



Recommendation 1454 (2000)¹

Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly considers education in Bosnia and Herzegovina to be one of the most critical factors both for establishing democratic stability in the country and for bringing about the return of refugees and displaced persons.
2. It has taken particular note of problems relating to the ethnic segregation of children, language issues, ethnic stereotyping in school textbooks and the authorities' refusal to develop a common curriculum or to co-ordinate the different curricula.
3. These problems are incompatible with the principles of the Council of Europe and unworthy of a state signatory to the European Cultural Convention.
4. The Assembly would point out the good co-operation in the field between the Council of Europe, the Office of the High Representative, Unesco, the World Bank and the European Union.
5. It is pleased to note that progress has been made in the education sector, in particular through the agreement of the three ministers to remove offensive terms from school textbooks and to set up a conference of education ministers. It welcomes the leading role played by the Council of Europe in both developments.
6. It regrets that, despite these modest examples of progress, education in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains far behind the corresponding European standards.
7. Accordingly, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
 - 7.1. provide the means for the Council of Europe to maintain its decisive role in promoting co-operation in the field of education in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
 - 7.2. work with the High Representative and the other international organisations present in Bosnia and Herzegovina towards a re-interpretation of the Dayton Agreements in such a way as to achieve a more workable distribution of responsibilities at the level of the cantons, the entities and the state;
 - 7.3. co-ordinate its work with that of other international organisations in order to establish a close link between financial support from the international community and the authorities' compliance with prior conditions, especially regarding the content of school textbooks, segregation, co-ordination and language policies;
 - 7.4. continue to press for acceptance of a moratorium on teaching about the most recent conflict so as to enable historians from all the communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the help of international experts, to develop a common approach;
 - 7.5. ensure that local educational initiatives - in particular those designed to counteract segregationist thinking - continue to be encouraged and developed with the aid of moral and material support, so that what have been isolated projects become the rule rather than the exception;
 - 7.6. give consideration, on the basis of pilot projects, to setting up multi-ethnic schools in places where they will have the broadest impact, such as the towns of Brcko and Mostar;

1. Assembly debate on 5 April 2000 (13th Sitting) (see [Doc. 8663](#), report of the Committee on Culture and Education, rapporteur: Mr de Puig). Text adopted by the Assembly on 5 April 2000 (13th Sitting).



Recommendation 1454 (2000)

- 7.7. ensure that, in addition to the three constituent communities, all minorities present on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina are also fully able to exercise their right to education in a multi-ethnic perspective;
- 7.8. propose administrative, financial and legislative solutions designed to lay the foundations for a cost-effective higher education system which will meet current and future needs;
- 7.9. consider using distance learning to overcome ethnic segregation at university level.