently change their place of residence, which additionally complicates record keeping on children enrolled in secondary school. Therefore, a unique networked system of monitoring and recording the number of enrolments, expected enrolments and also dropouts is necessary.

According to the “Action Plan for Enrolment in Schools and Attendance of Classes” developed by national experts with the support of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina and UNICEF (signed by all ministers of education and published in May 2006), all deficiencies of the then system of education were planned to be remedied. One of the tasks was regular coordination of activities amongst competent bodies, namely the municipalities, centres for social work, the ministries of education and the statistics bureaus, with comprehensive data collection and exchange.

To date, such regular coordination appears not to have been set up since schools do not have adequate records that would allow them to monitor dropouts and thus find better solutions to this problem.

4.2 Records in Relevant Institutions

4.2.1 Employment Bureaus

Employment bureaus keep records on unemployed active and passive job seekers. This group of unemployed persons includes young individuals who dropped out of secondary school. However, the system of records keeping does not allow for extracting such individuals into a special database. Applications used by the bureaus do not allow applicants to state if they have

completed a few years of secondary school and therefore they are all ultimately registered as unemployed and holding primary school qualifications. In accordance with the rules on records in the field of employment, the bureaus do not register data on young people who dropped out of school, because this is not defined as one of their competencies.

Representatives of the employment bureaus saw a database of pupils who have dropped out of secondary school and the reasons thereof as a highly useful tool for policy making. In that manner records would contain a clear overview of individuals who would like to receive education but are not able to and thus such individuals could be helped. Institutes/services/bureaus could have access to such individuals and adapt programmes of education, training and skills upgrading to suit them. There would also be a record of individuals who would like but are unable to receive education and they could be helped. It would be a layered database containing information on pupils who refuse to learn, even though they have the opportunity to do so, as well as on pupils who would like to learn but lack the means.

4.2.2 Centres for Social Work

In the centres for social work staff in the course of their duties work with families and thus receive data indirectly on children who have left school. Data is also provided by schools, parents and local communities. Strong cooperation with local communities enables these centres to take action and visit families to identify the reasons why a child has dropped out of primary school.

There is no comprehensive database on the categories of children and young people and the most frequent reasons why they dropped out of school. However, the respondents did emphasise that they try to approach each case individually and resolve the problem or problems at issue.

4.2.3 Municipal Departments of Education

Municipalities are expected to maintain a database containing information on each child that should enrol in school at the municipal level and to have data on children enrolled in and graduating from primary school and young people enrolling in secondary school.

The municipal departments of education obtain information on the number of children enrolled in primary school mainly from the schools enrolling the children, by means of a regular annual report that schools must submit and a report provided by primary schools on the enrolment of children in school. They also reported that they obtain information from the Ministry of Education and the offices of the Registrar in their municipality.

Article 36 of the Law on Primary Schools in the Central Bosnia Canton stipulates that information on the enrolment of children in school shall be delivered to the founder, namely the Canton and Ministry, in order to improve monitoring and to undertake timely adequate measures in all cases of non-enrolment. Similar provisions are included in the laws of other cantons and the entities for the same reason.

In 60% of cases (or in 9 municipal departments of education) it was reported that there was a database on young people enrolled in secondary school. However, only four municipal departments reported that they maintained statistics on young people who graduated from primary school. The departments that did not follow these statistics were also unable to follow the number of primary school graduates

A good example of municipal education statistics maintained by a municipal department of education can be found on the webpage of the Municipality of Prijedor. They have developed a draft Plan of Enrolment of Pupils in the First Year of Secondary School for the School Year 2009-10, which was adopted in February 2009 and has been implemented in its entirety.

Records kept in Sarajevo Canton estimate that around 7% of primary school graduates do not enrol in secondary school and do not receive any other form of additional education. In Sarajevo Canton a special system has been introduced into secondary education which foresees that the first two years of secondary school will become compulsory as of the school year 2010-2011. Upon completion of the first two years pupils will have low educational attainment and thus be low-skilled (locally known as “1st and 2nd degree skills”), but considered to hold secondary school qualifications. This programme has still not yielded any results, given its recent start. The opinion is that through proper networking with the labour market and adequate education in which employers and teachers all take part this programme may reduce unemployment rates and provide education for those who would otherwise not be able to receive it.

enrolled in secondary school. In other words, they cannot monitor the number of young people who do not continue their education after completing primary school.

When asked for the reason why they did not follow the statistics the respondents answered that they were not competent to do so under the law and that they did not have a statistics expert and that such a task was not included in their job descriptions.

The many reasons reported suggest that the municipalities covered by the survey did not have a database that could provide reliable data on the number of young people who do not continue education after graduating from primary school.

A good example of municipal education statistics maintained by a municipal department of education can be found on the webpage of the Municipality of Prijedor. They have developed a draft Plan of Enrolment of Pupils in the First Year of Secondary School for the School Year 2009-10, which was adopted in February 2009 and has been implemented in its entirety.

4.2.4 Pedagogical Institutes

The biggest problem surrounding primary school dropout and non-enrolment rates is the lack of records on children who do not enrol in or dropout of school. Some pedagogical institutes have information on children who enrolled in primary school or they can obtain records on children who did not enrol in primary school by approaching the relevant institutions. Since secondary education is not compulsory the pedagogical institutes do not have this information on secondary schools.

The Pedagogical Institute in Tuzla reported a lack of a quality database on children who do not attend primary school. The most frequent cause of concern was Roma parents who enrol their children in school later than prescribed by the law. Such children also leave school very early.

There were no records on the number of young people who did not enrol in secondary school. There were estimates and assumptions, but due to the lack of a law on compulsory secondary education there was no adequate database to register this problem and allow for its better and more efficient solution. (Brčko)

4.2.5 Ministries of Education

Only some ministries of education in BiH keep records on children who do not enrol in or do not graduate from primary school. The situation is actually partially different to that of the records, due to the non-registration of Roma births in the Registrar's Offices, so that accurate information on Roma children who do not attend school cannot be obtained.

SECTION 5:

PROGRAMMES TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF OUT-OF- SCHOOL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

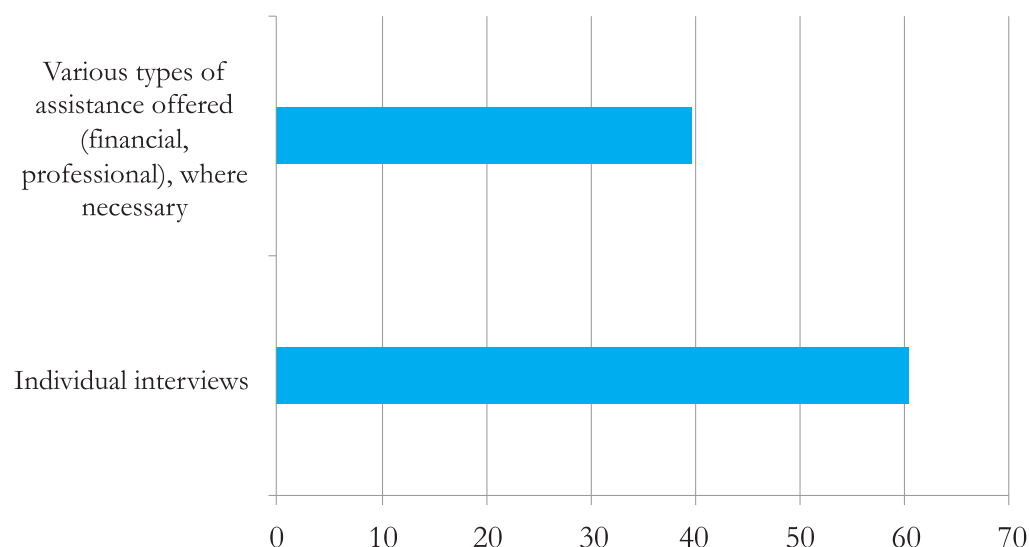
5.1. School Programmes to Reduce the Number of Out-of-School Children and Young People

5.2 Institutional Programmes to Reduce the Number of Out-of-School Children and Young People

5.1. School Programmes to Reduce the Number of Out-of-School Children and Young People

5.1.1 Primary School Programmes

Primary schools reported individual interviews with children and financial assistance as the most frequently used programmes for the prevention of dropping out of school. Also reported were cooperation with relevant institutions, ministries, centres for social work, municipal courts, various educational activities within regular classes and extra-curricular activities, workshops to educate parents and pupils, training for teachers to work with children at risk, pointing out the statutory obligations and the potential cost.



Since the schools have direct knowledge of the problems faced by the families of children who are not enrolled in or who withdraw their children from school they are most often the makers of different programmes aimed at reducing the number of children who do not attend primary school. However, such projects should be raised to a higher level. These problems should also be made visible in the activities of the ministries. Competent ministries should also provide visible support to programmes aimed at reducing the number of children who do not attend primary school.

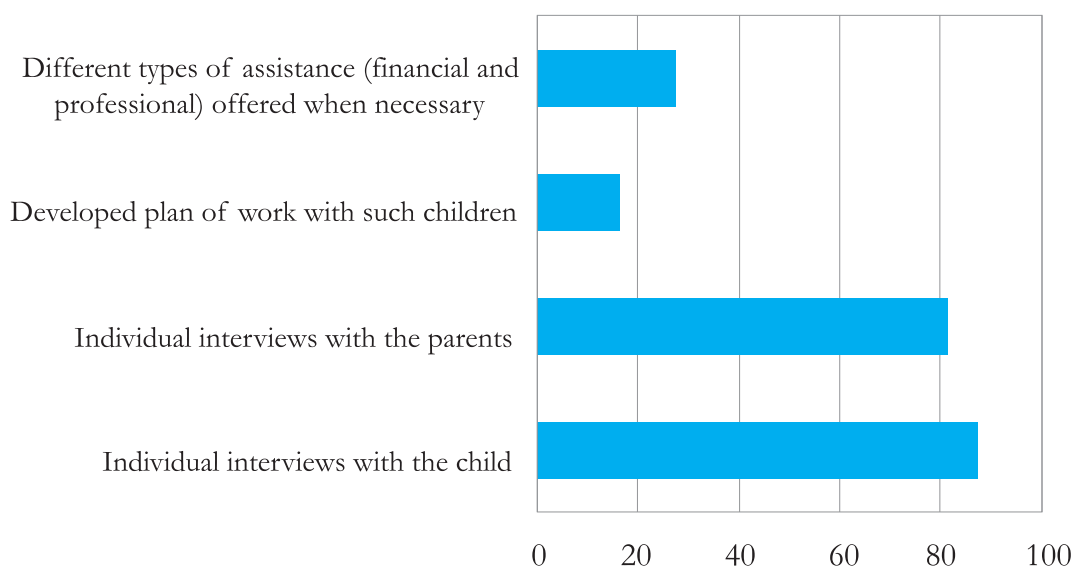
Help provided by the competent ministry for dealing with the problems of dropping out of and non-enrolment in school were reported by one-third of the primary schools. Some of the forms of assistance reported were the provision of textbooks and school supplies and an exchange of information with the ministries. However, according to the respondents, there were no funds earmarked for this purpose.

In order to reduce the number of children who do not attend primary school the respondents were of the opinion that the importance of education should be promoted and that parents should be educated about the importance of upbringing and education and that education should be made completely free, including free textbooks.

Promoting the importance of education does not imply a seminar or another type of training for parents to be held once a year, but should be a continuous campaign promoting the importance of education in order to get through to every household in BiH. Education should be linked to the economy (better living standards for families and the society in general) and the possibility of free education.

5.1.2 Secondary School Programmes

In secondary schools interviews with children and their parents are the most resorted to tool for “persuading” pupils to be persistent in attending secondary school. The level of success would be greater if during the course of such interviews between the school staff the pupils they were to be made aware that by completing secondary education they would ensure the minimum required for their subsistence and the development of a personal career; this would have long-term effects on the development of the society as a whole.



Education is a key factor in the development of our society and the only secure road to its success. Far greater attention should be paid to solving the problem of early school leaving. Even though the EU (and the accession to which we aspire) has worked to build a knowledge-based society and introduced different programmes on adult education and emphasised that knowledge is capital, the schools covered by this survey have no programmes in place to reduce the number of young people not enrolling in secondary school.

Numerous non-governmental and international organisations deal with the implementation of different projects aimed at building a society of educated citizens. Considering their activities and efforts better cooperation between such organisations and schools is needed.

BiH has recognised the importance of education in its development programmes. The country has worked, albeit rather slowly, on educational reform and tried to create a society of educated citizens. Nevertheless, schools that should be the beneficiaries of such projects and be the first step in the creation of such a society do not have programmes to assist young people in receiving education in the event that they dropout of school.

The survey has discovered that only two secondary schools have implemented projects which might reduce the number of young people leaving school early. One of the schools that took part in this project has implemented a programme for children with special needs, while the other school assists young people and their parents through such a programme. This is the type of activity necessary if young people and parents are to become aware of the benefits of education and gain better access to employment opportunities.

As many schools as possible should be included in a project to implementing various programmes with the aim to reduce the number of young people leaving school early or not enrolling in secondary education. There are various forms of prevention and, if there is a will, different institutions can be networked with schools for the purpose of programme implementation. Prevention can be carried out through a number of education, health and social systems. Active involvement is required on the part of the local community, centre for social work, employment bureaus, schools and institutions that can identify in time a young person who is planning to leave school early or those that have already left school; joint efforts should be made to try and return such persons back into the educational system.

There are a growing number of psychological experts who have agreed (which has been empirically proven through research) that education is necessary for raising the cognitive capacities to a higher level. The social and emotional skills of young people are developed through education.

“The results of this research support the thesis that social and emotional competencies can be learned through programmes integrated into the school curriculum. Such programmes appear to be an efficient means for reducing potential problems in pupil’s behaviour and emotional difficulties, while they also increase social adaptability and encourage academic achievement.”¹¹

Development of such characteristics in a young person results in the prevention of dropout and the continuation of education, which then contributes to the creation of a healthy member of society who is able to provide a better life for himself/herself and by so doing build a better society for him/her to live in”.

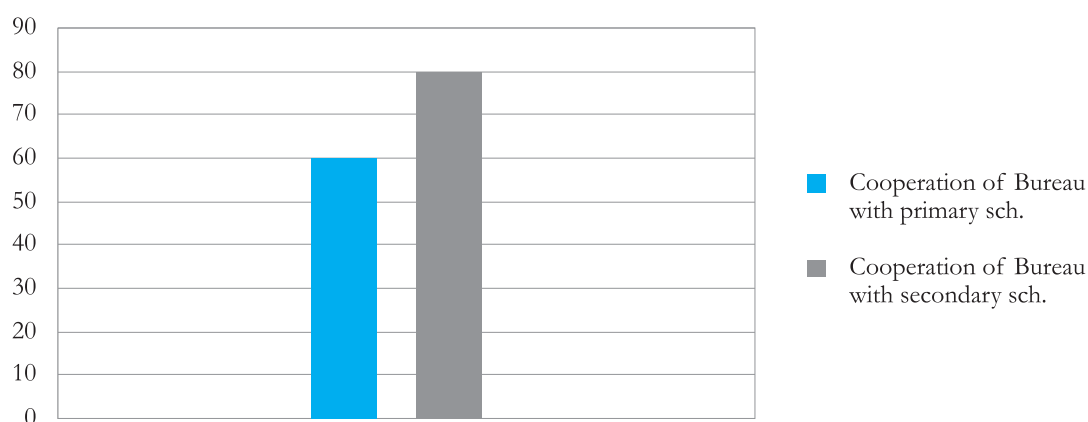
¹¹ Biometrika Healthcare Research

5.2 Institutional Programmes to Reduce the Number of Out-of-School Children and Young People

5.2.1 Programmes Implemented by Employment Bureaus

Employment bureaus usually cooperate with primary schools on vocational guidance programmes. They visit schools and deliver presentations with appropriate promotional handouts. They conduct interviews with pupils and teachers and send information to schools about the current and anticipated situation in the labour market and the skills in demand.

Cooperation also takes the form of printing publications and designing brochures (“My Road to Employment”) and participating in project implementation (cooperation with GTZ on a project implemented at the community level is another example).



The most frequent reason for the lack of cooperation between employment bureaus and primary schools in BiH regarding the issue of vocational guidance is the lack of interest displayed by pupils and parents.

Primary school seniors are still too immature to fully comprehend the advantage of gaining knowledge about the situation in the labour market; therefore, their parents, teachers and professional staff at school as well as employees of the competent employment bureau should explain the value of such information to them.

Young people in secondary school are almost fully formed persons, having their opinions and relatively clear preferences. A lot of them will have already given a great deal of thought to their future life and education. Secondary school seniors are far more interested in receiving information on the labour market than primary school seniors. However, vocational guidance in this case comes down to mere referral to further education or assistance in choosing an occupation and providing information on current demands in the labour market. The potential of vocational guidance in terms of influencing the youth and their choices is thus greatly neglected.

Most employment bureaus cooperate with secondary schools by organising presentations in school about the skills in demand on the one hand and redundant skills on the other. They also provide other relevant information about the labour market. Psychological testing and counselling are also organised so that pupils can become as familiar as possible with employment opportunities upon graduation.

Examples of specific programmes for Roma implemented by employment bureaus

1. In 2009 the Employment Bureau of Republika Srpska began implementation of a Programme of Supporting Roma Employment in Republika Srpska. To date, 190,000 BAM has been approved for co-financing the employment of 75 individuals, five of whom are self-employed and seventy are employed by an employer.
2. The Employment Bureau of the Federation has also implemented a Programme of Roma Employment and Self-Employment, in line with the Memorandum of Understanding for the Implementation of the Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Resolve the Roma Issue in the Field of Employment for 2009. Funds available and earmarked for support to employment and self-employment of Roma in the Federation of BiH have been allocated for co-financing employers who employ Roma in craft or other related activities (traditional crafts, cottage industries, production and service crafts), collection of secondary raw material, agriculture (greenhouse production, beekeeping and other branches of agriculture) as well as additional activities.

5.2.2 Programmes of the Centres for Social Work

Around 50% of the centres for social work covered by the survey had programmes aimed at reducing the number of children who do not attend primary school.

Programmes implemented by these centres for social work were as follows:

- part-time education for children who dropped out of school for various reasons and part-time education for children whose age exceeds the age limit for regular education;
- crash programmes for mastering school material, financed by donors and implemented in collaboration with primary schools;
- counselling sessions to encourage children to continue their education;
- assistance in purchasing textbooks and subventions for transportation;
- children receive assistance in learning, socialisation and education at the day centres, which come under the centres for social work.

Such programmes are mainly developed by the centres for social work. In the majority of cases it was reported that individual interviews with children were used; this is also the best way to approach the issue, because every problem is different and requires an individual approach.

5.2.3 Programmes of Pedagogical Institutes

The pedagogical institutes in BiH covered by the survey had no separate prevention programmes for non-attendance of school and tackle the problem of school dropout by organising counselling sessions in primary schools about the importance of education.

There were no prevention programmes for non-attendance of secondary school. Some institutes implement vocational guidance programmes to prevent secondary school dropout and educate young people about the importance of education.

The Pedagogical Institutes in Tuzla had no specific programmes aimed at reducing the number of children who do not attend primary school; however, the Institute did have an employee (officer) in charge of various education programmes for citizens, which includes the education of adults/parents about the benefits of education for their child's future life.

5.2.4 Programmes of the Ministries of Education

Prevention programmes exist and are implemented in different ways. Professionals talk to parents, send call-ups, warnings and organise meetings for those parents who failed to enrol their children in school. Parents who either fail to enrol their children in school or fail to return a child who left school are subject to minor offence proceedings. Since the reasons for dropping out of school are mainly individual, the school, with the help of professionals such as school psychologists, works with parents and pupils and if necessary transfers the child/pupil to special classes. Commissions postpone the enrolment of a child if they deem the child to be too immature to attend school or for other related reasons.

One programme that contributes to the prevention of school dropout is the UNICEF programme of donating textbooks to indigent pupils. (Ministry of Education, Bihać)

NGOs organise seminars and training for primary school seniors to help guide them to choose the right secondary school. Employment bureaus implement vocational guidance training to point out the skills currently in demand and employment opportunities after graduation from secondary school. The Ministry of education does not launch such programmes but does support all quality initiatives. According to the Ministry, the return of particular pupils to school is in the hands of enthusiasts who invest effort in order to get through to these pupils and help them to resolve their issues. (Ministry of Education of RS, Banja Luka)

With reference to the problems of non-attendance of primary and secondary education and dropping out from primary and secondary schools, the Ministry of Education sanctions the implementation of certain prevention programmes in schools in order to reduce school dropout and non-attendance as much as possible. These programmes include a reduction in the cost of education, free textbooks and school transportation (more than 2 km) for primary school pupils, reduced tuition fees for secondary school pupils who are beneficiaries of welfare, children from families with extreme religious beliefs and children of demobilised soldiers. They are implemented by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Zenica-Doboj Canton and schools.

SECTION 6:

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Conclusion

6.2 Recommendations

6.3 Annexes to the Report

6.1 Conclusion

The right to education is enshrined in the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina which stipulates that, “The rights and freedoms set forth in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Protocols shall apply directly in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These shall have priority over all other law. All persons within the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina shall enjoy the human rights and fundamental freedoms including the right to education”.

Regardless of the fact that the right to education is a fundamental human right many children and young people are unable to exercise this right, due to numerous obstacles and reasons.

This survey, which covered employees in schools and institutions competent for education, revealed the below listed factors as the most frequent reasons for non-enrolment in and dropping out of primary and secondary school.

1. Poor financial standing of the family
2. Lack of parental support
3. Loss of motivation and interest in education
4. Conflict with the law.

In a lesser number of cases the inadequate education of parents, marriage or common-law marriage and parents’ demands that a child should work were also reported.

All of the reasons revealed through the survey are serious problems that require close monitoring in both schools and other relevant institutions.

In order to enable activities aimed at resolving these problems children and young people who fall into this category should be identified. An updated database and the networking of institutions competent for education should provide a flow of information that will allow for the better identification of this category of child and facilitate actions aimed at preventing the problem of non-enrolment in and dropping out of school.

Such a single database would contribute considerably to the resolution of the problem of non-attendance and school dropout. The information made available would allow for an individual approach to each child who dropped out of primary school or did not enrol in secondary

school, with the aim of jointly resolving the current problem and enabling the child to continue his or her education.

Information obtained in the survey has shown that the largest group of children who do not enrol in and or dropout of primary school are Roma, followed by children from families in need. Considering this problem in the context of secondary schools, young people in conflict with the law and young people from families in need are the two leading categories.

One of the priorities set before the management and staff of schools and employees in the education sector is the enrolment of all pupils in school and the prevention of dropping out.

In this regard, schools cooperate with the relevant institutions, ministries, centres for social work, municipal courts and organise various educational activities within regular school and through extracurricular activities. They also run educational workshops for parents and pupils, training for teachers to work with children at risk and point out the statutory obligations and possible cost and similar.

A problem that also warrants much attention is the correlation between skills and qualifications and the demands of the labour market. Vocational guidance is a very important factor for successful long-term social development.

The survey led to the conclusion that no institution has a quality and comprehensive database on the current problem. Communication between institutions regarding children who drop-out of school exists, albeit only between schools and the relevant institutions. There is a simultaneous lack of mutual communication and cooperation amongst all institutions. Only when a joint database is in place and all institutions are networked can this important problem be resolved more thoroughly and effectively.

6.2 Recommendations

- Provide education for every child and every young person. Educate them from earliest possible moment about the importance of education to themselves and others.
- Pay attention to children from the two constituent peoples who are not in the majority in a given municipality so that such children do not feel like outcasts from the majority of children.
- Children and young people at risk of dropping out of school (families in need, youths in conflict with the law, Roma and children with special needs) should receive more attention and be given sessions with teachers and school psychologists/pedagogues.
- Develop prevention programmes aimed at the prevention of non-enrolment and dropping out of primary school. An ideal solution would be to have a state level programme that could then be adapted to the entity, cantonal and local level. The relevant ministries should be most responsible for the implementation of the programme.
- Build quality databases that contain information on children and young people who do not enrol in or dropout of school and their reasons for so doing.
- Networking of schools, municipal services, cantonal and entity governments is necessary to build a high quality database on children who should be enrolled in secondary school. Such a database would allow for an individual approach to each young person who does not enrol in or drops out of secondary school and enable him/her to continue in education.

- Set up mechanisms to enable children from families in need to proceed with education and prevent situations where children must leave school due to a lack of funds.
- Pay greater attention to young people in conflict with the law.
- Solve the problem of Roma children at an early stage through the education of parents who could then transfer their new understanding to their children.
- Pay attention to children from the two constituent peoples that are not in the majority in a given municipality so that such children do not feel like outcasts in any way among the majority of children. The greatest responsibility for this lies with professional staff in all grades of primary and secondary education and with the local community.
- Children with special needs should be provided with better conditions for education e.g., adapted school infrastructure, more assistants in classes and similar.
- Primary education should be free in every sense of the word.
- Work towards introducing compulsory secondary education. Secondary schools should respect the differences amongst their pupils and take pride in such differences. No discrimination, on any grounds, should be allowed in secondary education. The latter is primarily the responsibility of school employees and the community as a whole.
- Generally speaking, Bosnia and Herzegovina should do more and strive towards so-called life-long education.