
A Key to Unlock the Past

History Education in Macedonia: *An Analysis of Today Suggestions for the Future*

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Table of Contents

Key Messages

Introduction	5
Main Conclusions	8
Recommendations	10
Proposed First Steps	11

Full Report

History in the Curriculum	12
History Curricula	12
History Textbooks	17
Classroom Practice	21
Pre-Service Teacher Training	22
In-Service Teacher Training	25
Concluding Remarks	26
Detailed roadmap for the improvements in the teaching and learning of history in Macedonia	26
Epilogue	30
References	31

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Key Messages

Introduction

Educating young people is a responsible task of a society. History education in Europe and beyond has been given a special role in enhancing the national sense of belonging of younger generations and therefore developed a strong national focus. Such approach has proven to be not without danger. Unfortunately, already only in the late 20th century in Europe, internal struggles in countries such as Bosnia, Estonia, Latvia, Moldova and Georgia as well as interstate conflicts in Former Yugoslavia, have demonstrated that nationally biased historical interpretations of recent and distant events in the past have played a negative role in the events.

Also in Macedonia the past is an issue of controversy; different communities have dissimilar accounts of the Country's past. Since the Ohrid Framework Agreement of August 13 2001, there is a growing gap in history education between the Albanian and Macedonian speaking populations. History educators from each community focus primarily on the history of their own 'nation'; learning about the other is not compulsory in national history education. The continuation of the divided histories will do little to promote social cohesion between the differing ethnic groups. However also the way history is taught about neighbouring countries leads to debate and tensions. These nation-biased interpretations of the past lead to disputed interpretations today and despite numerous calls to address these issues, these challenges for history education are still very topical.

Many history educators in Macedonia and beyond feel responsible to develop history education into a modern school subject, appropriate for students in the 21st century global society. They work together under the umbrella of EUROCLIO, the European Association of History Educators, established in 1993 on request of the Council of Europe. The mission of the Association is to promote a responsible and innovative teaching of history, based on multi-perspectivity, critical thinking and mutual respect¹. It promotes a sound use of history education towards the building and deepening of democratic societies, connecting professionals across boundaries of countries, ethnicities and religions. EUROCLIO believes that the past does not stop at national borders and that history education has a significant impact on how people look at the world around them. The Association propagates an approach to history education that deconstructs historical myths and negative stereotypes and promotes teaching an attractive, engaging and relevant history, heritage and citizenship education, supporting the 21st Century knowledge-based and global society. It seeks to enhance the quality of history and citizenship education through capacity building of history education professionals and producing and implementing innovative teaching tools. The History Educators Association of Macedonia (ANIM) is one of the 77 EUROCLIO Member Associations.

¹ www.euroclio.eu

ANIM, the Macedonian History Educators is an interethnic, non-political and volunteer civic society organisation, protecting and developing history teaching in primary and secondary education in the Republic of Macedonia, promoting peace, democracy, stability and improvement of interethnic relations in Macedonia and the region. ANIM strives to improve the teaching of history into a tool for cooperation and understanding and to influence the young generation in the construction of proper attitudes and views on the world, especially Europe and the region. The Association strives to raise the quality of history teaching in Macedonia and to adapt it to modern trends in Europe and beyond. ANIM furthers building a large national, regional and international network of history educators through the exchange of information and ideas, participation in international conferences, seminars and projects. The Association also wants to share its experience with domestic and foreign governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations.

In order to achieve their missions, EUROCLIO and ANIM have since 2000 worked together in several projects. From 2000 to 2003 they worked together with the History Educators Associations from Albania and Bulgaria in the project Understanding a Shared Past, Learning for the Future, Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia. This project developed a cross-border, innovative and comparative approach to teaching about the recent past in these countries. The project published a common Teacher Resource Book Change and Continuity in Everyday Life in Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia 1945-2000, also available in Macedonian and Albanian. The book was developed and implemented through national and international capacity building seminars. In 2006 and 2007 EUROCLIO and ANIM worked again together, this time in the project Macedonia: Retelling the History². This project focused on developing a common, interethnic curriculum on the twentieth century and related teaching materials, respecting diversity and multi-perspectivity. The publication Retelling the History contains 4 interactive teaching modules about independent Macedonia. Both projects combined innovative content with new ideas about methodology of history and pedagogy.

In 2011, ANIM and EUROCLIO obtained again a grant, this time from the Belgium Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to further the professional capacities of history educators in Macedonia, with a special focus on addressing sensitive issues. On top of this, there is in this project a focus on strengthening ANIM as a multi-ethnic, multi-religious civil society organization, enhancing its skills in management, lobbying and networking. The project wants in particular to reach out to a younger generation of historians, history and civics educators in higher and secondary levels, curriculum developers, textbook authors, policy makers, historians and experts in the field of history and civic education and students.

This year three active capacity building seminars were already organised in Ohrid, Stip and Veles, involving more than 120 history educators from Macedonia. Colleagues from Albania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece and the other countries of Former Yugoslavia Were invited to act as resource persons and observers. Trainers were invited from Estonia, Finland, The Netherlands, Scotland, Turkey and Ukraine. A core team of Macedonian history educators has also acted as contributors to the regional project History

² http://www.euroclio.eu/site/index.php/projects-mainmenu-125/past-projects-mainmenu-47/national-mainmenu-241/cat_view/61-national/48-2006-2007-macedonia-retelling-history

That Connects– Former Yugoslavia, addressing the emotive history of the region about the period 1900-1945³.

ANIM and EUROCLIO were asked to make an overall scan of the process of textbook production and publishing during their visit to the Macedonian Minister of Education Mr Pance Krlev on 19 September 2011 in Skopje⁴. The Minister wanted a systematic analysis with guidelines on how to improve the process and concrete suggestions for process interventions. ANIM and EUROCLIO consider that the process of history textbook writing and publishing is an element of the whole process of learning and teaching of history, and have decided to widen the required scan into a variety of issues.

This independent inquiry has looked into the current history curricula, current history textbooks, class room practice, teacher preparation and in-service teacher training. In this study I have tried to address key stakeholders such as the advisors within the Ministry of Education and the Bureau of Educational Development, Academic Historians, State Education Inspectorate, the National Agency for textbooks but primarily current trainers and teachers. The research also looked at documents and appropriate literature. As a result a set of suggestions for improvement related to the research areas are made. I hope that this publication supports professional thinking on how to further the development of innovative and responsible history education in the Republic of Macedonia.

However within the limited time frame of the project, the report can only give an in-depth impression, but can certainly not claim that it gives the full picture. I am happy that so many wanted to meet with me and share their knowledge and time. The teachers in each seminar were an important source of information, and they had always time for personal interviews and were willing to translate documents and texts. I am also grateful to the historians, textbook authors and experts who shared their thoughts. Unfortunately it was not possible to meet with everybody i intended to speak to due to a manifold of reasons. I regret that I failed to meet with such important stakeholders as the Director and the Advisors for History at the Bureau for Development of Education. But also other textbook authors I wanted to speak to were either too busy, on study trip or on vacation. A special session with young Albanian history teachers fell through due to sudden illness of the participants. And I did not manage to speak with present history education students in university and in schools, due to mismatch of travel and holiday schedules. However despite such problems this report is still built on the input of many, all sharing a genuine drive for fostering good and relevant history education in the republic of Macedonia.

³ <http://www.euroclio.eu/new/index.php/work/history-that-connects-history-education-in-former-yugoslavia>

⁴ *The Project is officially approved by the Minister of Education and Science (Ministry of Education and Science, Republic of Macedonia, No. 07-3458/1 - Date 08-04-2012)*

Following the wide range of elements brought together in this report, I wish to focus the attention to the following Main Conclusions, Priority Recommendations and Proposed Concrete Actions below.

Main Conclusions

History Educators:

1. There is a growing network of trained practicing history educators in Macedonia, aware of the innovative European trends in history and citizenship education, willing to take an active role in innovation processes for learning and teaching of history in Macedonia.
2. It is very positive to notice that excellent history students make a clear, positive choice to become a history teacher. They want to contribute to high quality education of the young generations and are interested to learn about innovative and learner-centred approaches and how to apply them in the classroom.

The History Curriculum

3. The history curricula in Macedonia have changed little since 1990. They do not challenge the dominant national narratives/nation building myths and show a lack of critical approach to the historical events presented. The dominant ethnic communities both produce their traditional story of the past.
4. The curricula do hardly advocate responsible and innovative history and citizenship education. It does not address the question how to involve and engage students and foster their curiosity. An approach to learner centred history education with a focus on developing independent attitudes of students and their abilities to critical thinking is not implemented. Without a radical reform of the curricula, history textbooks in Macedonia will continue to fall short to the requirements for modern history education.
5. Curriculum debates about the relevance and significance of teaching history are absent, history curricula are designed by academic authors without using enough the capacity and expertise of history teaching practitioners (teachers).
6. The curriculum development process is not transparent. Most history educators are not well informed about changes in curriculum and procedures. This leads not only to a lack of knowledge about policy decisions and education frameworks but also to rumours and suggestions, which are often not supported by evidence. This situation contributes to negative and dissatisfied feelings obstructing reform and cooperation.

History Textbooks

7. History school textbooks are slowly improving in design and technical quality, however there is a decreasing opportunity to choose which textbooks to use. Beyond the textbooks, there is a lack of (quality) resources, targeted on involving students in their learning and understanding of history. Authorized online materials for history education are not available, neither in Macedonian nor in Albanian.
8. The procedure of textbook writing and publishing is in-transparent. Mostly academic historians create author teams, where the (practical) competencies on the learning and teaching of history are neglected. The Albanian authors have limited impact on the overall concept of the textbooks.
9. The historical accounts of the country and the region are of conflicting nature and have regularly been a field of study for national and international experts over the last twenty years. However their reflections, questions and debates related to the quality and content of the history textbooks in Macedonia have not lead to significant changes in the textbooks.

Training History Teachers

10. There is a misbalance in the curriculum of the history teachers' pre-service training. There is an in depth focus on historical knowledge, however capacity building in teaching and learning of history methodology and practical training are neglected.
11. The introduction of new curricula after 1990 has not been complemented by any official training programme. An effective lifelong capacity building on new historical research results, new methodology, pedagogy or innovative teaching tools in teaching history has not been developed and implemented.
12. Lifelong Learning is not an acknowledged within the education system of Macedonia concept as tool to improve the quality of history education in Macedonia. Innovative capacity building activities are mostly financed by foreign funding. These (international) projects have had insufficient opportunity to have impact on the present quality and content of history education in Macedonia.
13. Academics and history educators in Macedonia are isolated from each other and from their colleagues abroad; there is little opportunity to have contacts and exchanges of experiences.

Recommendations

1. The current history curricula in the Republic of Macedonia have to be rethought and revised, based on recent developments in historical research as well as in the theory of history education. Groups of innovative skilled history educators and historians, but also a wider audience should be involved in this process. Rather than opting for a “quick fix”, a reasonable timeframe of at least two to three years should be observed to allow fundamental reform.
2. History education should address the history of the peoples living in Macedonia, respecting their diversity but also supporting a sense of belonging by overcoming the present separation in Macedonian and Albanian narratives. The narratives of the past should have a better balance between aspects that unite and what separates. Training on teaching diversity in history is needed.
3. There is a need for the creation of innovative (online) educational materials in order to make history a relevant and engaging subject for students. History educators and their schools should be provided with resources, containing documents, visuals and a wide range of materials enhancing historical thinking and students’ engagement, required for responsible and innovative learning and teaching of history. The use of alternative educational tools should be stimulated, also to compensate the present lack of choice and democratic, commercial market of textbooks.
4. Textbook writing and publishing by the Ministry of Education and Science of Macedonia is in need for transparent procedures which clearly state how the selection of authors is going to take place and on what competences such selection is based. An open selection of authors, respecting the diversity in the country, is the first step.
5. Lifelong learning is a prerequisite for implementation of education reforms through high quality performance of academics and educators. Stimulating international cooperation and exchange of experiences with colleagues and experts from abroad is very important to raise the standards for academic as well as school history teaching. A programme for the improvement of knowledge of foreign languages, notably English, would support transnational cooperation and diminish the lack of access to new research and recourses.

Proposed first steps

Following the Priority Recommendations above, in which I call for the Minister of Education and Science to initiate a reform process to develop innovative History Curricula, I propose the following actions supporting this process, working for its implementation and innovation.

1. The creation of new exemplar multi-lingual History Teaching resources that put diversity and multiperspectivity at the heart and are authored and edited by inclusive groups of History Educators, making sure they are developed on principles of responsible and innovative history education and result in ready-to-use material for the classroom.
2. Support national, regional and international networking, training, mobility and peer-exchange for motivated history educators and academics in Macedonia in order to transfer innovative European academic and practitioner's knowledge, expertise and experience
3. Establish democratic and transparent structural mechanisms for Government – Civil Society Partnerships in the field of History Education in order to create dialogue and cooperation in the processes of curriculum reform, textbook writing, classroom practice, heritage education and teacher initial and in-service training.

All these actions can be carried out by civil society organisations such as the History Educators united in ANIM, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science and all relevant authorities, as well a wide national, regional and international network of relevant Institutes, universities and Heritage Institutes.

EUROCLIO would be delighted to sustain the process by supporting these actions through providing guidance for the collaborative creation of teaching tools, the organisation of high-level teacher training through its extensive European network and continuous efforts for the voice of civil society to be heard in education policy reform.

Full Report

History lessons in the Curriculum

In the Macedonian School system pupils between 7 and 10 years study history within the subject titled Nature and Society. History as a separate subject is since 2011 compulsory from the 6th to the 9th form in Primary School, which means from 11 to 15 years. In Secondary Education it depends on the type of school. In the gymnasium it is compulsory the first 3 years, with a possible elective course in the 4th year. In the Vocational School system history is compulsory in the first two years, addressing age group 16 and 17. History is generally taught with 2 times 40 minutes classes per week⁵.

History Curricula

The goals of Macedonian history education in elementary schools is to give students knowledge about the past and present, to contribute to building students values towards their country and its people and towards other peoples and countries, to learn about world civilizations in the in the spirit of civic values and democracy, and to deepen the students interest in further learning of the historical events and processes⁶.

However when talking to the educators in the seminars, it was hard to find out what they understood as the aims of teaching history in schools. People are generally unaware or inattentive what is actually stated about it in the curriculum. A young teacher, who started midterm, just received the pages of the curriculum, which targeted on the lessons she was still expected to teach for the rest of the year. The pages where the overall aims of the curriculum are stated were not included. When I showed her the full document, she became aware that she had never seen it before. The school administration obviously also did not consider understanding the aims of the subject as important.

The curriculum has little changed since 1992, the continuity from the old to the new is clear, only most of the communist ideology has been removed. Since the independence of Macedonia the history curricula increased its focus on national history, including ancient Macedonian history⁷. The history of independent Macedonia is not addressed.

⁵ Source Igor Jurukov, on www.historyproject.dvv-international.org and Sofia Vouri in *War and National History. The Case of History textbooks in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (1991-1993)* in Wolfgang Hopken (Hrsg) *Textbooks, Ethnic Stereotypes and Violence in South-Eastern Europe* (1996) pg 189

⁶ Source *Macedonian elementary history curriculum 2004* and Sofia Vouri, *ibidem*, pg 188

⁷ Wolfgang Hopken in *History Education and the Yugoslav (Dis-)Integration* in Wolfgang Hopken (Hrsg) *Textbooks, Ethnic Stereotypes and Violence in South-Eastern Europe* (1996) pg 112

The curricula in basic education for grades 5-8/6-9 and gymnasium 1-4 are basically the same, only the knowledge volume increases in the second circle. The student examines the subject in greater detail.

There has not been a significant debate about innovative approaches to history curricula: the curriculum is traditional and basically knowledge based⁸. In the general objectives, it does lip service to contemporary theory and research in Europe and North America, however in the detailed description of the classroom curricula for the different grades these theories are not implemented. Introducing the philosophy of competence and outcome-based learning has not been considered. And also neither the Council of Europe documents on the learning and teaching of history nor the European Reference Framework have been used as source of inspiration for curriculum development in Macedonia⁹.

The history curriculum is content-based and an implementation of new thinking, reflected in the so called *new historical paradigm*, is absent¹⁰. The interviewed academic historians as well as school history colleagues agreed that the curriculum is concentrated on war and political history and that a widened and improved balance between political, cultural, economic and social perspectives is absent¹¹.

The lack of balance between geographical dimensions, addressing local to global perspectives, is also a matter of concern. In a period where entanglements become such vital elements in historical studies, young people in Macedonia are offered history courses where World, Balkan and National history are separated. A teacher said: 'Because they are separated, students do not get the whole picture. This is a major shortcoming'. Local history is not included in the curriculum, and people feel there is an overconcentration on Balkan history. There is little satisfaction among history teaching professionals with the way European history is represented. Innovative themes and topics such as gender, environment, diversity, migration, everyday life and human rights are generally lacking, and examples of positive experiences of living together are also missing.

⁸ In 2010 the concept of making textbooks and the methodology of evaluating textbooks was developed by the Bureau of Development of Education in cooperation with UNICEF http://www.unicef.org/tfymacedonia/Biro_za_obrazovanie_-_konceptija_za_izrabotka_na_ucebnik_ALB_-_za_na_I_b.pdf [http://www.unicef.org/tfymacedonia/Biro_za_obrazovanie_-_konceptija_za_izrabotka_na_ucebnik_mk_-_za_na_I_b\(3\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/tfymacedonia/Biro_za_obrazovanie_-_konceptija_za_izrabotka_na_ucebnik_mk_-_za_na_I_b(3).pdf) . This document refers to new approaches; however these ideas have not played a role in the current curriculum.

⁹ Council of Europe Recommendations are issued by the Committee of Ministers, which is the Council of Europe's decision-making body and comprises the Foreign Affairs Ministers of all the member states, or their permanent diplomatic representatives in Strasbourg, to member states. Various recommendations are highly relevant here: Recommendation CM/Rec (2011)6 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on intercultural dialogue and the image of the other in history teaching. Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 6 July 2011 at the 1118th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1813461&Site=CM>), Recommendation Rec(2001)15 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on history teaching in twenty-first-century Europe. Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 31. October 2001 at the 771st meeting of the Ministers' Deputies. (<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=234237>) and Recommendation 1283 (1996) on history and the learning of history in Europe. Adopted by the Assembly on 22 January 1996 (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/historyteaching/Source/Results/AdoptedTexts/Rec1283_en.pdf); The European Union, while not working on History Education directly has been able to develop an excellent reference document, European Reference Framework for Transversal and Key Competencies http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/ll-learning/keycomp_en.pdf

¹⁰ www.coe.int/t/dg4/nscentre/Source/WorkshopICD_EUROCLIO.ppt

¹¹ Sofia Vouri , pg 181

The lack of balance between geographical dimensions, addressing local to global perspectives, is also a matter of concern. In a period where entanglements become such vital elements in historical studies, young people in Macedonia are offered history courses where World, Balkan and National history are separated. A teacher said: 'Because they are separated, students do not get the whole picture. This is a major shortcoming'. Local history is not included in the curriculum, and people feel there is an overconcentration on Balkan history. There is little satisfaction among history teaching professionals with the way European history is represented. Innovative themes and topics such as gender, environment, diversity, migration, everyday life and human rights are generally lacking, and examples of positive experiences of living together are also missing.

The curricula consist just of a number of topics, related to the amount of history lessons required to teach within a year¹². This selection of historical topics and periods is not interconnected and is therefore neither offering a comprehensive nor a comprehensible narrative to the students. Each topic has a certain amount of elements that should be addressed.

Teachers complain about an overload of knowledge which is requested from the students within the history curriculum. They say that there is a lack of time to cover all required topics in a way that students develop an understanding of the topic. And no wonder, for a 40 minutes lesson for 11/12 years old on Hellenic Culture, students are required to know, understand and explain the beliefs of the people in supernatural powers; the symbols, mythology and gods; the Olympic games as the major meeting of the Hellenic countries and the values of the development of literacy and theatre, architecture, art, philosophy and science. In many other European countries teachers would spend at least a month teaching all these issues.

There are suggestions how the topic could be addressed. The topic about the beginning of the Roman Empire suggests amongst others to use a Map of Apennine peninsula, a source book, a sound source on the Etruscans, a portrait of Hannibal or a fiction film about the Roman Empire¹³. There are no further references where to find these resources. To my opinion it seems only possible to show a fiction film within a framework of a 40 minutes lesson, if a teacher is highly skilled in technically adapting movies to such time frame.

In the end of their school year, students aged 14-15, are required to have knowledge, understanding and skills related to the whole Twentieth Century, including topics such as the reasons for World War I and the involvement of the Balkan people, the events during the October Socialist Revolution, the Great Powers' relation to the Macedonian question at the Paris Peace Conference, Fascism in Italy and National-Socialism in Germany, the Turkish achievements in becoming a contemporary and civic country and so forth and so forth¹⁴. The content of this course is more than many bachelor students are able to digest.

As the curriculum is fully knowledge-based with focus on chronological understanding, basic requirements for innovative methodology promoting historical enquiry based on evidence (sources-based

¹² Source Igor Jurukov, on www.historyproject.dvv-international.org

¹³ Source *Macedonian elementary history curriculum 2004*, p. 11

¹⁴ Source *Macedonian elementary history curriculum 2004*, p. 11

learning) are missing. *The methodology is old fashioned.* Also other internationally acknowledged key concepts in history education such as interpretation, cause and consequence, change and continuity, empathy are not implemented in the various history curricula for primary, gymnasium and vocational education.

The approach to teaching history should focus on kids, students must understand “how history developed and not just what happened; we must address the process, and not just learn dates and persons” (A teacher).

Unfortunately the history curricula also do not address innovative pedagogy with the question how to involve and engage students and foster their curiosity. *‘History is boring’.* An approach of learner-centred, competence-based learning where history education focuses on developing independent attitudes of students and their abilities to critical thinking, to question, to analyse, to interpret and to judge is absent. The curriculum also does not consider any need to adapt its content to the intellectual level or age group of students. On the contrary, all students in vocational education are treated equally, despite the big intellectual dissimilarities between different types of vocational schools.

With the introduction of the 9 year compulsory education, it seems that school history has not used the opportunity for a serious rethinking of the present curriculum. However the sole and only new textbook for the 6th form, the former 5th form, is based on a renewed curriculum from 2008, but the contents of this curriculum received a shallow dissemination strategy and teachers are totally unaware of its existence.

In 2004, in the spirit of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, a significant reform took place. From that year it is obligatory that school history in primary and gymnasium education addresses the history of the two main different ethnic groups: Macedonians and Albanians. However the prescribed amount of lessons on Albanian history is less, based on the demographic scope of both population groups.

In 2011, with the introduction of the new 6th form textbook for the 9 years of primary education, the amount of lessons on Albanian history decreased with 20%, (5-4), as result of change in teaching about Antiquity. The national focus in teaching about the Romans is changed into Balkan focus. It is in itself a positive development, but as it is based on the aforementioned curriculum from 2008, and as it affects the delicate balance between the amount of Albanian and Macedonian history lessons, it increases dissatisfaction among the ethnic Albanian historians.

The curriculum does not challenge the dominant national narratives/nation building myths of both dominant ethnic communities and shows a lack of critical approach to the historical events presented. Both produce the traditional story of their considered national pasts. The Albanian academics I spoke with refused even to call it a common past for Macedonia; they insisted that their national history was fully separated from the history of the Macedonian speaking community. Addressing sensitive and delicate/controversial history and white spots/hidden history is therefore also avoided.

Quote: The curriculum should not provoke nationalism in any community. - Academic Historian

With separate lessons on Albanian and Macedonian history, the curriculum does not enhance an understanding of the cultural, ethnic and religious diversity in Macedonia. This separate teaching of the history of Albanian- and Macedonian-speaking Macedonian citizens does not foster an integrated approach opening opportunities for intercultural dialogue.

The idea to develop a more integrated education strategy has not entered into the history curriculum as the existing, available, curriculum is not changed since 2008.

The interviewed historians as well as the history educators emphasized repeatedly that they deplored that themes that focus on questions related to the entire population, including all communities, are missing.

To ensure better implementation of multiculturalism in practice, it is recommended that the following steps be taken to revise the curricula of History and Languages: Compulsory content about 'others' should be introduced into the History curriculum. This would promote interaction by presenting the ways in which ethnic communities have been part of the same events and have shared similar aspirations'¹⁵.

People signaled that the situation in vocational schools is particularly difficult, where history is since 1998 compulsory for two years. The teachers are required to cover in one year topics ranging from ancient to modern times: the first year concentrates on world history and the second year addresses only the national history of the Macedonian people. The vocational curriculum does not consider any need to adapt the lessons to the intellectual level of students; students in different types of vocational schools are treated equally. This is a particular problem as there are big intellectual dissimilarities between the students in the different types of vocational schools.

The programme in the vocational schools is based on an EU-Phare project which was finalized before the Ohrid Framework Agreement. In this curriculum therefore, a requirement to teach the history of both communities is absent. Albanian History is not taught.

The Macedonian government has been active stimulating the use of innovative communication tools, providing all students with hardware to be used in the classrooms. Unfortunately the outdated history curriculum does not address how to apply these new opportunities offered by information technology for history.

The history curricula are designed by a group of authors, stated in the curriculum document. Some people are already for long involved in this process. Most of them act also as the textbook authors. The academics are chosen as representatives of the academic historians' community representing Universities and the Institute of National History¹⁶. The teachers in the EUROCLIO seminars wondered if the practitioners (teachers) involved had much influence on the curriculum design, looking at the many classroom challenges it provided.

¹⁵ Source Macedonian elementary history curriculum 2004, p. 7

¹⁶ This Institute deals with Macedonian History. In 2007 the Institute of Spiritual and Cultural Heritage of the Albanians was founded, three years after the curriculum of 2004. This institute has since 2007 not been involved in any curriculum development.

In 2004 the panel of curriculum developers consisted of 11 individuals from both dominant communities, four Albanian speaking academics were involved. The process to develop the curriculum was far from easy; the conflicts within the Committee in 2004 centred on how many history lessons about Albanian history should be allowed. Several of the Curriculum Commission members in 2004 stated that they were unhappy with the curriculum they developed but recognized that it was at that moment the first step.

In general the interviewees, as well as the teachers in the seminars, complained that the process of curriculum development is not transparent. People were generally ignorant about existing procedures, or how they were applied. I could not help noticing a (total) lack of information, knowledge and understanding among the people I have been talking to. The authorities within Macedonia were unable or not willing to share vital information with me. Only after asking around among foreign actors and donors such as Forum ZFD, UNICEF and the OSCE links and documents on procedures became available.

History Textbooks

The textbooks in Macedonia follow faithfully the (knowledge overloaded) history curricula, which allow very little deviation¹⁷. A review commission checks if the textbooks follow the curriculum¹⁸. As the last serious curriculum reform happened in 2004, the textbooks are not changed fundamentally since that year. The only exception is the new 6th form textbook. In the present grade 7-13 there is a choice between two history textbooks, which do not differ very much content-wise, however the educators present in the seminars noticed certainly a difference in approach and design.

With the introduction of the nine years of primary school (instead of 8), there is only one textbook for grade 6 available, and therefore any opportunity for choice is lost. One of the books, which were previously available for grade 5 of the old eight year system, is slightly adapted for grade 6 in the new system. The (academic) authors group is almost the same, just one author is different.

The judgment about the quality of the textbooks is not very positive, although people noticed an improvement in design and technical quality using colour and visuals. In several (but not all) textbooks, the amount of visuals is increased, but unfortunately they are not very varied: charts, maps, cartoons and graphs are rare. The teachers complained about a lack of usable, original and well-referenced written and visual source materials, required for the innovative approaches to teaching history, especially addressing multiple points of view or narratives. Many of the pictorial sources are small and are not approached as educational materials, but simply as illustrations. The language of the textbooks was in general considered not to be tailored towards the age or intellectual capacities of the students; the language in the history textbooks books is academic and child-unfriendly.

¹⁷ *Very little has changed. In his evaluation of late Yugoslav textbooks Wolfgang Hopken concludes the same. Wolfgang Hopken in History Education and the Yugoslav (Dis-)Integration in Wolfgang Hopken (Hrsg) Textbooks, Ethnic Stereotypes and Violence in South-Eastern Europe (1996)*

¹⁸ *Since 2010 textbook selection is following this process. However the new 6th form textbook, the only new history textbook that appeared since, does rarely comply with the innovative requirements in this document, but this textbook at least follows one: it gives the required explanation of some of the concepts used.*

The textbooks contain some basic questions and tasks for students but the students are not stimulated to think really critically or to carry out individual research work (inquiry). The textbooks in their present format are no tools to engage students in active learning as requirements for innovative methodology and pedagogy, as explored under the curriculum section of this report, are not implemented. Workbooks with tasks and activities for students, common in many other countries, are not available in Macedonia.

The educators in the EUROCLIO seminars were happy with the introduction of questions and tasks for students in the textbooks; however they stated that most of the questions ask to repeat what was in the written text of the book, and sometimes questions were asked which are impossible for students to answer. They did not notice questions which stimulate independent thinking and learning.

The teachers in vocational schools were relieved when for school year 2011/2012 new history textbooks were published. These textbooks have certainly an attractive design and use good quality paper. However the teachers using it are very disappointed about the content. Unfortunately the book is considered boring, with a lack of written and visual historical sources. There are no specific lessons targeted to the history related to the profession the vocational school is preparing for, such as for example the history of medicine. This textbook is similar for all vocational students, despite the fact that the quality of students in this level of education in Macedonia varies very much: from lower attainers in technical schools to high level students in medical schools.

During the sessions with the educators in the seminar, I asked to identify some textbooks which stand out. Unfortunately there was little positive reaction. Some titles mentioned by one, provoked serious criticism by others. In the framework of this limited research it is therefore not possible to point to a real Macedonian best practice history textbook example. Several teachers, who have had in recent years opportunities to see books from Slovenia, Croatia and other European countries, Were disappointed by the fact that in comparison with those books, the Macedonian history textbooks lack quality.

In history textbook research much attention is paid to the use of partial language and biased presentations of events, persons and processes. The use of prejudiced language was especially mentioned by the Albanian Academic interviewees, who complained that Albanians are mentioned generally briefly and in a negative light. As an example they said that the Illyrians ('our ancestors') are described as pirates. This reference was indeed used in the previous 5th form textbook; however the new 6th form textbook does not give this phrase anymore.

I asked some colleagues to generally evaluate the language in the textbooks. They concluded that national narratives are generally probably more biased in language, with trivial glorification, supporting myths and legends. Sometimes they contain scientifically unjustified claims with regard to for example the Ottoman Period. However the group respondents were not aware about insulting or vilifying with regard to present "other" community. They considered that the description of international events showed less bias. They also considered that the impartiality of the language improved, compared with the situation of ten years ago.

However looking at outsider (international) research, the assessment was less positive. Questions and debates related to the quality and content of the history textbooks in Macedonia have been recurring. The accounts of (Macedonian) history that textbooks give are frequently challenged by historians from neighbouring countries. The historical accounts in the region are of conflicting nature, and have regularly

been a field of study for international experts over the last twenty years¹⁹. Within Macedonia experts on history accuse each other of producing ethnically biased narratives textbooks; however similar accusations are made about the textbooks from the neighbouring countries. In this respect there is still much to be desired.

It is in the light of the limited time framework of this study impossible to give a full assessment of the textbooks, as I have by far not been able to scan all textbooks in use, which of course would have been a project in itself. I was also not able to use as reference the textbook study on 8 Macedonian school history textbooks, carried out in 2011 by Professor Violeta Petrovska-Beshka and colleagues, on request of the Soros Foundation in Macedonia. Unfortunately the results of this study are not publicly available.

Several academic historians complained about scientific quality of the school history textbooks, pointing out several errors and outdated information. Professor Boban Petrovski published in 2010 a comprehensive review of the shortcomings of Macedonian textbooks covering the Medieval period, however this did not lead to any revision of the existing textbooks²⁰.

Unfortunately, despite national and international criticism, little of the results of these researches have been implemented. There have been no corrections or additions in textbooks published as long as eight years ago. People suggested that the government does not permit authors to make changes because only the original version of the textbook was approved for publication.

The ideas behind the strategy to develop a more integrated approach to education are not reflected in the textbooks, as they are written before such policy approach²¹. The textbooks, just like the curriculum of 2004, therefore do not address promoting cross-community understanding in Macedonia. In the curriculum of 2008 for the new sixth form does mention such approach, but still it is not implemented in the only textbook so far based on it.

¹⁹ In several international publications the partial language and bias of the Macedonian history textbooks is addressed, unfortunately most of this work is carried out already before 2004. However as the academic historians state that there are only minor changes in their interpretation of the national past, not too much of what has been written will be outdated. See Sofia Vouri in *War and National History. The Case of History textbooks in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (1991-1993)* in Wolfgang Hopken (Hrsg) *Textbooks, Ethnic Stereotypes and Violence in South-Eastern Europe* (1996) pg 189-210

Fotini I. Toloudi, *The Image of the 'Other'/the Neighbor in the School Textbooks of the Balkan Countries in Macedonian Heritage, the Online Review on Macedonian Affairs, History and Culture* http://www.macedonian-heritage.gr/Contributions/contr_Toludi1198.html; GEI Georg Eckert Institute for International textbook Research *The Project for the Coordination of Textbook Research, Development and Comparison in South-East Europe* was established in 2000-2009. <http://www.gei.de/en/research/textbooks-and-conflict/3-dealing-with-and-preventing-conflict-via-textbook-work/project-for-the-co-ordination-of-textbook-research-development-and-comparison-in-south-east-europe.html> Checked 8/6 2012; The Thessaloniki-based NGO Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in South East Europe has been working on Reconciliation through History Education. Amongst others it published Koulouri, C, eds., *Clio in the Balkans. The Politics of History Education* (2002). Full publication available here http://www.cdsee.org/pdf/clio_in_the_balkans.pdf

²⁰ Boban Petrovski, *The history textbooks, Critical review of history textbook for the 6th grade (Proceedings of the Scientific Meeting of the Association of History Teachers in the Republic of Macedonia and the Institute of History of the Faculty of Philosophy, 12 December 2009)*, p. 17-22 (Skopje, 2010)

²¹ The policy titled "Steps towards Integrated Education" was adopted by the Ministry of Education in October 2010 and is available on the Ministry's I bsite in seven languages: <http://mon.gov.mk/en/novosti/649-integriranoobrazovanie> Also, a good overview of its focus can be found in a blog on the European Training Foundation's work in the region: <http://www.etfiveandlearn.eu/issue/march/2012/145/former-yugoslav-republic-of-macedonia/english>

The chapters on the history of Macedonian and Albanian speaking Macedonians are generally separated, and chapters, or even references, to other communities are lacking. Only Jewish history and Holocaust are mentioned, a separate lesson for the last year of Primary and Upper Secondary education is devoted to this topic.

In 2004 one of the Albanian speaking academics in the Curriculum Committee became co-author of three history textbooks books, with the task to produce the lessons about Albanian history, however he was not involved in the overall concept development for these books. In the curriculum of 2008, the number of Albanian lessons is slightly reduced for age group 11-12. All interviewees were wondering what results can be expected for the amount of Albanian history lessons when the novel book for the new 7th form will be published.

Quote: "Textbooks should begin with a sentence that says "Macedonia is a country that is populated by Macedonians, Albanians, Bosnians, Roma, Serbians, etc." - Teacher in seminar Stip

Most history textbooks are available in the Macedonian and Albanian languages, and some in Turkish and Serbian. The Albanian interviewees and teachers complained that the translation into Albanian is not always of good quality and that some books contain maps, where references are not translated from Macedonian in Albanian.

Since 2005 more and more textbooks have become available free of charge and are provided by the Ministry of Education. The procedure selecting these free textbooks has certainly its question marks. The Ministry of Education and science issues a call for a finalized textbook, which has then to be produced within a very short period, interviewees were even mentioning a period of only one month. This preliminary version has to be shown to the editors for review, based on the procedure document in 2010. However I was not able to retrieve a document about the selection of the reviewers, or assessment documents, giving evidence of the results of the procedure. The Bureau of Education denies any role in this process²².

There was also little idea how the authors teams had been created. People suggested a procedure where one academic historian was asked, and composed the rest of the team himself. However if this was true, I was not able to receive confirmation. The interviewees simply did not know. Only academic historians are authors, (practical) competencies on the learning and teaching of history are not really used (see above). An approach of working with a collaborative, inclusive and teacher-lead writing team is not followed.

²² E - Mail of 3-7 2012 by Advisor Igor Jurukov. Probably the National Textbook Commission hires external experts as reviews who assess the textbook. I have not been able to verify this.

Classroom practice

Many History teachers in Macedonia generally follow textbooks and therefore the curriculum, without too much questioning of its overall aims. When I asked interviewees and educators what the overall aims for history education were, people generally were unable to answer this question. They just follow the book, and address the rather overwhelming content what is required within a lesson of 40 minutes. They have to document the planning of each lesson, referencing to the curriculum requirements.

Teachers do not have rights to deviate from curricula, however are allowed to make certain choices within the curriculum and therefore among the lessons. As example, of the 48 themes present in a history textbook, teachers are obliged to teach 36 of them²³. This leads to opting to reduce teaching about the other community. *'The most problematic curricula are those for the subject of History, which offer contents about the 'other' but which, in contrast with the curricula for all other subjects, lack explicit goals to ensure compulsory instruction of such content. This means that the teaching of the history/culture of other ethnic communities depends entirely on the will of individual teachers'*²⁴. In the case of the Macedonian-speaking community it is possible to avoid teaching about the other community. Talking with three young teachers, I asked them if they did teach the lessons on Albanian history: one did, the other two avoided teaching about Albanian history. The Albanian teachers can somewhat reduce the focus on Macedonian history in their lessons, but as the number of lessons on the history of the Macedonian speaking community is larger, they can not totally avoid teaching about the other community. Unfortunately there is in the educational system in Macedonia quite some division along ethnic lines. For students to meet each other in a normal diverse learning environment is therefore almost impossible.

The additional history teaching tools referred to in the curriculum document and targeted to involve more the students in their learning and understanding of history, are generally not widely available in schools. The participants in the EUROCLIO seminars complained about a lack of resources such as additional literature, source books, DVD's, maps and visual sources. And also the quality of the available resources is rather poor: teachers have to use old and often damaged materials, regularly fully outdated. Although ICT is heavily promoted, the history educators complained that networks to use computers do not always function in an optimal way and that there is a lack of whiteboards and LCD projectors, especially in the Albanian language schools. The teachers in the seminars also expressed their concerns about the lack of manuals for teachers, supporting innovation and change in their teaching practice.

The schools do generally not have a special classroom or even a cabinet for teaching history, where teaching tools could be stored and made ready to use. Teachers interested to use a variety of materials are forced to carry materials around and to bring everything in and out of the classrooms. Sooner or later this situation often discourages teachers to continue to use such materials.

The sometimes large number of –sometimes even more than 40- students in the classroom, especially in primary education in the cities and in the recently compulsory secondary education also discourages

²³ Source Igor Jurukov, on www.historyproject.dv-international.org

²⁴ Violeta Petroska-Beska, Mirjana Najcevska, Nikolina Kenig, Safet Ballazhi, and Ana Tomovska Study on Multicultural Education & Inter-Ethnic Relations, Macedonian National History Curriculum (2009) p. 6

innovative learner centered learning. Voice, book, blackboard and chalk are also in 2012 often the only teaching tools. Ex-cathedra teaching is still the norm in classroom, memorization is still the main competency developed in history classes.

A young motivated teacher, who wanted to deviate from the traditional approach, experienced how complicated that was. Students were not used to work in an active learner environment, and Were surprised they Were asked to do homework. Their resisting attitude lead to bad marks, which activated angry parents, dissatisfied with the fact that their children preformed less. The teacher said: *it ended in a complete mess!* A unhappy outcome, as it is precisely for this reason that educators are conservative in their classroom methodology: the safest way to survive.

The innovative idea of the Ministry of Education and Science to give each teacher and student IT hardware to use online tools has not solved the resources scarcity. Until now additional on-line educational resources for school history in Macedonian and Albanian languages are not available. An online exchange of lesson material would allow for a wider sharing of sources, unfortunately history teachers are not yet trained how to apply internet in the classroom. On top of this all the teachers expressed their (not implausible) concern that students are abusing the opportunity to go online and use internet for all but school learning.

The history education colleagues signaled specific problems related the lack of opportunities to organizing field study trips for on-site learning. They want to be able to use the rich heritage of the country as one of the tools to make students interested in history, and to make them feel responsible for the value of this heritage and the need to preserve it for future generations.

Pre-service Teacher Training

In the Macedonian Universities, the history study is based on a chronological structure, broken down into four periods: antiquity, medieval, modern and contemporary history. The various periods focus on three geographical levels: national, regional (Balkans) and European (global). These periods of time and levels are not taught in an interlinked manner, and therefore do not emphasise (inter)connections. In the Albanian language State University of Tetovo there are additional obligatory courses on Albanian history. The students have some elective courses such as US history or Politics in Eastern Europe, however learning about the other is avoided: Albanian history is in Skopje not addressed as a separated subject, but it is studied in subject „history of Balkan Nations”. The entanglement of both pasts is not addressed in any Macedonian University.

Teacher-training programmes for pre-service and in-service teachers should be revised to ensure that teachers are adequately sensitized and equipped to achieve the goals related to accepting and respecting ‘others’ in the multicultural and multiethnic reality of the country²⁵.

²⁵ *Idem*, p. 7

The history professors are specialised in targeted periods and offer classes in their special spheres of interest. Young teachers who left University 3 to 7 years ago all complained that the study of history had been a disappointment for them. They had expected active participatory education but were generally confronted with lecturers, who were reading from their papers. They noticed that only the younger generation of academic teachers involve their students more in active, but rather irregular, workshops. In such courses there were opportunities to debate, however they generally did not acquire enough skills for debate, group work and research, necessary for innovative classroom approaches.

These younger academics stimulated students to avoid traditional inquiry choices. Students are allowed to choose freely what kind of research on different aspects of Macedonian and world history they want to do and to select areas they are most interested in. The young educators complained that students are not asked to do independent research on a regular basis. For the total study of four years, only two essays, one on World and one on Macedonian history, were required. These are painstakingly described: they have to contain 28 pages of 22 lines each! The concept of copy/paste was to my taste far too much used during the explanations of these requirements by several (not always young) teachers.

However also the academic teachers complained: students are often reluctant to analyze sources and lack critical thinking skills. They stated that it was only second rate or uncertain students who choose history as field of study. The best students, according to the academic interviewees, did generally not value competencies learned through the history study and favour programs that will lead to acquiring technical skills and jobs. The academic teachers informed us that almost all history students follow the education courses. They believed that such choice was made due to the fact that the teaching profession guaranteed to a certain extent a place on the job market. Interesting enough my experience is entirely opposite. The younger teachers I talked to informed me that they entered University with the clear wish to become a history teacher, some of them wanted to be a teacher already since primary school. Their option to study history was clearly a positive choice.

A painful moment occurred when I asked the young educators what they really appreciated during their studies. As if they had rehearsed before they all exclaimed: the excursion, the habitual study trip to an interesting historical environment. Unfortunately this heritage education experience was not embedded in their learning environment. This is unfortunate, as a large group of the teachers in the seminars considered a University course on organizing meaningful fieldtrips and visits to local heritage sites as indispensable and beneficial. They understood that if history teachers would be prepared to use the historical surroundings as learning environment, field trips for their future students would become far more than only a day out of school.

A general reproach is that school history education does not take into account the results of new research. The question is in how far new academic research is carried out in Macedonia and being transferred to the new generation of history educators. The academic interviewees acknowledged that old sources of information are often used, but that there is new (literature) research incorporated in their lectures. The academic historians stipulated that new primary sources are rare in Macedonia, however if discovered, they are incorporated into courses. More commonly, new materials are translated from other languages into Macedonian. The academics therefore saw some minor changes in the interpretations of the history in Macedonia, but there was no fundamental change. The situation I saw in the State University of Tetovo University is especially problematic, where the academic historians stated that there

was little primary research, due to a lack of funds. Innovative topics such as human rights, diversity, migration and gender might be addressed in various classes but they are not taught as separate courses.

The national as well as the regional history is particularly sensitive, with internally a major schism in the historical interpretation of the Macedonian and Albanian speaking historians. However also the way Macedonian historians read the history of the neighbouring countries and Albanian, Bulgarian, Greek, and Serbian historians understand the history of Macedonia is also creating tensions. These historical debates are followed with concern by a wider community of international historians.

Unfortunately academics in Macedonia are isolated from each other and from their colleagues abroad. There is little opportunity to have contacts and exchanges of experiences, even academic conferences of historians within the same communities are scarce. There are even less opportunities created for meetings between academic representatives from different ethnic communities inside Macedonia or with colleagues from neighbouring countries and beyond.

In the State University of Tetovo the situation seemed extremely problematic. The historians informed us that have very limited external contacts. None of the history professors I was meeting spoke English and contacts with Slavonic speaking colleagues in Macedonia and beyond seemed also to be hindered by lack of interest and language skills. Any normal academic exchange of papers and historical discourse was absent.

In the last years the Universities of Macedonia are introducing the Bachelor/Master programme structure. Unfortunately, none of the young teachers I was meeting had experienced this new approach. They were trained as historians and then specialised as history teachers, finishing their program with extra courses on sociology, pedagogy and methodology. During the last semester, history students had courses that focus on subject methodology and the practical aspects of teaching. Students visit for two to three weeks a school to observe lessons, and to prepare and teach one lesson in front of students. This lesson is after one, or maximum two tryouts, also examined and judged as part of their graduation results.

After graduation the new history teachers are qualified to teach in Primary as well as in Secondary schools, meaning that they teach history to students from 9 to 18 years old. A young teacher has one year of apprenticeship, his or her school assigns an experienced teacher as mentor/supervisor. Specific qualifications or selection criteria for these mentors, such as knowledge and experience with responsible and innovative teaching, are not stipulated, and therefore the interviewees regularly pointed out that the Mentors Were of different quality. Some were excellent, others were not helpful at all and in some cases, despite a legal obligation, there was even no mentor at all. On my question what approach they took as a starting teacher, they just said: we copied our own history teacher!; unfortunately still a familiar and classical approach in countries with an underdeveloped teacher pre-service training system.

After one year of working as a teacher, all teachers must pass a mandatory State Examination. Successful passing of this examination gives the right for permanent employment. The examination commission consist of three members: a professional history educator, a technical specialist (only dealing with teaching regulations) and a teacher, without any specific professional orientation. The assessment focuses on three parts. The first part is to write an essay about a topic related to teaching history, the second element is an oral test about the teachers' knowledge about the law on primary and secondary

education. The last part is a lesson for students from another school than where the teacher teaches. The examination focuses exclusively on the teacher's performance and does not address subject content.

The younger as well as the experienced teachers in the project seminars considered their preparation for their profession superficial, not taking into account how to prepare better for innovative history education and to develop historical thinking among students. They also considered the in-school trainee period far too short, and not giving enough support to new teachers, how to cope with the many challenges for classroom teaching.

In-service Teacher Training

A serious problem is that the tradition of in-service training ended with the collapse of Yugoslavia. Since that time, learning for academics and teachers ends upon the completion of their study program at university. The introduction of new curricula since 1992 has not been complemented by any official and compulsory training programme. The academic interviewees informed us that there have been regular demands from history educators for capacity building events and seminars, but that in fact little has happened. A serious programme of lifelong capacity building on new historical research results, new methodology, pedagogy or innovative teaching tools in teaching history has not been developed.

The teachers in the seminars complained that the rarely available trainings in innovative education were not for free, and that their schools had no specific funds for lifelong learning. The capacity building of educators has been in the hands of trainers, supplied by international donors and projects. Most of these trainings have focused on general capacity building, not with a direct focus on history education. However some international projects have addressed specifically history educators capacity building²⁶.

Lifelong learning has unfortunately not yet been implemented as concept to increase the quality of Macedonian (history) education. Since 1991 many new ideas about education are discussed and new laws are passed. However the implementation strategies have been insubstantial, resulting in a serious ignorance of teachers and others involved; a grave mistake, which obstructs any quality improvement in education, especially the role of the Educators is underestimated.

²⁶ *Understanding a Shared Past, Learning for the Future, EUROCLIO with History Educators Associations Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia (2000-2003); Macedonia: Retelling the History, EUROCLIO/ANIM (2006-2007)*

Concluding remarks

Stakeholders in history education in Macedonia have done little over the last 20 years to make it become a relevant school subject for students. It is considered a boring subject, giving much factual information, which is not interconnected and which has to be memorized by students. The educators in the EUROCLIO seminars felt that this approach to the learning and teaching of history does not reflect a sense of priority, neither among students nor among parents, educational authorities or policy makers.

In almost all interviews and talks with educators, I noticed little sense of importance about the role of school history in a divided community. People expressed a need to address the history of all communities living within the territory of the republic of Macedonia, but rarely expressed the need to develop a common historical narrative, respecting the diversity of the country. The present lessons on the history of the Macedonian and Albanian communities are accepted as normality, as well as the fact that you avoid teaching about 'the other'.

The current expected results for one year of history lessons, as stipulated in the history curricula, leave space to develop a common historical narrative, respecting the diversity of the country, and it is therefore vital to start thinking about integrated education, and to see together how a new curriculum can really implement it.

Detailed roadmap for the improvements in the teaching and learning of history in Macedonia

History Curricula

1. The current history curricula in the Republic of Macedonia have to be fundamentally rethought and revised, based on recent developments in historical research as well as in the theory of history education. Rather than opting for a "quick fix", a reasonable timeframe of at least two to three years should be observed to allow fundamental reform.
2. History education should address the history of the peoples living in Macedonia, respecting their diversity but also supporting a sense of belonging, based on a picture of Macedonia's multi-cultural and multi-confessional past. The history and contributions from Roma, Serbs, Turks and other minority communities should be included. The narratives of the past should have a better balance between aspects that unite, and aspects that separate.
3. The curriculum should foster a multi-perspective approach to Macedonia's past. Young people should be aware of the differences in historical accounts of different communities in Macedonia, in the Balkan countries and also beyond.
4. The history curricula should diminish its emphasis on military and political history; new topics have to be addressed such as culture, human rights, everyday life and gender. An integrated local to global history course would help making connections between communities, different events and between and national, and regional and global perspectives. A deeper thinking is required to balance the

selection of thematic units and the representation of historical periods. There need to be more emphasis on the use of sources and more questions need to be raised.

5. The history curricula should insert recent achievements in national and international academic historical research and also follow international research and debates on the theory and practice of history education.
6. The history curricula have to go beyond content and should be competence-based (knowledge, skills and attitudes). It should be learner-centered, inquiry-based and address fostering of critical and analytical thinking and the ability to evaluate sources.
7. A more flexible curriculum should be considered, leaving space and freedom for cultivation of local specifics, events, personalities and culture
8. The history curriculum in the vocational schools should be fundamentally revised, taking into account the diversity of Macedonia and the time constraints of the time allocated to the subject at this level.
9. The curriculum debate must involve a range of innovative skilled history educators and historians, but should also include a wider audience in order to create a bigger support in society. (well-trained) History educators, such as members of ANIM, the Interethnic Association of History Educators, should be involved in history curriculum development, as its key members have already been involved in national, regional and international capacity building on innovative and responsible history education. Curriculum development should involve members of the different ethnic communities on an equal footing.
10. Capacity building on history curriculum development is required. National and international policy documents on the learning and teaching of history have to be taken into account when reviewing the present history curricula.
11. The process of history curriculum development and reviewing needs to be transparent
12. History professionals in universities as well as schools should actively combat the present instrumentalisation of (national) history by members of the different ethnic communities.

History Textbooks

1. Publication of innovative history textbooks in Macedonia is only possible after a fundamental reform of the history curricula. Such books also need well trained authors, with new knowledge, as well as new methodology and pedagogy, based on the European approaches and trends in the learning and teaching of history.
2. Textbooks have to reflect the requirements for innovative and responsible history teaching, including a variety of written and visual sources, presenting a multi-layered past and offer opportunities for learner-centered approaches.

3. Textbooks should give teachers and their students some insight about the aims of learning history and the deeper context why particular events and processes are important for historical understanding.
4. Teams of textbook authors need to be inclusive, respecting diversity, with involvement of experts on the learning and teaching of history and practicing teachers, using amongst others the existing competencies of ANIM members. Further cross-border capacity building for textbook authors would lead to an important quality impulse.
5. The fact that the Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for the dissemination of amongst others free textbooks increases the need to be extremely transparent about the procedures related to textbook writing, selection and producing, in order to prevent accusations of partiality.
6. Textbook writing and publishing by the government of Macedonia is in need for transparent procedures which clearly state how the selection of authors is going to take place and on what competences such selection is based. An open call for authors, respecting the diversity in the country, is the first step.
7. The time-span for the call for submission of draft textbooks should be extended. The present timeframe does not allow serious rethinking of the textbooks.
8. Textbook review criteria and procedures need to be transparent as I II. A piloting procedure among teachers and students before publishing textbooks would help identify errors and other problems which can be addressed before the final publication of the textbooks.
9. The use of alternative educational tools should be stimulated, to compensate the present lack of choice and democratic, commercial market of textbooks.
10. The textbook research report of the team of Professor Violeta Petrovska-Beshka has to be made public in order to have an in-depth insight in the current quality and challenges of the current history textbooks.

Classroom Practice and Resources

1. History educators and their schools should be provided with resources, such as new maps, updated additional source collections, visuals and movies, enhancing historical thinking and students' engagement. Special history classrooms, or at least a history cabinet, would stimulate teachers to use a much wider variety of teaching tools
2. A special focus should be on the development of on-line teaching tools for history education, supporting the goals of the information technology programme of the Ministry of Education and Science.
3. The development of teachers' manuals is required, to support the implementation alternative teaching tools as well as innovative learning approaches

4. On-site learning is one of the tools to make students interested in history, and to make them responsible for the value of this heritage and the need to preserve it for future generations. Teachers in Macedonia need to be better supported when they want to use heritage through creating guidelines on how field trips have to be organized.

Teachers Pre-service and In-service Training

1. The pre-service trainings for history education should be based on the current approaches to the learning and teaching of history in Europe and North America and should focus on the development of historical thinking using concepts such as multi-perspectivity, evidence and interpretation.
2. The pre-service trainings for history education should increase its focus on competencies based learning, targeting on transversal skills such as critical thinking, creativity, problem solving and decision taking. The European Reference Framework, Key Competencies for Lifelong Learning should act as a source of inspiration. Experienced and well trained practitioners, among them members of ANIM, should be invited to share their knowledge and experience with the future and present history educators.
3. Training on teaching diversity is needed as an answer of the integrated education policy within history and heritage teaching in Macedonia. The results of activities already carried out by the Council of Europe, EUROCLIO, CDRSEE and others should be used as resources for future capacity building regarding trans-community and inclusive history education .
4. The pre-service trainings for history education should implement a training programme focused on methodology, based on interactive learning methods.
5. The quality of the practical work during the studies should be addressed. University could strengthen the cooperation with schools and search for innovative, high quality mentors. Future teachers should not only attend the mentor classes, but also have to actively learn by teaching history in a variety of classes.
6. In Macedonia there is an apparent need for a comprehensive programme of professional capacity building for history educators. This programme should focus on innovative and responsible subject content, including the results of new historical research, as well as on innovative and interactive subject methodology and pedagogy. Concepts such as multi-perspectivity, learner-centered and transversal skills such as critical thinking, problem solving and creativity should be at the core of such programme. The programme should also make use of the expertise, the experience and the wide regional and international network of ANIM.
7. Lifelong learning is a prerequisite for implementation of education reforms through high quality performance of academics and educators. Stimulating international cooperation and exchange of experiences with colleagues and experts from abroad is very important to raise the standards for academic as well as school history teaching.

8. A programme for the improvement of knowledge of foreign languages, notably English, would support transnational cooperation and diminish the lack of access to new research and recourses.
9. An official obligation for each teacher to devote three days per year to life long learning activities would support raising standards in the learning and teaching of history in Macedonia. Setting up high quality centres for training of teachers might be considered.
10. In order to implement the usage of information and communication technology in the classroom, teachers have to be trained on how they can implement the new opportunities offered by these technologies. New educational tools as well as communication tools such as web portals, Facebook should be promoted actively by in-service training activities. However as long as innovative online teaching material for school history in the local languages is absent, little can be expected.
11. There is a need for developing a strategy on how to organize fieldtrips and for training history teachers on how to use Macedonian heritage in their work.

Epilogue

This one year project made us dive into the situation of history education in Macedonia. I had many questions, on many I received answers, unfortunately many other questions are still open, and I also formulated new questions. Writing a report about history education in Macedonia without knowing the local languages is a very complicated mission. However the local network of ANIM was invaluable, bringing nearly 200 History Educators together, making appointments, finding and translating documents.

It was of vital importance to use the knowledge of so many involved in the process of history education in the country. In each capacity building seminar substantial time was allocated to discuss the inquiry, and in the last seminar in Veles, the participants discussed at length the main conclusions and prioritized the possible steps ahead. In between there were individual and group interviews. A lot of mails with questions were sent and articles, reports and documents were studied. Before the final publication a draft was made available to various experts to avoid mistakes and misinterpretations.

However, I am certainly responsible for what has been written, and I am entirely to blame for mistakes and misinterpretations that are still there. Writing such comprehensive reports is probably far too ambitious.

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