

GENDER REVIEW IN EDUCATION IN KOSOVO



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Gender Review in Education in Kosovo

UNICEF Kosovo

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST)

Statistic Office of Kosovo (SOK)

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Executive summary

BACKGROUND

- In Kosovo there is a lack of statistics, both quantitative and qualitative, relating to the education of girls and the reasons for their non-inclusion in the educational process. The Gender Review in Education in Kosovo aspires to analyze the existing data on education in Kosovo with a view to explaining this. The study will also serve as a basis for future more complex research, which could be planned as a next step. The proposed recommendations are aimed at achieving an increase in the number of girls included in the educational process and improving the quality of studies in general. The study also offers recommendations on how to improve the process of data collection in the area of education in general, and girl's education in particular, that may serve for future analysis. The Gender Review in Education in Kosovo has been built upon data provided by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MEST), the Statistical Office of Kosovo (SOK) and UNICEF.

- This review was undertaken by a task force composed of MEST (EMIS, General Education and Communities Gender Section), the Prime Minister's office (Gender Equity Division), the Statistical Office of Kosovo (SOK), European Council, UNIFEM, and various NGOs and UNICEF. The analysis and report writing was confined to a local consultant from the University of Prishtinë/Priština. The report was approved by the task force, and endorsed by MEST, SOK and UNICEF Prishtinë/Priština.

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

- The current new educational structure in Kosovo includes pre-school education (age 9 months -3 and 3-6), primary education

(age 6-11), lower secondary education (11-15), upper secondary education (15-18) and higher education (18-26).

- Pre-school education in Kosovo is split into two kinds of institutions: kindergartens (age 9 months -5 years) and pre-primary education (age 5-6). There are no particular buildings for pre-primary education therefore those classes function either within the kindergartens or within primary schools.

- A comparison with the neighboring countries showed that in 2000/2001 only 2.8% of children in the 9 months-6 age group were included in pre-school education, compared with 37% in Albania, and 20% in Macedonia etc.

- The current insufficient number of pre-school buildings and lack of a proper institutional network of pre-school education, as reflected in statistics from October 2001, showed that only 20% of 30 municipalities in Kosovo have pre-school facilities (kindergartens). Out of 43 kindergartens in total, 29 offered pre-primary education, while out of 962 primary schools only 328 organized pre-primary education.

- Out of a total number of 21,427 children in pre-school education, 13,793 were included in pre-primary education, while 7,634 were in kindergartens.

- Slightly less than 50% of the total number of pre-school pupils were girls - 10,359, while the number of boys was 11,068.

- The majority of children not included in the pre-school program were from rural areas, minority groups, poor families as classified by the World Bank, or were children with special needs.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

- For the school year 2002/2003, in primary and secondary education the new 5 + 4 + 3 model replaced the 4 + 4 + 4 model. The new model reflected the mod-

els and standards of the developed countries and consisted of 5 years of primary school, 4 years of the lower cycle and 3 years of the higher cycle of secondary school. Children enrolled in primary school at the age of 6. The primary school and the lower cycle of the secondary school (9 years in total) were compulsory.

- The total number of pupils included in the primary educational process in 2000/2001 was 308,940, an increase of about 20,000 compared with 286,940 students in 1999/2000, and it comprised roughly 73% of the total number of pupils in all levels of primary education.

- According to statistics from October 2001, around 52% of students were male and 48% were female, out of a total of 308,940 pupils included in the compulsory educational levels (primary and lower secondary).

- The number of girls in the 8th grade was 3,780 or 19% lower than the number in the 1st grade. This percentage was the same for boys (19%), and it indicated a negative trend for both genders of dropping out from primary education.

- According to the data from 2001, only 80% of children aged between 7-15 were included in the educational process. In general, due to an insufficient amount of information in Kosovo in recent years, it has been difficult to assess the trends and the numbers of children in the educational process. However, it is clear that only 73% of children who enrolled in the 1st class ended up successfully in the 8th class.

- Factors that might have influenced the extent of non-inclusion in the educational process included economic hardship, non-enforcing of the laws that protect the rights of children, internal and external migrations, lack of partnerships between schools and communities, and the need for advancing the school management and teacher training.

- Transferring children from their primary schools to other distant locations for their

9th grade, led many girls to discontinue their education. The phenomenon was widespread in rural areas.

- The total number of teachers in primary education was 16,409. It was estimated that about 1/3 were female and 2/3 were male teachers. The proportion varied at the different levels of education. While the percentage of male staff at the pre-school level was 44%, at the higher education level (graduate studies) it was 88%. According to the same source, in 1999, 86% of support staff was male. The majority of the school directors as well as the managers at the municipal or regional level were male.

SECONDARY SCHOOL

- Completion of secondary school in Kosovo takes three or four years. MEST statistics showed 73 secondary schools.

- Only 75% of the children that completed primary education continued secondary education. Only 45% of the total number of children that registered managed to complete secondary school.

- Data showed that only half of the Albanian girls aged 15 - 18 attended school. Primary school attracted 91.2% of girls, while the percentage in secondary school education fell to 54%.

- Only 43.6% of the total number of students in secondary school education in Kosovo were female.

- While in the first grade of the secondary schools 41.1% of students were female, in the fourth grade this percentage rose to 46.1%. Although the number of female students dropping out of secondary school education was high: 3,429 (30%), the number of male students dropping out was twice as high: 7,083 (57.5%) (Ibid, 35). The retention ratio for girls in secondary school from first to fourth grade was 71%, which was higher than boys (58%).

- Female employment level differed a lot in rural areas. 93% of females who completed

secondary school education were unemployed.

- The inclusion of females in secondary school education differed in urban and rural areas. While in urban areas the inclusion level was higher, in rural areas this level was lower for all age ranges. The poll conducted by KFOS and KEC showed that in rural areas, 9.5% of females between the ages of 16-19 were illiterate and 16.3% of this age group had a very basic literacy level.

- The main reasons that prevented female education in the age group of 16-19 were: economic hardship (48.6%), family obstacles (17.6%), security issues (16.4%), distance to school facilities (10.9%), and early marriage (0.2%). Also the mentality of the Albanian society tended to prevent females from entering secondary education.

- 92.4% of girls in rural areas in the 16 to 19 age group expressed a wish to continue their education.

- Around 27.3% of girls were not educated when the head of the family was female, while this number was 24.7% where the head of the family was male.

- Children tended to achieve the same or similar educational level as their parents, especially the head of the family.

HIGHER EDUCATION

- Higher education in Kosovo in the Albanian language is provided at the University of Prishtina (UP). The UP comprises 14 faculties (colleges) and 7 higher schools (OECD 2001, 31).

- During 2001/2002, the UP had 21,198 registered students. Of this total 4,900 students were enrolled in higher schools.

- Of the total number of students in the UP, 56% (11,864) were male and 46% (9,334) were female.

- During the academic year 2001, the UP

had 801 professors in total (faculty), of whom only 177 (22%) were female.

- Around 13,409 students studied social-human sciences, while 6,868 studied natural-technical sciences (KEC 2001, 60). The majority of female students fell into the first group, particularly at the faculties of philosophy, philology, law and economics.

- The university dorms can accommodate 2,800 students. The rest of the students have to search for private flats to rent. According to the officials from MEST, 1,093 dorm facilities were reserved for female students and 1,365 for male students.

- The gender balance differed in faculties and higher schools. The number of male students in faculties was 22% higher than that of female students. In higher schools this was the opposite: the number of male students was 33% lower than that of female students.

INCLUSION OF MINORITIES IN EDUCATION

- According to SOK (April 2002), 10% of the total number of children included in pre-school institutions came from the Serb minority. Other minority groups (Bosnian, Ashkali, Roma, Croatian, Turkish, Goran, Egyptian etc.) constituted 2% of the total number. Also the children of the Serb community were in a far more favorable position to the other minority groups in respect of their inclusion in pre-school education.

- Compared to the demographic percentage, MEST statistics showed that from April 2001, only 49 children in Kosovo were from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian groups, while (0.2%) were registered in pre-school institutions. In addition to security, poverty was a major problem for this community.

- According to the statistics from MEST, the total number of children in primary

schools in Kosovo was 307,517. Out of this total 13,853 (4.5%) were children from Serb minority, 0.9% were Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian, and 2% were from other minorities. There was no data on the gender balance of minority children included in the educational system.

- Teaching in secondary schools in Kosovo is performed in Albanian, Serb, Bosniac and Turkish. Based on educational statistics in Kosovo from MEST 2002, as of October 2001, secondary schools in Kosovo contained about 93,688 students of whom 91%, were Albanians, 7% Serbs, and 2% were from other national groups.

- Children from minority communities in rural areas also encountered the problem of traveling to secondary schools. Expenses and risks faced during travel caused many children (especially girls) to discontinue their education.

- The UN General Secretary's special representative of in Kosovo gave the Serbian university in the north of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica permission to function. This university offers further education to Serb-speaking students. Due to the lack of data, it was not possible to examine the gender balance in this university. Based on unofficial data, the number of female students enrolled in this university was slightly higher than the number of male students. There is no separate university for the Turkish minority in Kosovo. Within the UP there is only the department of Turkish language studies.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- Only a small number of children with special needs were included in the educational process. According to the statistics from MEST (December 2002), the number of children with special needs included in the educational system was 508 (427 in primary schools and 81 in secondary school). The number of boys

included was 337 (67%), which was twice as high as the number of girls included 166 (33%). Of that number 33 were Serbian children, 6 were Turk and 5 were Bosnian. There were only 7 special schools and 28 schools where classes were held for children with special needs. The total number of teachers in special education from Albanian, Serb and Bosniac communities was 140. The majority of teachers were female (75%), but staff generally lacked proper qualifications.

ILLITERACY

- The illiteracy level of the population in Kosovo was 6.5% in the year 2000. Despite the fact that during the past decades the level of education of women has advanced faster than that of men, this level was still lower compared to the level of education of men. A similar situation exists for literacy where the level for men was 97.7% and 89.9% for women (UNDP, Human Development Report Kosovo 2002). According to a UNDP report, there was little difference in illiteracy between males and females up to the age of 35. The general concern was that the illiteracy level in Kosovo for both genders was amongst the highest in Europe.

- According to the same sources, the level of literacy amongst females in rural areas was over 60%. The percentage of those who could read or write was 14.8, whilst the percentage of women that knew a little of both was around 12.5%. Special attention should be paid to the level of relative (and absolute) illiteracy within the 16-19 age groups. Not only was illiteracy higher than in the 11-15 age group, but it was also higher than in the 20-27 age group, and even higher for women up to 35 years of age. Considering that their years for primary education were the 1990s, the increased level of illiteracy for this age group suggested that the situation during the Serbian regime did have a negative impact on the education of women in Kosovo.

- Some 99.3% of rural women declared that they were unemployed. The data highlighted the fact that over 99% of women in rural areas have little opportunity to use their literacy skills.
- An overwhelming percentage of rural women in all age groups wished to continue education. Women who have been prevented from continuing education for objective reasons, such as distance and security, were more eager to continue education.

1. Introduction

Girl's education is among the most important priorities in all the countries aimed at achieving acceptable educational standards. In Kosovo, where the level of education is considered among the lowest in Europe, there is a lack of statistics both quantitative and qualitative especially relating to the education of girls and the reasons of their non-inclusion in the educational process. Nonetheless, clear and explicit indicators have reflected this phenomenon (gender discrimination in education) in Kosovo society over a number of years.

Non-inclusion of girls in education contravenes international conventions on the right to education for all, and is, to some extent, a form of violence against women.

Gender Review in Education in Kosovo aspires to analyze the existing data on education in Kosovo with a particular reference to girl's education and the reasons for their non-inclusion in the educational process. The data and the analysis will help in identifying the gender issues and the extent and nature of the gender discrimination in education. The study will serve as a basis for more complex research on the issue, which is planned as a next step.

2. Methodology

Gender Review in Education in Kosovo has been built upon data provided by the Ministry of Education Science and

Technology (MEST), the Statistical Office of Kosovo (SOK) and UNICEF. Qualitative analysis from a gender perspective has been completed to enable recommendations to be made for ensuring gender equality in education in Kosovo. The proposed recommendations are aimed at achieving an increase in the number of girls included in the educational process and on improving the quality of studies in general. The study also offers recommendations on how to improve the process of data collection for education and especially for girl's education that can serve for future analysis.

It has to be noted however, that the data on education in Kosovo used in this study offers statistical information on girl's education but at the same time is a poor source of information on the reasons for non-inclusion of girls in the educational process. This report is based on comparison and analysis of the available existing statistics (see bibliography), and the resulting main findings should serve as a basis for further research.

3. Process

This review was undertaken by a task force composed of MEST (EMIS, General Education and Communities Gender Section), the Prime Minister's office (Gender Equity Division), the Statistical Office of Kosovo (SOK), the European Council, UNIFEM, various NGOs and UNICEF. The analysis and report writing was confined to a local consultant from the University of Pristina. The report was approved by the task force, and endorsed by MEST, SOK and UNICEF Kosovo.

4. National context

Kosovo has an area of 10,887 km². Data from UNMIK, IOM and SOK from 2000 estimated that it had a population of 1.8-2.0 million citizens, of whom 50% were younger than 20 (the youngest population in Europe). The expected lifetime was 74 years (76.6 women and 71.5 men), while the mortality of children was 34-35 in 1,000 births (2001). The number of children born in

Kosovo in 2002 was 41,827. It was estimated that 51% of the population were female, and 49% were male. It was estimated that 90% of the population was Albanian, 7% Serbian, 3% Montenegrin, Bosniac, Turkish, Roma and other ethnic groups (UNDP, Human Development Report - Kosovo 2002).

Kosovo is a rural country with 2/3 of the population living in villages (30% of the population lives in urban areas). National income per capita for 2001 was 904 USD. If the Human Development Index is calculated by using the lowest index level of GDP, Kosovo was placed between 102nd and 103rd in the list of countries. If the highest GDP index level is used (PPP US\$), Kosovo was placed between 82nd and 83rd (data from 1999). The unemployment level in 2002 was estimated at 50-55%, the illiteracy level at 6.5% in 2000. Despite the fact that during the past decades the level of education of women has advanced faster than that of men, this level was still lower compared to the level of education of men. A similar situation exists for literacy where the level for men was 97.7% and for women 89.9% (UNDP, Human Development Report Kosovo 2002).

5. Educational system in Kosovo

During 1991-1992, after the Serbian regime imposed its enforced administration onto the educational system in Kosovo, Albanian students and staff continued working in a parallel educational system.

Primary schools in Albanian continued to work within the school buildings, but teaching was allowed in the late afternoon hours only which meant reduced time for classes. Secondary schools and high schools continued the educational process in private houses after they were banned from the school buildings.

The number of students during this time was reduced. This was attributed mostly to restricted movement caused by deteriorating

security and later due to the large internal displacement of the population affected by the continuing Serbian police campaigns. The educational process was halted on the 20th of March 1999, just a few days before the NATO bombardment.

Since June 1999, the educational system of Kosovo has been administered by the UNMIK's Department of Education and Science. All existing regulations pertaining to education were cancelled by UNMIK, while new ones were generated slowly as it was impossible to implement them in a short transition period.

Following the armed conflict, the end of the emergency phase for the educational system in Kosovo marked the beginning of a new cycle - the development phase. The new phase entailed broad reforms including institutionalizing the educational system, consisting of institutions such as the MEST and all the institutions responsible for subsequent levels of education.

At the same time, reforms included teaching requirements and salary assessments, training on new methodologies, curricula alteration, increasing the capacity for the transfer of knowledge and apprehension, and inclusion of students needs in the new educational system.

The transfer of responsibility and authority from the international to the local staff was considered to be an important event.

CURRENT SITUATION

Established in March 2002, the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MEST) is responsible for the development of the educational system in Kosovo. Among the MEST's priorities are: improving the quality of education to the level of European standards including the curricula, gender balance, new teaching methodology, preparing the youth for active participation in society, and access to education for all in Kosovo. The current new educational structure includes pre-school education (age 3-5), primary education (age 6-11), lower secondary education

TABLE 5.0 - Inclusion in education in different educational levels by gender (UNDP 2002, 21)

	Female	Male	Total
Primary education (compulsory education: 1-8 grades)	91.2%	92.1%	91.7%
Secondary education (1-4 grades)	54%	65%	59.5%
Higher education (2, 4, 5 years)	16.4%	18.2%	17.3%

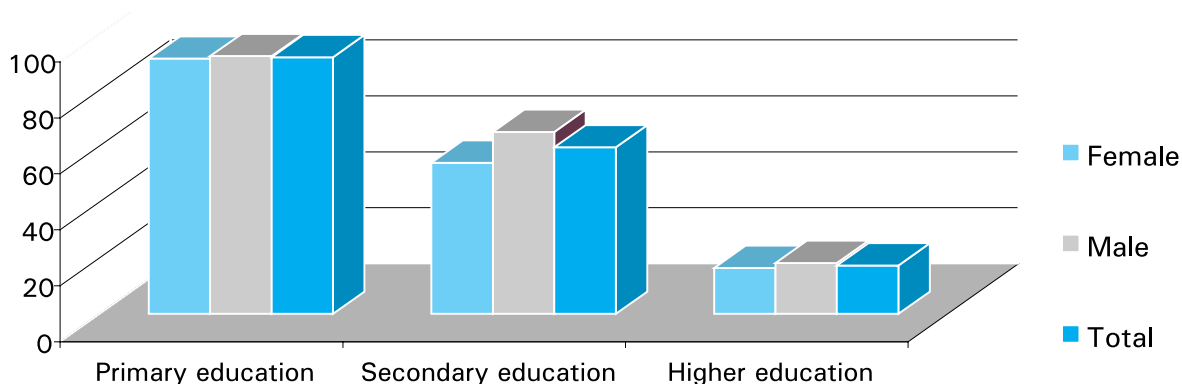


FIG 5.1 - Level of inclusion of children in education for 2002 (in %)

(11-15), upper secondary education (15-18) and higher education (18-26).¹

TABLE 5.1 - Educational system in Kosovo

New Structure, 2002		Grade	Age	Schema until 2001		
Preschool Education	Kindergarten		3-5			
	Pre-primary		5-6			
Primary Education (compulsory)	I		6-7	Primary Education		
	II		7-8			I
	III		8-9			II
	IV		9-10			III
	V		10-11			IV
Lower Secondary School (compulsory)	VI		11-12	V	Secondary Education	
	VII		12-13	VI		
	VIII		13-14	VII		
	IX		14-15	VIII		
Upper Secondary School	X		15-16	1		
	XI		16-17	2		
	XII		17-18	3		
University B.A	University applied sciences B.A.	1	18-19	Higher Education		
		2	19-20			
		3	20-21			
Graduate studies M.A		1	21-22			
		2	22-23			
Graduate studies PhD		1	23-24			
		2	24-25			
		3	25-26			

6. Pre-school and early childhood development

Pre-school education in Kosovo is split into two kinds of institutions: kindergartens (age 9 months - 6 years) and pre-primary education (age 5-6). There are no particular buildings for pre-primary education therefore these classes function either within kindergartens or within primary schools. The goal of pre-school education is to foster the psycho-physical development of children through games and socializing, hygiene, basic language elements, maths and the environment.

Despite its importance for children's development, pre-school education in Kosovo is the least developed part of the educational system. Even three years after the end of the armed conflict, children have not been registered in the civil registration system of Kosovo. Statistics based on the estimates completed by the Federative Statistical Office of Yugoslavia from 1991 showed that the number of children aged 5 or below was 263,302, of which 127,042 were female or 48.2%, and 136,260 or 51.8% were male.

A comparison with neighboring countries showed that in 2000/2001 only 2.8% of children in the 1-6 age range were included in the pre-school education, compared with 37% in Albania and 20% in Macedonia etc. The majority of the children who were not included in the pre-school program were from rural areas, minority groups, poor families as classified by the World Bank criteria, or were children with special needs.

This is a complex problem and is determined by several main factors. First of all, there is a lack of tradition in the Albanian community for including children in this level of education. Also, the current insufficient number of pre-school buildings and lack of a proper institutional network of pre-school education is reflected in statistics from October 2001 showing that only 20% of 30 municipalities in Kosovo had pre-school facilities (kindergartens). Out of 43 kindergartens in total, 29 offered pre-school education, while out of 962 primary schools only 328 organized

pre-primary education (Statistic on Education in Kosovo, SOK/MEST/UNICEF).

Financial issues are the next important factor for the non-inclusion of children in pre-school institutions given the monthly fee for a whole-day stay of 35 EUR + accompanying expenses (transport, clothing etc). For families with higher numbers of children and for those with lower income, it was practically impossible to enroll their children in this educational level. In addition, a high percentage of parents (especially mothers) were unemployed and did not consider it reasonable to pay for pre-school services, neither were they interested in doing so.

Statistics from MEST from October 2001 clearly illustrated that the location of pre-school facilities played an important role in the inclusion of children in these institutions. With a minor difference in gender, the number of children fell considerably with the increase of distance from home to pre-school facilities. In Appendix 1 the number of pre-school pupils traveling less than 1 km to the pre-school facility is 14,069. The number of children that have to travel 4-5 km to the pre-school facilities is 105. Thus the conclusion was that children who do not have a pre-school facility nearby tend to be excluded from the pre-school educational system, and that fulfilling the needs for the pre-school facilities in the areas where they are not present results in an increase in the number of children included in the system.

It has to be noted that as yet, no research has been conducted amongst the parents to find out the reasons behind their choice of child care and educational services for children aged 1-6 years, which could also reveal the reasons for their non-inclusion in the system.

6.1 Gender balance in pre-school education

According to data from MEST/SOK, October 2001, the total number of children in pre-school education in Kosovo (age from 9 months - 6 years) was 21,427. The majority of them were in Prishtinë/Priština where

there was a high concentration of the population and where the percentage of employed parents was higher than in other cities. At the same time, the majority of pre-school institutions were located in Prishtinë/Priština and the children traveled less than one kilometer to the facility.

Out of a total number of 21,427 children in pre-school education, 13,793 were included in pre-primary education, while 7,634 were in kindergartens. Slightly less than 50% of the total numbers of pre-school pupils were girls 10,359 and the number of boys was 11,068. This structure was relatively equilibrated and reflected the demographic structure of Kosovo. From the overall number of children included in pre-school education in Kosovo, 88% were Albanian.

The reasons noted earlier for low inclusion of children in pre-school education applied to both boys and for girls. At this level of education, the majority of teaching staff was female (kindergartens were staffed exclusively with female educators). This may be one of the reasons why there was a high inclusion of female pupils in pre-school education.

6.2 Inclusion of minorities in pre-school education

According to SOK (April 2002), 10% of the total number of children included in pre-school institutions came from the Serb minority. Other minority groups (Bosniac, Ashkali, Roma, Croat, Turk, Goran, Egyptians etc.) constituted 2% of the total number.

Apart from the children of the Serbian community, who were in a far more favorable position than the other minority groups in respect of their inclusion in pre-school education, other minority groups faced limited access to educational programs as a reflection of their overall position: security situation, economical obstacles and access to various social services.

Pre-school education for the children of the Serbian community was organized in kindergartens and pre-primary programs from 9 months to 7 years. Talks are going on with the Serbian community to accept 6 as the age of registering children in the first class of the primary school as opposed to 7, which was the case until now in conformity with the laws of Serbia. These pre-school institutions are ethnically "clean" and function in enclaves in school buildings or in kindergartens. The curricula are different and separate too. It is interesting that despite the unfavorable position of the Serb minority in Kosovo, 53% of the total number of children from this community included in pre-school education were female (1137) and 47% were male (1031). This "positive discrimination" in pre-school education characterizes other minority groups in Kosovo too (Appendix 2).

The groups less well represented in the educational system in Kosovo especially at pre-school level, were the children of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian groups. MEST statistics from April 2001 showed that only 49 children from these communities (0.2%) were registered in pre-school institutions. In addition to the security reasons, poverty

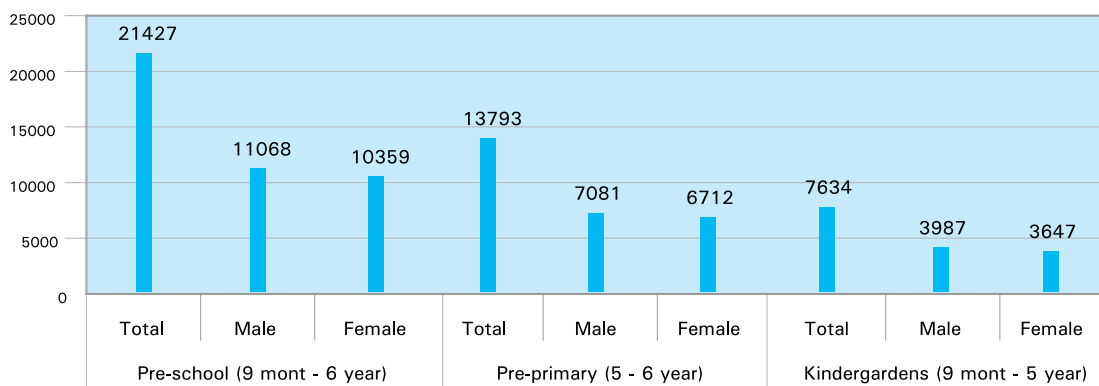


FIG 6.1 - Gender status in pre-school education in Kosovo, October 2001

was a major problem in these communities. It was very difficult for the parents, who were unemployed most of the time, to register their children in institutions that were not part of compulsory education and were fee-based. Despite the very difficult situation in these ethnic groups, 51% of the children in pre-school institutions were female (Appendix 2).

In addition to the lack of facilities in smaller localities, the main reason for the non-inclusion of children in the pre-school system was the lack of classes in their language in areas where minority groups such as Bosniac, Croat, Goran, Turkish were dominant.

7. Primary education

The main principle in educational policies in Kosovo in the period after the war was characterized as "education for all". This meant that all the children and youth in Kosovo had to have equal opportunities in education. In September 2000, DES (Department of Education and Science) took some important decisions to revise the educational system. From the 2000/2001 school year onwards, the new 5+4+3 model replaced the 4+4+4 model in primary and medium education. This model reflected the models and standards from the developed countries and consisted of 5 years of primary school, 4 years of lower cycle and 3 years of higher cycle of secondary school. Children enrolled in primary school at the age of 6. The primary school and the lower cycle of the secondary school (9 years in total) were compulsory.

In Kosovo, there is also a legal act that stipulates that the maximum travel distance to the school has to be less than 5 km. Aiming to rationalize financially and also reduce the administrative staff, the primary schools were often organized as central schools with satellites. The satellites could vary in the terms of the number of classes and the multigrade classes they offered ("Arsimi në Kosovo", KEC 2001). In primary schools in Kosovo there were classes in 5 languages: Albanian, Serbian, Bosniac, Turkish, and

Croatian. The total number of students included in the educational process in 2000/2001 was 308,940, which was an increase of about 20,000 compared with 286,940 students in 1999/2000; it comprised roughly 73% of the total number of students in all levels of education. Out of a total of 962 primary schools, 840 were taught in the Albanian language (87%), 92 in Serbian (9.5%), 23 in Bosniac (2.4%), 5 in Goran (0.5%) and 1 in Croatian (0.1%) (Statistic on Education in Kosovo SOK/MEST/UNICEF).

The compulsory education in Kosovo functions in two or three shifts, each lasting 5 hours and there is no daily care for children.

Though primary education is compulsory and non-attendance has consequences for the parents, according to data from 2001, only 80% of children aged between 7 to 15 were included in the educational process. In general, the available information was insufficient to assess the numbers of children in the educational process in Kosovo in recent years but it was clear that only 73% of children who enrolled in the 1st class ended up successfully in the 8th class. It has to be noted that these statistics tell nothing about the quality of education, nor the degree to which children drop out (non-consistent attendance of classes), neither do they indicate how many children are enrolled officially but do not show any success². Despite the lack of data, the relationship between going to classes and illiteracy can be seen in conjunction with the high level of unemployment of youth in Kosovo. Other factors that might influence the extent of non-inclusion in the educational process include economic hardship³, non-enforcing of the laws that protect the rights of children, internal and external migrations, lack of partnership between schools and communities and the need for advancing the school management and teacher training (UNDP Human Development Report Kosovo, 2002)

Statistical data (Appendix 4) shows that regardless of the legal criteria on the 5km maximum distance to the school, a high number of students in the 1st to 12th grades (36,210) have to travel between 5 to 10km to the school facilities. This is a key

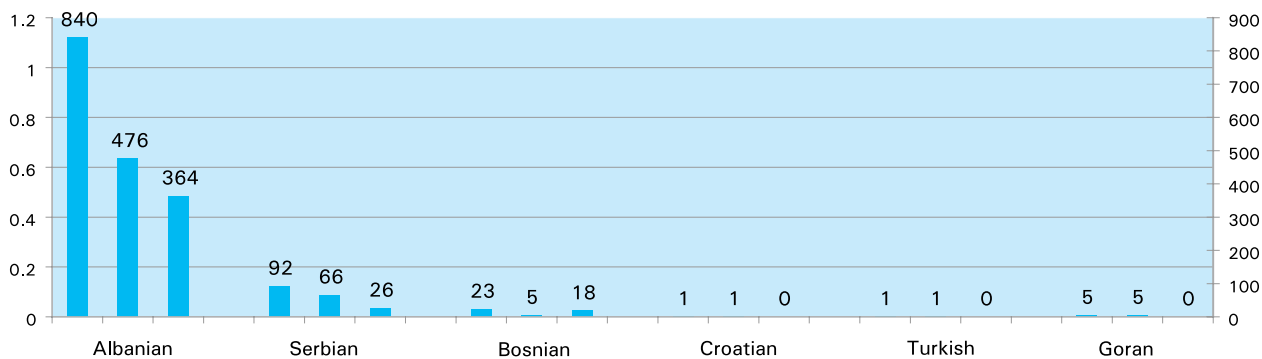


FIG 7.1 - Number of schools by language (total, main and satellite schools), October 2001

factor to be taken into account when considering the non-inclusion of children in the educational process. It has to be noted that for the children from the Serb community the maximum distance to the school facility was 1-2 km.

7.1 Gender balance in primary education

According to the statistics from MEST/SOK, October 2001, around 52% of students were male and 48% were female out of a total of 308,940 students included in the compulsory educational level. The statistics showed not only the gender imbalance in primary education, but also the 1% decrease of the inclusion of girls in comparison to their inclusion in pre-school education (49%). The percentage of girls through the grades (grade 1 to grade 8) in the primary education system did not show variations in comparison to the percentage of boys. However, when compared to the number of girls in different grades, a decrease in the higher grades

TABLE 7.1 - Number of pupils in primary school by grade and gender

Grade	Primary school students			
	Male	Female	% of Female	Total
1	21974	19962	47,6	41936
2	24503	22509	47,9	47012
3	21240	19922	48,4	41162
4	18873	17488	48,1	36361
5	19676	17843	47,6	37519
6	18850	16969	47,4	35819
7	18455	16687	47,5	35142
8	17807	16182	47,6	33989

could be noted. Table 6.1 and Fig 6.1 show that the number of girls in the 8th grade was 3,780 or 19% lower than in the 1st grade. This percentage was the same for the inclusion of boys (19%) and it conveys the negative trend that children of both genders are dropping out of primary education.

Though there are no comprehensive studies, indications are that traditional beliefs especially in rural areas are the reason behind children dropping out and the lower level of inclusion of girls in the educational system. In addition, during the first months following the armed conflict in Kosovo, some parents did not send their female children to school for fear of their safety. Other factors were more economic. When additional expenses are unaffordable some families are forced to choose which of their children will continue their education. More often than not the priority was given to boys over girls.

One of the innovations for the 2002/2003 school year was the establishment of a 9th grade as a part of the lower medium education. Though this grade was part of the 5 + 4 cycle, which had been conducted in the primary school facilities up to now; due to a lack of space it was transferred to the secondary schools where, again, the space was insufficient. The majority of the secondary schools are located in smaller cities and towns, and the transport of children means additional expenses especially for rural families. The distance from the home to the school facilities means transportation has to be organized and since this is not well defined it is up to the parents to take care of it. Transferring the 9th grade from the location where the children have completed primary school to other distant locations has

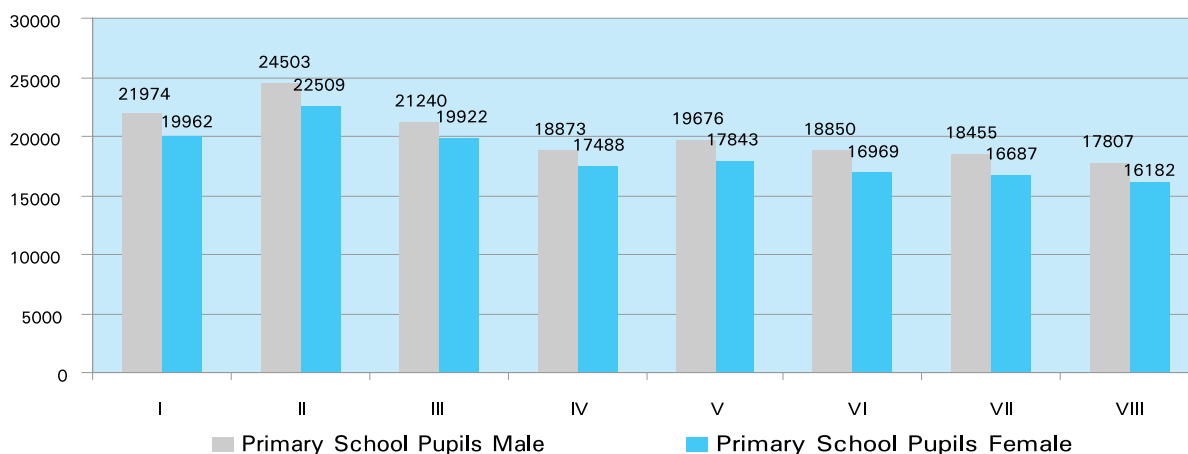


FIG 7.2 - Number of pupils in primary school by grade and gender

had a particularly negative influence in discontinuing education for girls. The phenomenon is widespread in rural areas.

7.2 Teaching staff

The total number of teachers in primary education was 16,409. Out of this total 88% were Albanian teachers, 8% Serbian, 1.6% Bosniac, 0.8% Turk, 0.6% Goran, 0.2% Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian and 0.06% Croatian teachers (Statistics on Education in Kosovo, 2002). There were no precise statistics of the gender balance of the total number of teachers in this level of education. It is estimated that about 1/3 were female and 2/3 were male teachers. This proportion varies going through the different levels of education. While at the pre-school level the percentage of the male staff was 44% at the higher education level (graduate studies) it was 88%. According to the same source of 1999, 86% of support staff was male. The majority of the school directors as well as the managers at the municipal or regional level were male (Thematic review of national policies for education - Kosovo, 2001).

The qualifications of the teaching personnel at each level and especially at the primary level were one of the main obstacles to achieving international standards in the education system in Kosovo. What is specifically worrying is the fact that the situation had deteriorated from the school year of 1999/2000 when 80.9% of the teachers were adequately qualified, as opposed to 19.1% of unqualified teachers. In

2000/2001, 77.8% of the teachers in the primary education level were qualified as opposed to 22.2% who were not adequately qualified for the job (there was no data for Serbian teachers), (Arsimi në Kosovo, KEC 2001). The tendency can be explained by the transfer of qualified staff to other areas where they were better paid.

The current situation in the educational system in Kosovo is such that teachers work in non-favorable conditions in regards to facilities and financial aspects, with textbooks that are still far behind the required standards, while the bulk of the schools operate in more than two shifts due to a lack of space. The system does not promote the inclusion of children in primary schools despite the fact that the level is obligatory. However, there is no data based on comprehensive studies that could relate the poor conditions in education in Kosovo to the non-inclusion of girls in the educational process.

7.3 Inclusion of minorities in the primary education

According to the statistics from MEST/SOK, April 2002, the total number of children in primary schools in Kosovo was 307,517. Out of this total 13,853 (4.5%) were children from the Serb minority, 0.9% were Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian and 2% were other minorities. There is no data on the gender balance of minority children included in the educational system.

The security situation remained one of the key factors for non-inclusion of children from minorities in the educational system in Kosovo. The Serb minority worked in a parallel educational system organized in enclaves where it was still taught according to the curricula from Serbia. Turk and Bosniac minorities were included in separate or mixed schools (with Albanians), though their curricula was not part of the official curricula in Kosovo.

Compared to the demographic percentage, the least number of children included in primary and other educational levels were from the Roma minority. Though security remained the key reason, a research conducted in Zveçan/Zveqan, Leposaviç/Leposaviq and Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (Serb minority inhabited areas) in July 2002 showed that the low level of education among parents, who did not consider it justifiable to enroll their children into the schools, negatively affected the inclusion of children in primary education. A lack of classes in native languages and extremely poor learning conditions were also apparent. This resulted in the high illiteracy rate (as much as 85%) among the school-aged children in these three camps.

Large numbers of children living in the camps aged between 8-18, considered themselves too old to be included in primary education (Child Friendly School - Roma Education Project - survey, July 2002).

7.4 Children with special needs in primary education

Only a small number of children with special needs were included in the educational process. According to statistics from MEST (December 2002), the number of children with special needs included in the educational system was 503 (427 in primary schools and 81 in secondary school). The number of boys 337 (67%) was twice as high as the number of girls 166 (33%). Of that number, 33 children were Serbian, 6 were Turk and 5 were Bosniac. There were only 7 special schools with 411 students and in 38 schools, where classes were held for children with special needs, there were 389 stu-

dents, while the total number of children with special needs included in the education system was 800. The total number of teachers in special education from Albanian, Serb and Bosniac communities was 140. The majority of teachers were female (75%), but the staff generally lacked proper qualifications.

8. Secondary school education

In the new system from 2002, secondary education was divided into two levels: lower secondary education (grade 6 to 9), which was compulsory, and upper secondary education (grade 10 to 12).

In the education system implemented until 2001, the completion of secondary school in Kosovo took three or four years from the age 15 to 18. MEST statistics reported there were 73 secondary schools (MEST 2001, 31). The educational system in Kosovo has three branches. These include general education, math-natural and linguistical (gymnasiums) in technical-professional schools and in secondary art schools (KEC 2001, 42). There were five schools for children with special needs in Prizren/Prizren, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and Pejë/Pejë, while in Prishtinë/Priština there was one theological school (ibid. 43).

While the inclusion level was 80% in primary schools, only 75% of the children that completed primary education continued the secondary education. Only 45% of the total number of children that registered managed to complete the secondary school (UNDP 2002).

8.1. Gender balance in secondary school education

The enrollment and perseverance of students in secondary schools in Kosovo was disappointing; Kosovo had the lowest level compared to other European countries (KEC 2001, 45). Data indicated that "only half of the Albanian girls at the age 15 - 18 attend-

TABLE 8.1 - Comparison of the number of students by gender in first year and in fourth year of secondary school education (MEST,Tetor 2001)

	Female	Male	Difference	% of girls
First year	11,656	16,690	5,034	41.1%
Fourth year	8,227	9,607	1380	46.1%
Retention ratio	71%	58%		

ed school" (SOK/MEST/UNICEF 2002, 17). Primary school attracted 91.2% of girls, while the percentage in secondary school education fell to 54% (UNDP 2002, 21). Only 43.6% of the total numbers of students in secondary school education in Kosovo were female (MEST 2002, 15). The gender proportion in secondary school increased in favor of females at the higher grades. While in the first grade of the secondary schools 41.1% of students were female, in fourth grade this percentage rose to 46.1%. Once registered, the number of female students that continued their education was higher compared to the male students. Although the number of female student dropping out in secondary school education was high 3429 (30%), the number of male students dropping out was twice as

high at 7,083 (57.5%) (Ibid, 35). The retention ratio for girls in secondary school from first to fourth grade was 71%, which was higher than boys (58%).

Kosovar society is in a transition phase both politically and economically. The destruction caused by war has placed a huge burden on household finances and those of private companies. As a result unemployment has reached a very high level⁴. According to a World Bank report on the level of poverty in Kosovo, some 50% of Kosovar society was living in poverty with 12% living in extreme poverty (BB 2001, 19).

For those who had completed secondary school education, the level of employment was very low. The job market had no capacity for all the students that had completed school. For females who had completed secondary school education, unemployed was as high as 99.3% (KFOS/KEC 2002, 10). Municipal directorates and secondary schools should assess the local job market and match the curricula of secondary schools to the job market needs.

The inclusion of females in secondary school education differed in urban and rural areas. While in urban areas, the inclusion level was higher; in rural areas this level was lower for all the age ranges. A poll conducted by KFOS and KEC showed that in rural areas, 9.5% of females aged 16-19 were illiterate and that 16.3% of this age group had a very basic literacy level (KFOS/KEC 2002, 9). Hence, the relative illiteracy level⁵ in rural areas for this age group was around 25.8% (ibid). Around 16.4% of female at the age group 16-19 were never included in primary

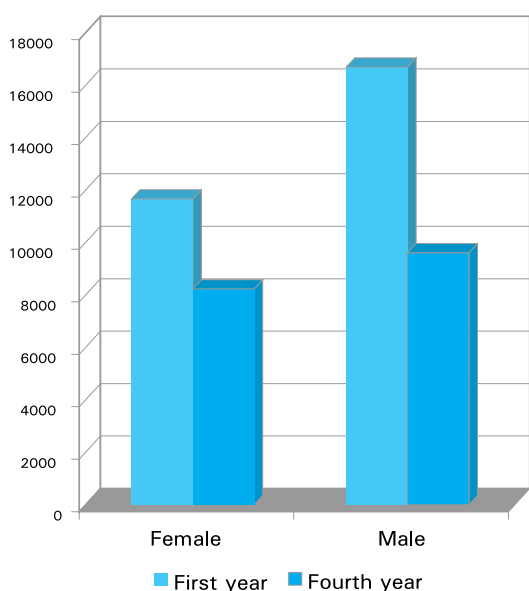


FIG 7.3 - Number of students by gender in 1st year and in 4th year of secondary school education

TABLE 8.1.1. - Percentage of girls in primary and in secondary education, 2001

	Female	Male	Difference
Primary education (compulsory education, grade 1 to 8)	47.8%	52.2%	4.4%
Secondary education (grade 1 to 4)	43.6%	56.4%	12.8%

school education; 35.2% of them had attended one to three years of primary school education; 32.2% had completed four to seven years of primary school education; only 12.3% had completed the primary school education (ibid, 11).

The main reasons that prevented female education at the age group 16-19 were: economic hardship (48.6%), family obstacles (17.6%), security issues (16.4%), distance to school facilities (10.9%) and early marriage (0.2%) (Ibid, 16).

The mentality of Albanian society works against education for females in secondary education. In the majority of cases, traditional and parochial families do not facilitate education for girls; their inclusion in schools could lead to negative attitudes towards the girls and the family in general. Some believe that schools may be morally degenerating for girls and will ruin their future chances of marriage. The larger the family, the less chance girls have for education. (SOK/DES/UNICEF 2002, 17). Girls are usually prevented from education in favor of helping with the housework.

According to research by KFOS and KEC, a high number of girls in rural areas wished to continue their education. This aspiration was even more emphasized among the younger females. Some 92.4% of girls in the 16 to 19 age group expressed a wish to continue their education (KFOS/KEC 2002, 17).

In rural areas, the gender of the head of the family was an important factor in determining the continuation of education for girls. When the head of the family was female, the level of the girl's inclusion in education was lower. Around 27.3% of girls did not get educated when the head of the family was female, while this number was 24.7% where the head of the family was male (ibid, 13). The interpretation is that families headed by females have less income and thus need more help with the housework. In Kosovar society these families are also more vulnerable to rumors about morals. The assumption to be drawn is that mothers sometimes fear the behavior of their daughters during the education process, and the loss of family prestige that might result from it.

The educational level of the head of the family was an incentive in allowing children to continue secondary school and higher education. There was a tendency for children to achieve the same or a similar educational level as their parents, especially the head of the family (ibid, 15).

The quality of teaching was perhaps another problem for registering and continuing the secondary school education. In 2001 "in any educational area, up to 50 percent of the engaged teachers might not be qualified" (SOK/DES/UNICEF 2002, 12). The conclusion was that the interest among parents and children (in this case girls) in continuing education went down as a result of the quality of education and the low level of employment opportunities.

According to the statistics from SOK (December 2002), the total number of teachers in primary and secondary schools was 22,010, where 62% (13,725) were male and 38% (8,285) were female.

8.2. Inclusion of minorities in secondary school education

Teaching in secondary schools in Kosovo is performed in Albanian, Serbian, Bosniac and Turkish. Based on education statistic in Kosovo from MEST/SOK from October 2001, the secondary schools in Kosovo had around 93,688 students. Albanians made up 91% of the total, Serbians 7% and 2% came from other national groups (34).

Security factors played a particular role in the discontinuation of education for the Serbian students. Female inclusion in education did not present a problem for this national group. The number of female students in secondary schools was higher than the number of male students.

Children in rural areas encountered the problem of traveling to secondary schools. Expenses and risks faced during the travel caused many children (especially girls) to discontinue their education. Accordingly "some-

TABLE 9.1 - Number and percentage of students by gender in the University of Pristina
(source: UP Central Administration 2002)

Number of students in UP	Female	Male	Total
	9,334	11,864	21,198
	Faculties		Higher schools
Female	6,336	Female	2,998
Male	9,962	Male	1,902
Total	16,298	Total	4,900

times, girls are denied the secondary school education, mainly because of the security reasons and the lack of funds" (SOK/DES/UNICEF 2002, 49).

9. Higher education

Higher education in Kosovo in the Albanian language is offered at the University of Pristina (UP). Until 2001, the UP comprised of 14 faculties (colleges) and 7 high schools (OECD 2001, 31). The academic year started on October 30th and ended on September 30th. It was organized into two semesters, the first ending on January 15th. The university offers undergraduate studies lasting 4 years, Masters (M.A.) lasting 2 years and (PhD) lasting at least 3 years. Studies in higher schools lasts 3 years.

Recently, the UP signed the Declaration of Bologna on higher education, according to which undergraduate studies only last three years and lead to a bachelor degree. Most of the faculties (colleges) (philosophy, law, economics etc.) have started applying the new rule as of 2001. Higher schools that used to operate as a part of the University of Prishtina until 2001, are now made up of part of the corresponding faculties or have been upgraded to this status although they remain located throughout the five centers in Kosovo. They teach the same curricula as the three-year faculties and have stopped offering the previous two-year curricula.

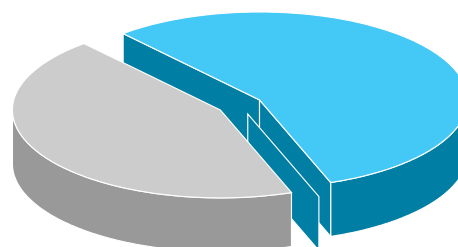
During the 2001/2002 academic year, the UP had 21,198 registered students. Of this total 4,900 students were enrolled in high schools (UP 2002). The same year, 6,059 new students were registered (ibid). The requirements to register in any faculty or

higher school include a secondary school diploma and a pass in the admission exam.

9.1. Gender balance in higher education

Of the total number of students in the UP, 56% (11,864) were male and 44% (9,334) were female (ibid). Higher education grouped 16,4% of females from the same age group in Kosovo, while 18.2 percent of male students in the same age group enrolled into higher education.

During the academic year 2001, there were 801 professors in total at the UP (faculty), and only 177 of them (22%) were female. Around 13,409 students studied social-human sciences, while 6,868 studied natural-technical sciences (KEC 2001, 60). The majority of female students fell into the first group, particularly at the faculties of philosophy, philology, law and economics.



Female 44% Male 56%

UNIVERSITY

Accommodation was a factor influencing the level of inclusion in higher education, regardless of the student's gender. Accommodation costs have increased significantly in Kosovo, following the arrival of the international UNMIK's administration and the influx of

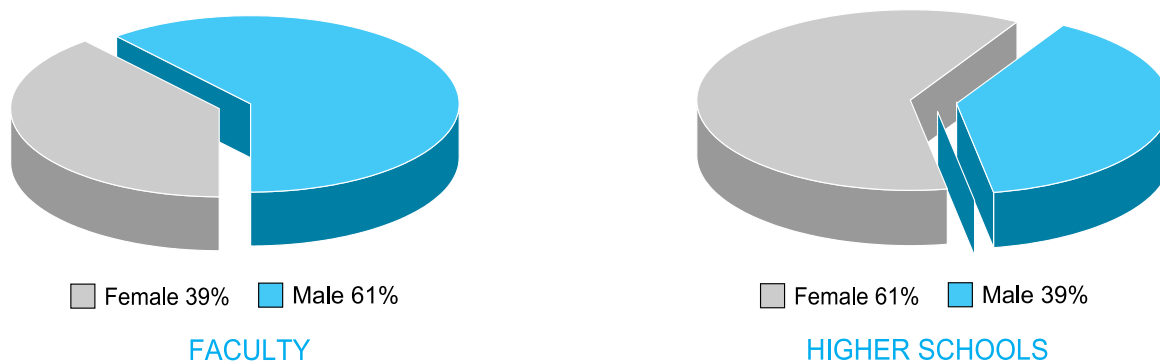


FIG 9.1.3 - Percentage of students by gender in faculties and higher schools (UP 2002)

numerous humanitarian organizations. The university dorms can accommodate some 2,800 students. The rest of the students have to search for, and rent private flats. According to MEST officials, 1,093 dorm accommodations were reserved for female students and 1,365 for male students. Although this correlates to the student gender proportion in the UP, it does not encourage female students to enter higher education.

The gender balance differs in faculties and higher schools. The number of male students in higher education was 22% higher than that of female students (see the table below). In high schools the opposite was true. The number of male students was 33% lower than female students. This showed that female students were more interested and more likely to study in higher schools that were near their home. The enrollment of females in higher schools assisted them in finding employment.

The job market in Kosovo needs professionals in the area of computer sciences, foreign languages, political sciences and sociology (OECD 2001, 35). Because there is little demand in other areas, qualified people especially graduates face unemployment. This reduces interest and motivation towards study. The job market's preference for professionals in particular areas creates competition for those studies. Heavy demand can lead to fraud in the registration process. Parents are frequently forced to choose which of their children will continue their studies, and often the priority is given to the male children.

9.2. Inclusion of minorities in higher education

The UN General Secretary's special representative in Kosovo allowed the Serb university in the north of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica to operate. This university offers education to Serb-speaking students. Due to a lack of data, it was not possible to examine the gender balance in the university. Based on unofficial data, however, the number of female students in the university was slightly higher than the number of male students.

There is no separate university for the Turkish minority in Kosovo. Within the UP, there is only the department of Turkish language studies.

10. Illiteracy

The illiteracy level of the population in Kosovo was 6.5% in the year 2000. Despite the fact that during the past decades the level of education of women has advanced faster than that of men, this level was still lower than the level of education of men. There was a similar finding regarding literacy where the level for men was 97.7% for men and for women 89.9% (UNDP, Human Development Report Kosovo 2002). According to the UNDP report, there was little difference in illiteracy between males and females up to the age of 35. Although the difference was not high, the general concern was the fact that both genders in Kosovo showed an illiteracy level that was among the highest in Europe.

Based on the KFOS/KEC survey of 2002, women in rural areas, who tended to be disadvantaged regarding education, were further hurt by the difficult political situation created in Kosovo during the 1990s. This period was marked by widespread violations of the basic human rights of education for the majority of the Kosovar population. Women were further hampered because of security concerns for girls traveling long distances to school, unaccompanied, during a time of conflict in Kosovo.

According to the same sources, the current level of literacy amongst females in rural areas was over 60%. The percentage of those who could not read or write was 14.8, whilst the percentage of women that could manage a little reading and writing was 12.5%.

Special attention should be paid to the level of relative (and absolute) illiteracy within the 16-19 age group. Not only was the illiteracy higher than in the 11-15 age group, but also it was higher than in the 20-27 age group, and even higher than that of women up to 35 years of age. Considering that these girls received primary education in the 1990s in Kosovo, the increased level of illiteracy for this age group suggested that the situation in Kosovo did have a negative impact on the education of women.

The chief reason for girls ending their education was economical. Family obstacles were the second main reason to explain why girls in rural families had no formal education. This problem was even more acute with girls that had finished primary education, where family obstacles and early marriage, were almost on a par with economics for explaining why girls had stopped studies. Also the distance was an obstacle to women with basic education.

Almost all the rural women, or 99.3%, declared that they were unemployed. The data highlighted the fact that over 99% of women in rural areas had little opportunity to use their literacy skills.

An overwhelming percentage of rural women in all age groups wished to continue education. Women who were prevented from continuing education for objective reasons, such as distance and security, were more eager to continue education.

11. Recommendations

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

- Conduct research into the factors (security situation, transport, quality of service, fee, mentality, curriculum, and educational staff) that might influence the choice of service for child care at pre-school level with a special focus on gender issues.
- Include gender equality elements in the pre-school curriculum and training of educators in gender issues.
- Abide by gender equality as a selection criterion for enrollment of children in pre-school institutions.
- Increase the number of male kindergarten educators. This is very important for proper and balanced child education and development.
- Promote community-based early childhood education centers that are affordable for the majority of people, self-sustainable through community/parent participation, and offer acceptable quality education.
- Promote pre-primary classes at primary schools in rural areas and ensure the quality of education (appropriate to pre-school children and not a replica of primary education) through teacher training, curriculum development and standards setting.
- Ensure inclusive education for different communities with special provisions for each community-specific education.
- Ensure inclusive education for children with special needs.
- Support projects for establishing new pre-school centers in rural areas.

PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

- In cooperation with local educational institutions and NGOs, campaign to raise awareness of the importance of education for girls.
- Include gender equality elements in the curricula of primary education and the training of teachers.
- Use "positive discrimination" as a criterion in staff selection, taking into consideration professional qualifications.
- Enhance learning conditions for minorities and particularly for the Roma minority.
- Enhance gender desegregated data collection, including children with special needs and minorities.
- Train primary school teachers to include children with special needs in their classes.

SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

- Initiate special programs for rural areas to raise awareness for the importance of secondary school education.
- Municipalities should organize and subsidize travel for children in rural areas.
- Increase the number of female teachers in secondary schools. This can be achieved through positive discrimination policies giving preference to females providing the same qualifications.
- Municipal directorates and schools should update the curricula to match the needs of the local job market. Initiate programs for female employment in rural areas. Stimulate the job market and create and adhere to employment policies that are favorable to females.

- Include gender equality elements in curricula and in teacher training.

HIGHER EDUCATION

- The number of high schools in regional centers should increase to improve access to higher education for female students.
- The number of dorms at the UP reserved for female students should increase to allow more females to participate in higher education.
- Increase the number of female staff in the UP. MEST can achieve this by adopting a positive discrimination policy when applicants offer the same level of professional qualifications.
- Conceive new gender courses for university curricula.

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Endnotes


¹ Higher schools that used to operate as part of the University of Pristina until 2001, are now part of the corresponding faculties or have been upgraded to this status although they remain located throughout the five centers in Kosovo. They teach the same curricula as the three-year faculties and have stopped offering the previous two-year curricula.

² In this respect the inclusion in the educational process is questionable: does this notion embrace only the children's simple physical presence in the educational system (enrollment in school facilities and passive attendance of classes), or qualitative and active engagement of students in the educational process?

³ In urban centers, in the households that fall into the category with the lowest income, almost 20% of children are not registered in the eighth year school (UNDP 2002)

⁴ It is estimated that 50-55% of the total population is unemployed.

⁵ In addition to absolute illiteracy, the relative illiteracy level consist the very low level of writing and reading skills.

A photograph of two children, a boy on the left and a girl on the right, standing in front of a building with a stone wall and a wooden door. The boy is wearing a dark beanie and a blue jacket with a red and orange plaid lining. The girl is wearing a dark beanie and a blue jacket with white stripes on the sleeve. The ground is paved with light-colored stones.

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