

8 Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Montenegro

It is estimated that an average of just 30 Roma/Gypsies finish elementary school each year (0.25 per cent of the school-age population). At the time of writing, only three Roma/ Gypsy children were attending secondary schools.

“I used to live in Peć. When we came here three years ago, I thought I’d be going to a regular school. But I didn’t have my report cards from my old school so I couldn’t enrol in any elementary schools.”

Roma boy, 14 years old

“Some of the children attended schools in Kosovo where they were taught in Albanian and therefore speak only Albanian. These children were not able to continue their education in Montenegro... We worked with pre-schoolers from the age seven to nine. When the programme was finished, we tested the children, using the official tests. Thanks to these tests and the recommendations of the children’s teachers, 50 children were enrolled in the first grade of elementary school in the extension here at the camp.”

Principal of an extension school
in an IDP camp

Summary

Context

Montenegro is Serbia’s junior partner in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Under President Djukanovic it steered an independent course during the latter years of the Milosevic regime, seeking better relations with the West. The republic may declare formal independence, which would bring the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to an end.

Roma/Gypsy population

Censuses have always underestimated the Roma/Gypsy population, counting as few as nine in 1953, rising to 1,471 in 1971. One NGO estimates that 20,000 Roma/Gypsies are permanently settled in Montenegro and that 6,500-7,000 Roma/Gypsy IDPs have come from Kosovo since 1999. Most of the IDPs are accommodated in camps. The permanently settled Roma/Gypsies are mainly Muslims and are divided into three main groups, which do not identify with each other. The largest group is the *Kovaci*. They are the most integrated into majority society, with smaller families and proportionally more of their children attending school than the other two groups. *Madjupi* speak Romani or Albanian and are settled in urban areas. *Gabelji* came to Montenegro only in the early twentieth century and are semi-nomadic. Roma/Gypsies are the most disadvantaged population group in Montenegro with high rates of

unemployment, and those who work have the hardest and worst-paid menial jobs. Living conditions, nutrition and health-care provision are poor. Mortality and birth rates are high, and average life expectancy low.

Roma/Gypsies and education

Of the 12,000 children of the settled Roma/Gypsy population who are of school age, fewer than 1,000 are attending primary school, and many of these drop out after a few grades. An average of just 30 complete primary education each year, and currently only three are in secondary education. According to official censuses, 80-90 per cent of adult Roma/Gypsies in Montenegro are illiterate. Their lack of experience of education inevitably impacts upon their children's school attendance and ability to study. Yet poverty, language incompatibility and discrimination are also barriers. In a survey of 14-30-year-old Roma/Gypsies in Kotor, 55 per cent said they discontinued education because they were subjected to verbal and physical violence in school. Illiteracy and school-attendance rates are slightly worse among Kosovan Roma/Gypsy IDPs. Open segregation is practised by the authorities in their education – separate Roma/Gypsy classes were established in an extension built onto the local primary school for children of the Konik II IDP camp.

Language provision

The majority of Roma/Gypsies in Montenegro speak Romanes or Albanian rather than Serbian. A large majority of the Kosovan Roma/Gypsy IDPs speak only Albanian. Although they have been given the possibility of attending Albanian language schools, Montenegrin Albanians have expressed hostility toward them, so Roma/Gypsy IDP children do not in practice attend them. Schools do not provide instruction in Romanes, due to a lack of qualified teachers and textbooks.

Special schools

Two per cent of children in special schools are Roma/Gypsy children – a relatively low proportion. Assessment techniques appear to have been adapted to avoid excessive referrals of Roma/Gypsy children.

Balance of NGO and government activity

Although the Montenegrin Constitution guarantees more education rights to Roma/Gypsies than the FRY Constitution, they are not implemented in practice. UNICEF co-ordinates and contributes to a range of education support projects, particularly for Roma/Gypsy IDPs, in partnership with international NGOs, and is also building the capacity of domestic NGOs for this work.

Montenegro report contents

Introduction – the Roma/Gypsy population	180
Demography	180
A brief historical overview	182
The socio-economic situation of Roma/Gypsies in Montenegro	182
Inter-ethnic relations	184
Minority rights	187
The right to education	188
In practice	189
The right to education of Roma/Gypsy children	189
Special schools in Montenegro	190
Language provision	192
NGO practice in the area	194
Voices of Roma/Gypsy children	197
Recommendations	200
Montenegro: Notes on the text	202

Introduction – the Roma/Gypsy population

Demography

There are no precise or comprehensive data on Roma/Gypsies in Montenegro.¹ In 1995, Minority Rights Group International estimated that there were between 400,000 and 450,000 Roma/Gypsies in what was then Yugoslavia. Of these they estimated that fewer than ten per cent were in Montenegro, that is, a maximum of 40,000-45,000 (6.5 per cent-7 per cent of the Montenegro population), a figure which far exceeds the official population census figure.² According to the 1991 census, Montenegro had a total population of 615,035, of whom 3,282 (0.53 per cent) were Roma/Gypsies. Higher numbers of Roma/Gypsies were found in larger cities. For example, in Podgorica there were 1,676 (1.1 per cent) Roma/Gypsies in 1991, and in Nikšić, 802 (1.1 per cent).³

The term “Tsigan”, ie, “Gypsy” was used to denote Roma/Gypsies in the population counts conducted from 1948 to 1971. The first census after World War II, in 1948, counted 377,189 people in Montenegro, of whom 162 were Roma/Gypsies. The 1953 census showed a total population of 419,873, among whom only nine Roma/Gypsies were counted, and these were only in the Bar District (six in the Ulcinj and three in the Bar municipality). Since there were no figures for other districts, it may be assumed that Roma/Gypsies were not registered as such in this census. The 1961 census revealed a total population of 471,894, of whom 183 or 0.04 per cent were counted as Roma/Gypsies. The term



“Roma” was first used officially in the 1971 census. Out of a total population of 584,310, 1,471 (0.25 per cent) were registered as Roma/Gypsies.

Trifun Dimić, a distinguished Yugoslav expert, believes that the census figures are erroneous, as they proceed from the assumption that minority populations always declare their real ethnicity. Roma/Gypsies often declare themselves to be members of the majority population group in areas in which they live in order to avoid the racial prejudice, segregation and discrimination to which they are customarily subjected.

As well as settled Roma/Gypsies living in Montenegro, there are also many internally displaced and refugee communities. The Montenegrin Red Cross, for example, registered 17,000 Roma/Gypsy refugees in Montenegro during the period from December 1991 to December 2000. Of this number, 7,500 settled in Podgorica and 2,700 in Nikšić. Some 3,000 were placed in two refugee centres at Konik in Vrela Ribnička near Podgorica.

Table 8.1 Roma/Gypsies in Montenegro, according to Grupa Margo

Region/City	Approximate number of Roma/Gypsies
1. Northern Montenegro	2,400
2. Podgorica	10,000
3. Nikšić	2,900
4. Southern Montenegro	3,700
5. Cetinje	600
Total	19,600

Grupa Margo, an NGO based in Tivat, also estimates a much larger Roma/Gypsy population, made up of both settled and displaced communities. It estimates that at least 20,000 reside permanently in Montenegro, plus between 6,500 and 7,000 who were displaced from Kosovo (see Table 8.1).

Since the break-up of the former Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, 46,604 displaced persons have found refuge in Montenegro, that is,

7.5 per cent of the total population according to the 1991 census figures.⁴ NGOs estimate that between 65,000 and 70,000 refugees and displaced persons from the territory of the former Yugoslavia are currently in Montenegro, that is over ten per cent of the population (1991 census).⁵ According to the Office of the Montenegrin Commissioner for Displaced Persons, there are in total 32,120 persons displaced from Kosovo, of whom 6,440 (20 per cent) are Roma/Gypsies and 972 (3 per cent) declare themselves as Egyptians⁶ (see Table 8.2).

A brief historical overview

Although a significant proportion of Roma/Gypsies currently living in Montenegro are refugees from Kosovo, most Roma/Gypsies are settled and have been living in Montenegro for many centuries. According to the ethnologist Stana Marušić, unlike in Serbia, Roma/Gypsies settled in Montenegro before the advent of the Ottoman Empire in this part of the Balkans. The first written documents that refer to Roma/Gypsies in Montenegro date from the eighteenth century.⁷ According to these documents, they lived mainly in northern Montenegro and in the vicinity of major highways. During the reign of King Nikola in the nineteenth century, Romani groups were delineated by profession. Today, Roma/Gypsies in Montenegro are mainly Muslims and are divided into three main groups, each of which considers itself as having little in common with the others.

The group documented as first arriving in this part of the Balkans was the *Kovači*, named after the blacksmith trade – a trade which was handed

down over many generations. They speak mainly Serbian, but for some of them their first language is Albanian. They are the largest Roma/Gypsy group in Montenegro and the most integrated into society. Their families are smaller and their children are more likely than those from other groups to attend formal schooling. Although the rate of illiteracy for this group is lower, according to the 1981 census, it was still recorded as high as 80 per cent.

Madjupi, the second group, came from Kosovo and Macedonia during Ottoman rule and settled in urban areas. Montenegro offered a favourable climate and opportunities for work. They settled in the Vrela Ribnička and Čepurke neighbourhoods of Podgorica. It was not until 1972 that they moved from this area, due to rapid urban growth. Whereas some continue to speak Romani, others speak Albanian as their first language. According to the 1981 census figures, 85 per cent of this group were illiterate.

The third group, *Gabelji*, are semi-nomadic Roma/Gypsies. They came to Montenegro in the early twentieth century and consider themselves a separate entity, disclaiming any relationship with the *Kovači* and *Madjupi*. The 1991 census recorded that 90 per cent of *Gabelji* were illiterate.

The socio-economic situation of Roma/Gypsies in Montenegro

Roma/Gypsies, both in economic and social terms, are considered the most disadvantaged population group in Montenegro. A number of factors have been identified as contributing to this situation, most significantly, high unemployment

Table 8.2 Displaced persons in Montenegro, according to the Office of the Commissioner for Displaced Persons

Municipality	Montenegrin	Serb	Roma	Muslim	Albanian	Egyptian	Other	Total
Andrijevića	743	551		1	5		6	1,306
Bar	1,817	2,107	737	427	109	54	98	5,349
Berane	2,473	1,543	545	471	16	149	52	5,249
Bijelo Polje	283	198	100	502	36		19	1,198
Budva	484	564	9	81	8		42	1,168
Cetinje	29	18					1	48
Danilovgrad	395	100	4		9		1	509
Herceg Novi	279	348	106	19	6		20	778
Kolašin	162	85		5			4	256
Kotor	98	113	25	33	34	16	7	326
Mojkovac	90	64		1			2	157
Nikšić	209	136	673	31	16	38	40	1,443
Plav	367	198	7	935	214	6	15	1,742
Plužine	3							3
Pljevlja	82	66	3	17	7		1	176
Podgorica	3,362	1,180	3,828	509	238	440	101	9,658
Rožaje	13	42	52	691	113	164	3	1,078
Šavnik	1	1						2
Tivat	220	377	151	121	18	100	17	1,004
Ulcinj	46	154	200	178	344	5	38	965
Žabljak	11							11
Total		7,845	6,440	4,082	1,173	972	404	32,186
%	34.7%	24.4%	20.0%	12.7%	3.7%	3.0%	1.5%	

and low levels of education. Roma/Gypsies who do have work hold the hardest and least-paid jobs, such as street cleaners, manual workers, gravediggers, waste collectors in urban areas, and day labourers and craftsmen in rural areas. A large number of Roma/Gypsies, mostly children, elderly people and disabled people, also engage in begging, whilst others earn a living as street musicians.

Roma/Gypsy settlements tend to be located on the outskirts of cities and villages, in spite of zoning laws, which prohibit building in these areas. As a result, such settlements are not serviced by public transport or waste collection. The dwellings are flimsy structures of cheap and easily found materials such as tin, wood and plastic sheeting, and are without running water, drains or electricity. The dilapidated appearance of these settlements and their physical isolation contributes significantly to Roma/Gypsies feeling alienated. It also fuels racial prejudice on the part of the majority population.

Roma/Gypsies suffer from a high incidence of malnutrition. Poor living conditions are also compounded by inadequate provision of health services. This, combined with the failure of the state to implement effective family planning services, means that Roma/Gypsies have both a high mortality rate, especially among infants, and a high birth rate. One implication of this is that many Roma/Gypsy families are relatively large. For both settled Roma/Gypsies and those displaced from Kosovo, it has been estimated that they have an average of seven members per family (see Table 8.3). As a result, almost one-third of the Roma/Gypsy population in

Montenegro are children under the age of 7 years and about one-quarter are between 7 and 16 years. Of the total number of Roma/Gypsies at the Konik refugee centre, 64 per cent of the 1,432 living there are under 20 years of age. These figures are at least partly explained by the fact that the Roma/Gypsy population has a much shorter life expectancy than other groups.

The position of Roma/Gypsy refugees in Montenegro deteriorated significantly after 1999 when some 7,500 Roma/Gypsies displaced from Kosovo were forced to find refuge in Montenegro.⁸ Most of the Kosovan Roma/Gypsies were placed in refugee centres in major Montenegrin cities. The Konik I and Konik II camps in Podgorica are better equipped and organised than other refugee centres. Konik I holds 399 Roma/Gypsy families with 2,290 members. Of these, 38 families live in houses with communal kitchens, and the remainder live in barracks, with four families to each barrack. Conditions in the other refugee facilities in Montenegro are much poorer, especially in Nikšić, where they are located between local iron and steel mills and the Brlja Romani settlement.

Due to high levels of unemployment, poor living conditions and ill health, almost all Roma/Gypsy families in Montenegro are recipients of some kind of social assistance. However, often this is not enough to secure minimum standards of living.

Inter-ethnic relations

As in other countries, there exist many stereotypes about Roma/Gypsies and anti-Roma/Gypsy prejudice prevails among the majority

Table 8.3 Roma/Gypsies and family size in Montenegro, 2000

	Displaced Kosovo Roma/Gypsies	Montenegrin Roma/Gypsies	Overall population
Total number of families	250	100	100
More than 4 members	41 (16.4%)	12	35
5 – 9 members	152 (60.8%)	69	62
Over 10 members	57 (22.8%)	19	3
Total number of members	1,839 (100%)	719 (100%)	529 (100%)
Men	921 (50.08%)	341 (47.50%)	265 (50.09%)
Women	918 (49.92%)	378 (52.50%)	264 (49.91%)
Total number of children	1,072 (58.29%)	355 (49.30%)	131 (24.76%)
Children under 7	563 (30.61%)	189 (26.30%)	84 (15.87%)
Children between 7 and 16	509 (27.68%)	166 (23.00%)	47 (8.88%)
Average number of family members	7.36	7.19	5.29

Source: Dr Božidar Jakšić, *Life of displaced Kosovo Roma in Montenegro (Podgorica and Nikšić) and possibilities for integration*, Belgrade-Podgorica, 2000, p.17.

Montenegrin population. Numerous sociological studies and surveys conducted in recent years in Montenegro indicate a wide social and ethnic distance between the majority population and Roma/Gypsies.⁹ Dr Božidar Jakšić recently surveyed displaced Kosovan Roma/Gypsies, Montenegrin Roma/Gypsies and the majority population in order to gauge inter-ethnic relations between the Romani and non-Romani populations.

Of the surveyed Kosovan Roma/Gypsies, 51 per cent were for marriage with Montenegrins and 49 per cent were against it. For 90 per cent of those surveyed, friendship with Montenegrins was desirable and the same number said they would

like to work together with them.¹⁰ In terms of the Montenegrin Romani population, 44 per cent of the respondents came out in favour of marriage with Montenegrins; 56 per cent were against it. Almost 100 per cent of those surveyed expressed a positive attitude towards living together with other Montenegrins.

In the same survey, Montenegrins demonstrated a far greater ethnic distance from Roma/Gypsies: 97 per cent rejected marriage with Romani people and 59 per cent did not want to maintain friendly relations with them. Roma/Gypsies were regarded as undesirable neighbours by 57 per cent of respondents, and 61 per cent came out against working with them.

A survey conducted by Živorad Tasić for *Grupa Margo* among the majority Montenegrin population produced somewhat more encouraging results.¹¹ According to his findings, 50 per cent of respondents would like to have Roma/Gypsy neighbours and 60 per cent said they had nothing against their children attending school together with Romani children. The majority, 78 per cent, accepted Roma/Gypsies as co-citizens and 63 per cent accepted Roma/Gypsies as co-workers. However, although 87 per cent were favourably inclined toward some form of contact with Roma/Gypsies, 85 per cent nonetheless considered that Roma/Gypsies should live in

their own separate settlements. Ultimately, the survey indicated that 69 per cent did not want Roma/Gypsies to be fully integrated into Montenegrin society.

The level of hostility revealed in these surveys translates into Roma/Gypsy children often dropping out of school. In a survey by the Kotor-based NGO *Anima*, 55 per cent of the Roma/Gypsy respondents between the ages of 14 and 30 said they had discontinued their education because of the verbal and physical violence they were subjected to in school.¹²



Minority rights

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Montenegro¹³ are bound by all the international acts in the fields of minority rights, the rights of the child and the right to education ratified by the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The new state continues to apply the international acts outlined above on the “basis of Yugoslavia’s uninterrupted status as a personality of international law”:

The rights of national minorities in Montenegro are regulated by the Constitution of FRY, the Constitution of the Republic of Montenegro and Montenegrin republican legislation on the official use of languages and scripts, education, freedom of association, and the electronic and printed media.

The Montenegrin Constitution lays down a broader framework for the protection of minority rights than the FRY Constitution. The latter uses the term “national minorities” to denote members of minority ethnic communities, whereas the Montenegrin Constitution uses the terms “national and ethnic groups.”¹⁴ The Montenegrin Constitution states that members of national and ethnic groups enjoy equal rights. However, neither the Constitution nor the republican statutes contain any criteria for differentiating between the two groups. Neither federal nor republican legislation lists the national minorities or ethnic groups to which they refer.

Under both the FRY and the Montenegrin Constitutions, national minorities are entitled to protection of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and

religious identity in accordance with international standards.¹⁵ They have the right to use their language and script, to education and information media in their language, and to use their national symbols, in accordance with the law.¹⁶

Both Constitutions guarantee to national minorities the right to establish educational, cultural and religious organisations and associations. Whereas the FRY Constitution says only that the state *may* financially assist these organisations, the Montenegrin Constitution makes financial assistance obligatory.¹⁷

In the field of education, too, the Montenegrin Constitution provides broader rights for minorities, since it requires the Ministry of Education to include the history and culture of national minorities in school curricula.¹⁸ No such provision is contained in the FRY Constitution.

Members of national minorities have the right to use their own language in proceedings before courts or government agencies.¹⁹ In contrast to the FRY Constitution, the Montenegrin Constitution also guarantees proportional representation of minorities in public services, government agencies and local government.²⁰

National minorities are entitled to establish and foster contacts with their co-nationals outside of Montenegro with whom they share a cultural and historical heritage and religious beliefs, on condition that these contacts are not detrimental for Montenegro. They also have the right to take part in regional international NGOs, and to address international institutions to protect their constitutionally guaranteed rights and liberties.²¹

They may not, however, exercise their special rights in a manner contrary to the Montenegrin Constitution or to the principles of international law, or to the detriment of the territorial integrity of Montenegro.²²

The Montenegrin Constitution obliges the government actively to protect and promote the rights of national minorities. A Council for the Protection of the Rights of Members of National Minorities has recently been established. It is chaired by the President of the Republic, and its composition and powers are determined by the Montenegrin parliament.²³ The Council's aim is to foster and protect the national, ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of national minorities, and ensure that they are able to exercise their constitutionally guaranteed rights.

The other rights of members of national and ethnic groups derive from the provisions of the Montenegrin Constitution treating the rights and liberties of all citizens.

Roma/Gypsies in Montenegro in practice do not exercise most of the rights guaranteed to national minorities and ethnic communities. As an ethnic group, their status is not stipulated in law: they do not exercise the right to education in their own language; the curricula of elementary and secondary schools do not include study of Roma/Gypsy culture and history; the Romani language is not in official use in any of Montenegro's municipalities; and the government does not finance any Romani cultural institutions. Furthermore, Roma/Gypsies are not proportionally represented in public services, government agencies or local government.

The right to education

National minorities and displaced persons in Montenegro are entitled to education from preschool to university. For displaced persons, this is based on the condition that they are officially registered as residing in the republic. The Montenegrin Preschool Education Act states that instruction in these institutions is provided in the Serbian language, but may also be provided in Albanian.²⁴ The programmes of preschool institutions are determined by the Ministry of Education, and parents choose the language in which their children will receive instruction.²⁵

Elementary education is compulsory for all children between the ages of 7 and 15 years.²⁶ For children aged over 15 years, elementary education is provided in separate classes in elementary schools or in elementary schools for adults.²⁷ Parents or legal guardians are responsible for enrolling their children in elementary school and ensuring their regular attendance. Elementary schools are obliged to report to the Ministry of Education when a child has not been enrolled or does not attend school regularly.²⁸ If a parent/legal guardian fails to enrol a child, or the child does not attend or irregularly attends school, the parent/guardian is liable to pay a fine ranging from one-half of to 20 times the minimum wage.²⁹ The fine may be levied repeatedly if the parent/guardian continues to disregard his or her responsibility in this regard.

In areas where national minorities constitute a majority, schools or classes are established to provide instruction in the minority language and, conditions permitting, such instruction may be

provided also in other schools and classes.³⁰ The law envisages the possibility of establishing bilingual schools or classes in multi-ethnic communities.³¹ When classroom instruction is in a minority language, Serbian-language courses are compulsory.³² Schools providing classroom instruction in minority languages keep their registers in both Serbian and the relevant minority language.³³ Semi-annual and annual report cards are also issued in both languages.³⁴

Under the Montenegrin Secondary School Act, secondary education is provided in general-programme, vocational and art schools.³⁵ Depending on the composition of the local population, classroom instruction for members of national or ethnic groups may be in the language of the group.³⁶ Schools or classes in which instruction is provided in both Serbian and Albanian, or only in Albanian, may be established in areas with a mixed population of Serbs, Montenegrins and Albanians. Instruction in Albanian-language schools is in accordance with the uniform programmes and curricula determined by law,³⁷ and Serbian-language courses are compulsory.

Under the Montenegrin University Act, the university is a public institution based in Podgorica, and has the legal status of an artificial person. The university comprises post-secondary schools, departments, art academies, scientific institutions in fields of study in which higher education is not provided, the Foreign Languages Institute, and the university library.³⁸ Instruction at the university is in Serbian. The law also envisages the possibility of instruction being provided in a major world language.³⁹ Those who wish to enter

the university are required to pass competitive admission exams, which are taken three months before enrolment,⁴⁰ and must have a secondary education diploma as required by the statute of the unit (department, etc) they wish to attend.⁴¹

In practice

The right to education of Roma/ Gypsy children

The Montenegrin Ministry of Education does not have data according to ethnic group on the number of children attending elementary and secondary schools. The reason given is that schools do not ask children to declare their ethnicity. Other sources, however, have tried to estimate numbers of Roma/Gypsy children attending schools. According to UNICEF figures for the year 2000, 190 Romani children were enrolled in regular schools, 50 each in Podgorica, Rožaje and Tivat, 11 in Berane and 29 in Bar. Serbian is the official language in Montenegro.⁴² In areas with a majority Albanian population, there are preschools, elementary and secondary schools providing instruction in either Albanian alone, or in both Albanian and Serbian. When instruction is only in Albanian, Serbian-language courses are compulsory.

According to official censuses, at least 80 per cent of adult Roma/Gypsies in Montenegro are illiterate. According to research carried out by Živorad Tasić, an activist of *Grupa Margo*, eight per cent have completed elementary school, and those with a secondary-school diploma are few and far between. Only two Roma/Gypsies in Montenegro have university degrees. Almost 45 per cent of the Romani population are children

of school age. Of the 12,000 Roma/Gypsy children, under 1,000 attend elementary school (about eight per cent). Most drop out after finishing a few grades and an average of just 30 finish elementary school each year (ie, 0.25 per cent of the school-age population). At the time of writing, only three Roma/Gypsy children were attending secondary schools.⁴³

A survey carried out by Božidar Jakšić among Kosovan Roma/Gypsies revealed that 62 per cent of respondents either did not go to school at all or did not finish it, and only 4 per cent had completed secondary education. The situation for Montenegrin Roma/Gypsies seemed slightly better: 80 per cent of Montenegrin Roma/Gypsies either did not go to school at all or did not finish it. Among this group, 27 per cent of children were recorded as currently attending elementary school.⁴⁴ InterSOS also carried out a survey at the Konik I camp and found that all the women living there were illiterate.⁴⁵

Some see cultural traditions, such as early marriage (practised by some Roma/Gypsy communities), as important factors to consider when understanding low-level attendance and high drop-out rates. A worker from the Konik II camp argues that we need to look much deeper:

“Roma are on the margins of society. Here at this camp we live far from everything and it is very hard to get involved in life outside the camp. That’s something we want to change. The Roma are a people who function very well among themselves, but they do not like to mix with others. In spite of the very poor living conditions, such as exist in this camp, Roma

manage to survive. A large number of Roma do not know Serbian. A large number speak Albanian and many also Romani. Children live in families in which almost all members are illiterate. Where education is concerned, Roma children do not have role models in their families. The result is that their values system is out of joint and they are unable to acquire habits which would make it possible for them to finish school. Parents do not take proper care of their children, do not supervise them to see if they go to school or monitor their progress, for the simple reason that they did not learn to do so from their own parents.”

However, factors such as these do not relate to all Roma/Gypsies and need to be placed alongside other factors of poor economic status, language barriers and high levels of discrimination.

Special schools in Montenegro

Under the Montenegrin Act on Special Education, special education is provided in preschool institutions, special, elementary and secondary schools, as well as in other educational institutions. The education authority, in accordance with a special committee made up of medical specialists, psychologists, counsellors and social workers, established jointly by the Ministries of Education and Public Health, establishes the various criteria for the categorisation of disabled children.⁴⁶

There are six special schools for disabled children in Montenegro, four in Podgorica and one each in Kotor and Bijela. The number of Roma/Gypsy children attending these schools is provided in Table 8.4.

Table 8.4 Special schools for disabled children

Special school	Total children	Romani children
School for deaf and hearing-impaired children, Kotor	150	1
Mladost Home for Children, Bijela	160	Ethnicity unknown
School for Rehabilitation of Disabled Children, Podgorica	80	2
I June School for Slightly Mentally Retarded Children, Podgorica	130	5
Reform School, Podgorica	30	2
School for Severely Mentally Retarded Children and Youth, Podgorica	140	2 children and 3 adults
Total	690 (100%)	15 (2%)

Instruction in special schools is in the Serbian language only. All those members of the Montenegrin Committee for Evaluation of Children who agreed to be interviewed underlined that the criteria used for determining access were reliable and realistic, citing as proof the proportionate number of Romani children currently attending special schools.

According to a psychologist who serves on the Committee:

“The majority of Roma children show up as pseudo-retarded, or falsely retarded, when they take the intelligence test. This is due in great part to the lack of stimuli in their communities. Roma children who do not know the language in which the test is administered are assigned a Romani-speaking person who translates for them. I have not noticed a significant number of Roma children with symptoms of real mental retardation. Roma children are more frequently than others sent to psychologists for

evaluation of their capability to attend regular schools, and they score good results on these tests.”

A counsellor at the School for Mentally Retarded Children in Podgorica stated that:

“Children in the fifth category, or slightly mentally retarded, are placed in our school. The school has separate boarding facilities for girls and boys and is considered to be the best-equipped special school. We have 130 children, of whom 70 are boarders and 60 day students. There are five Romani children between the ages of 8 and 15. For two of these children and their parents, the most important thing is that the school provides them with meals, clothes and shoes, because they are from the Konik I camp here in Podgorica. These Roma children attend quite regularly and their school results are satisfactory. They are making especially good progress in learning Serbian.”

According to a therapist and director of the School for Severely Mentally Retarded Children and Youth in Podgorica:

“Retarded persons are placed in this school on the basis of decisions taken by the competent Social Welfare Centre, the Ministry of Education and the republican Committee for Categorisation of Retarded Children. The school provides instruction for severely retarded persons, those with an IQ below 20, and aims to capacitate them for work and to educate them. We have five Roma in our school, two children and three adults over 50. Members of other national and ethnic groups also attend this school.”

A social worker with the School for Rehabilitation of Disabled Children in Podgorica stated that there were only two Romani children in this school:

“We have 80 children in all, 40 of whom attend elementary school, 35 are in secondary school and 5 are preschoolers. These children are from Serbia, [Federation of] Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and Montenegro. There are only two Romani children in the school.”

A social worker at the Reform School in Podgorica, spoke of work with educationally neglected Roma/Gypsy children:

“Juvenile delinquents, who have committed offences and were placed in our school by the competent authorities, attend elementary and secondary school. They are trained to become

auto mechanics, locksmiths and carpenters. There used to be more Romani children here a few years ago. Here they had food, clothes, shoes and a warm place. We tried to get them into classes, but their attendance became irregular and then they stopped coming at all. We had a programme together with InterSOS, which was to last four months. It was intended for Romani children from the Konik I and II camps in Podgorica, and we were to teach them to be auto mechanics. They came in the first two months, although not very often, and later stopped showing up, so that the programme had to be discontinued.”

Language provision

The majority of Roma/Gypsies in Montenegro, especially those displaced from Kosovo, speak either Albanian or Romanes, not Serbian. Data gathered by *Grupa Margo* indicates that 90 per cent of Roma/Gypsies from Kosovo currently living in Montenegro speak Albanian. A survey conducted by Božidar Jakšić also with Roma/Gypsies from Kosovo revealed a higher proportion who spoke Romanes: 58 per cent declared that Albanian was their native language while 36 per cent declared that it was Romanes. Only a small number of Roma/Gypsies stated that Serbian was their native language.⁴⁷

Although there are some differences in exact figures, it is still recognised that a large majority of Kosovan Roma/Gypsy children speak Albanian and are therefore given the possibility of attending Albanian-language schools in Podgorica and Ulcinj. However, Montenegrin Albanians express hostile attitudes to Kosovan Roma/Gypsies, and thus, fearing possible incidents,



Roma/Gypsy children tend to keep away from such schools.

Despite the high proportion of Roma/Gypsies speaking Romanes, schools in Montenegro do not provide instruction in Romanes. This is seen as being due to a lack of qualified teachers and textbooks.⁴⁸ In light of this, the NGO *Crnogorska Romska Inicijativa* (Montenegrin Roma Initiative) has requested that the Ministry of Education approve the publication of a Romani primer for use in the first grade of elementary school. At the time of writing, the Ministry was still considering this proposal.

NGO practice in the area

There have been various attempts by NGOs to support Roma/Gypsy children in education. UNICEF, COOPI, InterSOS, NPA, and *Enfants du Monde – Droits de l'Homme* maintain a series of different projects for the education of Romani children. These organisations work in co-operation with domestic NGOs, for example, in setting up workshops, informal education programmes and kindergartens for Roma/Gypsy children.

UNICEF actively directs informal education programmes in Montenegro, preparing Romani children to enter regular elementary schools. For example, it sponsors a programme of “informal education” for Romani children aged between 6-18 years who have been displaced from Kosovo. There are 37 teachers employed and 1,000 children enrolled on the programme. The programme lasts for one year and aims to

facilitate the integration of the children into the education system. The curriculum consists of six standard subjects: Serbian language, mathematics, natural and social studies, music, physical education and art, with additional classes in hygiene. Three classes are held each week, each session lasting 45 minutes. On completion of the course, the children are expected to enrol in regular schools.⁴⁹

In addition to this, regular classroom instruction in Serbian, together with computer courses, have been organised at the 25 Maj Elementary School in Rožaje for 2000/2001. This is targeted at Romani schoolchildren from Kosovo as part of a joint project of the Montenegrin Ministry of Education, UNICEF and the Mercy Corps humanitarian organisation.

Enfants du Monde – Droits de l'Homme and UNICEF work together on organising supplementary classes in some elementary school subjects and literacy courses for children who are not in school. The programmes are designed for refugee and displaced children.

InterSOS, UNICEF and WorldVision conduct informal education programmes for 250 Romani children at the Konik I camp in Podgorica. As part of this initiative, they have established a kindergarten with 2 teachers for 25 children who do not live in the camp, and plan to increase the number of children who can attend.

UNICEF plans to strengthen and affirm local NGOs focusing on Roma/Gypsy education issues, and to organise seminars and workshops on the rights of the child.

InterSOS plans to launch two programmes to supplement the existing programmes for preschool children. The aim is to increase the number of children in kindergartens. One of the programmes will be carried out in conjunction with UNICEF.

Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin Elementary School recently built an extension to accommodate two classes for Kosovan Roma/Gypsy children from the Konik II camp. They follow the same curriculum, yet their classes remain separate. The educational authorities assert that this is necessary because of the lack of space in the school building itself. However, the establishment of classes solely for Roma/Gypsies is an indication of open segregation, which precludes the integration of Roma/Gypsy children in the Montenegrin education system and constitutes a drastic departure from international standards in this field. In addition to these classrooms, a programme of informal education has also been organised at the camp itself, with a view to helping children prepare for regular schooling.

The principal of the Konik II extension sees the classes held in the camp and, in turn, the principles of informal education as very important:

“We realised it was necessary to create any kind of conditions for the education of Roma children, even an extension, because the most important thing was to continue making progress with Roma children. We launched the programme for the education of Romani children, both from Kosovo and those of Montenegrin Roma, on 11 January 2000.

The programme is sponsored by UNICEF, InterSOS and WorldVision and is the first of its kind in the world. Five hundred children are in the programme, though the number varies because the families move. It's an informal school. Not all the children attend regularly. I speak with the parents in the camp every day, trying to convince them that their children should continue their education. Some of the children attended schools in Kosovo, where they were taught in Albanian and therefore speak only Albanian. These children were not able to continue their education in Montenegro. The goals of the programme are to teach the Roma children the language in which instruction is given, to include them in the formal system, their socialisation and their integration in the local society. Another goal is the training of teachers.

The first stage of the programme was from January to August 2000. We worked with preschoolers from the age seven to nine. When the programme was finished, we tested the children, using the official tests. Thanks to these tests and the recommendations of the children's teachers, 50 children were enrolled in the first grade of elementary school in the extension here at the camp.

Besides the crafts workshop, we have supplementary classes for children who find it hard to keep up with their schoolwork, an art club for gifted children and a carpentry shop where they do artistic woodwork.

The *Vrela*⁵⁰ newspaper gives a big contribution to education with its reports on the daily life of Roma in their own language.”

Before its scaling down in Montenegro, Save the Children USA was also involved with this camp. It established two kindergartens for 120 children at the Konik II camp. Five Romani teachers, who attended a nine-day training seminar, implement active methods of working with the children to prepare them for school. Two of the teachers speak Serbian, Albanian and Romani. In Berane, Save the Children USA also set up a kindergarten for displaced children at the Petnica refugee centre.

Humanitarac (Humanitarian), a Montenegrin NGO based in Nikšić, has been successful in preparing Roma/Gypsy children to enter elementary school. In the course of 2000, *Humanitarac* organised Serbian-language classes and psychosocial work with children between the ages of six and nine. As a result of this, 40 Romani children enrolled in regular elementary school in the 2000-01 school year. In order to include older children aged from 9 to 18, the organisation had to seek assistance from the Ministry of Education, since the law does not allow education of this age-group according to programmes designed for adults. The Ministry was responsive and in 2000-01, 62 Roma/Gypsy children attended classes at the Adult Education Centre. In such centres, instruction lasts 45 days in the first four grades and 90 days in grades five to eight. Many Roma/Gypsies take advantage of this and complete two grades in one year.

The *Početak* (Beginning) Roma Association was founded in Nikšić in October 2000. Its goals are the education of Roma/Gypsy children and youth, and the realisation of their right to learn about and foster their culture and traditions.

Početak receives financial assistance from the Open Society Institute in Podgorica and Save the Children UK.⁵¹

The Ksenija Centre for Girls, a Podgorica NGO, and the Reform School in Podgorica carried out a joint six-month project to promote social ties between inmates of the Reform School and their peers from outside, in order to challenge isolation and prejudice. Workshops were held four times a month at the Reform School and once a month at the Centre for Girls.

Romski Centar, an NGO in Nikšić, is financed by UNICEF and is working on a number of programmes. These include supplementary classes for Roma/Gypsy children enrolled in the Adult Education Centre, classes to prepare Romani children for entry into elementary school, literacy courses for Roma/Gypsy women, sewing, knitting and needlework and similar workshops for Roma/Gypsy children and adults, and psychological, legal and medical counselling. Children attend classes every day. A total of 143 Romani children are involved in some kind of activity at *Romski Centar*.

The international organisation Norwegian People's Aid runs programmes for Roma/Gypsies, which are typical of many interventions, based on hygiene, creative and music workshops. Fifteen elementary and secondary schools are involved in its Model-Making programme. In December 2000, it launched a programme entitled "With education to a better life". This involves 39 Romani children aged from 9 to 15 in the third grade and another 30 who are attending first grade at the Adult Education Centre,

18 attending local elementary schools and 3 attending secondary schools. The secondary-school students finished the 1999-2000 school year with good results, as did 93 per cent of the third-graders at the Adult Education Centre. Of the first-graders, 78 per cent completed the year without failing in any of the subjects. The children who did best were rewarded with a one-week winter vacation on Mt Lovćen.

The Open Society Institute in Podgorica and the NGO *Početak* are preparing a project designed for children displaced from Kosovo who live in three Roma/Gypsy settlements in Nikšić – Brlja, Trebjesa and Željezara. There will be three workshops in the framework of this project to prepare children to enter regular schools. Instruction will be in Serbian and partly in the Romani language, and only experts in specific fields will work with the children. A collection of poems in Romani and the Humanitarian Law Centre's bilingual Serbian/Romani publication on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, called "Children's Rights", will be used. As no schools in Nikšić provide instruction in Albanian, the only language most of these children know, the project will give them an opportunity to learn enough Serbian to be able to attend regular schools, and to learn some Romani. The Open Society Institute also plans to start the Step-by-Step project for children of pre-school age next year.

A number of humanitarian organisations have also been concerned with helping Roma/Gypsies to improve their economic and social status, in some cases by securing permanent jobs. Italy's COOPI, for example, financed the construction

of a recycling facility at Vrela Ribnička, next to the city waste dump and junkyard, and handed it over to the Podgorica Sanitation Department. The precondition for the realisation of the project was that the Sanitation Department would employ Roma/Gypsies in the facility. Two metal presses have been installed so far and six Roma/Gypsies employed. Once two more presses have been installed, more Roma/Gypsies will be employed.⁵²

Norwegian People's Aid has organised employment training seminars for Roma/Gypsies and other Montenegrin citizens in Herceg Novi, Tivat, Budva, Podgorica, Nikšić, Plav and Berane. Many of the participants, one-third of whom were Roma/Gypsies, went on to find employment as "eco-rangers".

Voices of Roma/Gypsy children

All of the following contributions from children and young people were given in interviews held in December 2000.

IB, boy, ten years old, in grade three, elementary school in Nikšić

"I'm always fighting with the kids at school. They all pick on me so I hit them. Then we all get into trouble with the teacher who shouts at us. I don't have my birthday parties at school. Other kids bring cakes and stuff for everyone in the class and celebrate their birthdays. I can't bring anything so I don't tell anyone it's my birthday.

A friend called Jelena told me they scare other kids by saying Gypsies will do something bad

to them. That's nasty. I don't hassle anyone who doesn't hassle me.

I'd like to be a pilot when I grow up. I hope people won't mind having a Roma driving the plane."

IZ, boy, ten years old, attends informal education classes at the Konik II refugee camp

"I didn't go to school in Djakovica from where I came here. I'm going to the school at the camp now.

Once, about a year ago, me and my brothers went to the elementary school a few kilometres from the Konik II camp where I live. We went there to play with other kids in the school yard. When we got near the school, six boys closed in on me and asked 'What do you want here, you little Shiptar?' They said I was a mafioso. One of them punched me in the face. I turned round and ran all the way home. My parents were scared and said I wasn't to go near that school again. I went again a few months later and something like it happened again. They chased me but I got away. It wasn't the same boys. I never went to play near the school again."

MN, girl, 13 years old, in elementary school in Nikšić

"I moved to Nikšić with my parents and brother from Kosovska Mitrovica in 1998. I was excellent in school in Kosovska Mitrovica. It was summer when we came to Nikšić and my parents and I were deciding on which school I would go to. There are a lot of elementary schools here in Nikšić but we chose this one because the teachers are stricter.

My Mum is a seamstress and she finished elementary school, like my Dad too. Dad learned the bricklayer's trade from his father and works for a private business. We rent a small house not far from my school. It has two big rooms and a small bathroom. My best friend lives in a building on the other side of the street."

AN, boy, 15 years old, in grade two, Adult Education Centre in Nikšić

"I came from Peć three years ago. My Mum and Dad work hard. My big brother can't go to school because he works. He's helping some people to put up and paint a fence. I'm always arguing with boys who aren't Romani. We fight almost every day. I don't have sports shoes like theirs. I wear the same pair when it rains, when it's sunny and when I play soccer. They make fun of me and keep calling me a Gypsy. I like the teacher at the Romski Centar where we have supplementary classes, a lot. We play, sing and learn to count there, and I always get the best marks."

CB, boy, 14 years old, in grade three at the Adult Education Centre in Nikšić

"I used to live in Peć. When we came here three years ago, I thought I'd be going to a regular school. But I didn't have my report cards from my old school so I couldn't enrol in any elementary schools. I work in the city-mortuary chapel. Me and my kid brother went around begging this summer. I don't fight with other kids. I can feel that they don't like me so I don't play with them."

BU, eight years old, in grade one at the Olga Golović Elementary School in Nikšić

“I’m in the first grade and I sit at a desk at the back of the class. When we play marbles during the breaks, we fight about who’s going to be first. Sometimes I’m first and sometimes I’m last.

When I don’t have enough time to learn things at school, I go to the Romski Centar, where the teacher explains it to me. I tell her what I know and get the best marks.

We’re doing a play at the Romski Centar. I’m the lion and my lines are the longest of anyone’s.”

UH, young woman, 22 years old, InterSOS activist, brings Roma/Gypsy children in settlements near Nikšić to the Romski Centar

“I bring the first-graders from the settlements, children who come to regular and supplementary classes here. In the beginning I had to interpret because a lot of the children spoke only Albanian. I come to the Centar to learn to sew.

I’m sorry I never went to school. I couldn’t because I was the oldest child in my family and I had to clean house and cook. It’s too late now. It’s high time I was married. My folks are afraid I’m too old and will never get married. I don’t go to town. I’ve never been on the Nikšić promenade. My folks don’t like me to go out. Maybe they are scared. Boys make passes at me when I go down the street to the Romski Centar.”

DH, boy, 12 years old, in grade three at the Adult Education Centre in Nikšić

“I’m in the third grade at the Adult Education Centre. I used to go to the Olga Golović Elementary School but they threw me out because I made three mistakes. The first mistake was hitting a boy in my class because of a blonde girl I liked. The second was when I set off a loud firecracker in school. And then I got into a fight with a boy who cursed my Gypsy mother while the teacher was on her coffee break. I don’t know if I would go back to elementary school. I like maths and counting German marks. I have brothers older than me who don’t go to school because they work. When there’s counting to be done, especially money, they call me to add it up.”

MH, young man, 16 years old, does not go to school

“I don’t go to school because I work. Me and my father are helping to build a house. I carry stuff and help the builders with anything they need. Two years ago, I collected old bottles and newspapers. My parents work too. I’m learning to read and write at the Romski Centar and go there when I can. I’m the best at the Montenegrin kolo in the folk dance group.”

DjK, 13 years old, in grade three at the Adult Education Centre in Nikšić

“I want to be a singer when I grow up. I don’t keep company a lot with Serb kids, and spend more time with Romani kids. For my last birthday, I had a party at the Romski Centar. We sang and danced.

I don’t have any brothers or sisters. My Mum comes to the Romski Centar to learn sewing.



We don't see a lot of Dad because he goes to the villages around here to gather and cut wood. My mother comes to most of the PTA meetings at the Adult Education Centre."

GA, young man, 17 years old, student at the Secondary Mechanical Engineering School in Nikšić

"I finished the regular elementary school. I'm now in the third grade of the Secondary Mechanical Engineering School. I chose the auto-mechanics section because I'd like to fix cars one day. I don't have any problems in school. I don't think anyone minds that I'm Romani."

NB, girl, 11 years old, in grade four, elementary school in Nikšić

"I'm in the fourth grade of elementary school. I have two brothers and a sister. They go to school too. My sister is in the third and my brothers in the sixth grade of elementary school. I help them with their homework a lot of times because I'm a good student. No one

bothers us at school. Boys hang round me a lot and quarrel over me. We're all good friends in the class. One time I got into an argument with a girl and she said I was a Gypsy. Our teacher said that wasn't nice, that she should apologise and that we should be good friends."

Recommendations

Given that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has ratified and must apply in Montenegro:

- the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ratified 1971, entered into force 23 March 1976)
- the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ratified 1971, entered into force 3 January 1976)
- the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ratified 1967, entered into force 4 January 1969)

- the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified 1990, entered into force 3 July 1991)
- the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (ratified 1964)
- the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ratified 11 May 2001, entered into force 1 September 2001)

Save the Children recommends that:

The Parliament and Government of the Republic of Montenegro

- Enacts, in collaboration with representatives of national minorities in Montenegro, including representatives of the Romani community, a Law on National Minorities. The Law should specify which ethnic communities in Montenegro have the status of a minority and, hence, the rights enjoyed by minorities.
- Co-ordinates the activities of republican and local government bodies, schools and NGOs on joint projects to eliminate ethnic and religious intolerance. Special attention should be devoted to co-ordination with teachers and children, organising human-rights workshops in schools, bringing out appropriate publications and co-operation with the media in eliminating ethnic intolerance.

The Ministry of Education of Montenegro

- Proposes amendments to school programmes and curricula in order to expand in history, geography, sociology and other textbooks for elementary schools sections on the history and culture of Roma/Gypsies. This would be in keeping with Article 71 of the Montenegrin Constitution, which states that the

programmes of educational institutions shall include the history and culture of national and ethnic groups.

- Introduces educational records on children who declare themselves as Roma/Gypsies and are attending elementary and secondary schools in Montenegro. These records would be used to draw up separate programmes for children belonging to the Romani ethnic group.
- Opens extensions of Adult Education Centres near large Romani settlements to provide elementary education.
- Re-examines the justification of maintaining the two separate extension classes of the Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin Elementary School exclusively for Roma/Gypsy children at the Konik II refugee camp.
- Organises the training of qualified teachers to provide instruction in the Romani language in regular schools and informal education programmes.
- Organises preparatory classes in pre-school facilities for all Romani children in municipalities where Roma/Gypsies live.
- Organises supplementary classes for Roma/Gypsy children in elementary schools in order to facilitate their integration in the process of education.
- Examines the effects over the long term of the application of the punitive provisions of the Elementary School Act under which parents/legal guardians are bound to enrol their children in elementary school, and elementary schools are bound to notify the Ministry of Education of children who have not been enrolled or do not attend school regularly.⁵³

The international organisations, including the UN Commission on Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education and the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, and the European Union

- Closely monitor the international obligations undertaken by the government of the Republic of Montenegro in respect of the right to education with particular attention to the right to education of Roma/Gypsy children in Montenegro.

Montenegro: Notes on the text

1 The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia comprises two republics: Serbia and Montenegro. This report focuses on Montenegro, while the education of Roma children in Serbia is the subject of a separate report.

2 Jean-Pierre Liegéois and Nicolae Gheorghe, *Roma/Gypsies, A European Minority*, Minority Rights Group International, London, 1995.

3 Ethnic composition of Montenegrin population according to 1991 census, Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Montenegro*, Podgorica, 2000.

4 Office of the Montenegrin Commissioner for Displaced Persons, 2000.

5 The findings of Živorad Tasić, an activist of *Grupa Margo*, were published in *Republika*, Belgrade, 2000 and *Matica Crnogorska*, Podgorica, 2001. His paper *Romi u Crnoj Gori – status i perspektive* (Roma in Montenegro – Status and Prospects) was not published in its entirety.

6 This minority is from Kosovo and its members speak Albanian. They define themselves as “Egyptians” rather than Roma/Gypsies.

7 Momčilo Lutovac, *Romi u Crnoj Gori* (Roma in Montenegro), Društvo prijatelja knjige, Ivangrad, 1987.

8 Figures of the Office of the Montenegrin Commissioner for Displaced Persons, Podgorica, 2000.

9 Ethnic distance, a term used in social psychology, is a measure of the psychological distance between two different ethnic groups expressed in the readiness of the members of one group to accept or reject social relations with members of another group. Social relations are graded from the weakest, such as acquaintance and residing in the same building, to the strongest, such as marriage.

10 Dr Božidar Jakšić, *Life of Displaced Kosovo Roma in Montenegro (Podgorica and Nikšić) and Possibilities for Integration*, Belgrade-Podgorica, 2000, p. 38.

11 Tasić (see note 4).

12 Tasić (see note 4).

13 The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia comprises two republics: Serbia and Montenegro. This report focuses on Montenegro, while the education of Roma children in Serbia is the subject of a separate report.

14 Chapter 5, *Special Rights of Members of National and Ethnic Groups*, Montenegrin Constitution, *Službeni list RCG*, No. 48/92.

15 Art. 11, Yugoslav Constitution; Art. 67, Montenegrin Constitution.

16 Art. 45, Yugoslav Constitution; Articles 68 and 69, Montenegrin Constitution.

17 Compare Art. 47, Yugoslav Constitution and Art. 70, Montenegrin Constitution.

18 Art. 71, Montenegrin Constitution.

19 Compare Art. 49, Yugoslav Constitution and Art. 72, Montenegrin Constitution.

20 Art. 73, Montenegrin Constitution.

21 Art. 48, Yugoslav Constitution; Art. 74, Montenegrin Constitution.

22 Art. 75, Montenegrin Constitution.

23 Art. 76, Montenegrin Constitution.

24 Ethnic Albanians are the only minority community in Montenegro who in practice exercise most of the rights guaranteed to national minorities, eg, the rights to education and information media in their language, and the right to use their own language in proceedings before courts and other bodies.

25 Art. 6, Pre-school Education Act.

26 Art. 3 and 4, Elementary School Act.

27 Art. 5, Elementary School Act.

28 Art. 59, Elementary School Act.

29 Art. 131, Elementary School Act.

30 Art. 11, Elementary School Act.

31 Art. 12, Elementary School Act.

32 Art. 13, Elementary School Act.

33 Art. 24, Elementary School Act.

34 Art. 26 (5), Elementary School Act.

35 Art. 3, Secondary School Act.

36 Art. 14, Secondary School Act.

37 Art. 14, Secondary School Act.

38 Art. 4, University Act.

39 Art. 6, University Act.

40 Art. 52, University Act.

41 Art. 53, University Act.

42 Art. 9 (1), Montenegrin Constitution.

43 Tasić (see note 4).

44 Jakšić (see note 13).

45 Jakšić (see note 13).

46 Articles 2, 3, 6, 11 and 13, Act on Special Education.

47 Jakšić (see note 13), p. 19.

48 Jakšić (see note 13), p. 19.

49 Statement by Branka Kovačević, assistant programme officer with UNICEF, Podgorica.

50 Newspaper for refugees and displaced persons in Montenegro.

51 *Blic*, 20 October 2000.

52 *Vrela* (newspaper for refugees and displaced persons in Montenegro), July-December 2000 edition.

53 Art. 59, Elementary School Act.

9 Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Kosovo¹

During the 1990s, the majority-Albanian population, excluded from state schools, set up an underresourced parallel system. Many Roma/Gypsy children and young people were effectively denied schooling, creating a ten-year education gap for many and undermining a belief in the role of education for today's Roma/Gypsy children.

“Most of the parents are illiterate, have never been to school and often do not understand why it is important for their children to go to school and that it could be a way to grant them a better future.”

Manager of a programme to provide education to displaced Roma children

“The day when I started going to school again I was the happiest child in the world. After we were expelled from my village, Zatriq, after the war and came to the Colonia settlement in Gjakova I was feeling very bad. I knew that other children were going to school.”

Roma boy, 13 years old, in a catch-up class

Summary

Context

Kosovo was Socialist Yugoslavia's poorest, least developed and most alienated territory. A decade of repression of Kosovo's Albanian majority by the Serbian authorities culminated in war and NATO intervention in 1999. Kosovo's marginalised Roma/Gypsy population was caught in the middle of the Serb-Albanian conflict, and has faced a violent backlash from Albanians since the end of the war. The new authorities, UNMIK and KFOR, have been slow to recognise and address Roma/Gypsy security, livelihood and social-inclusion needs.

Roma/Gypsy population

Of Kosovo's 2 million population, between 100,000 and 150,000 are Roma/Gypsies. The aftermath of the conflict has added extra layers of danger and hardship to the discrimination, social exclusion and poverty they faced prior to the war. After the UN takeover in mid-1999, Albanians launched attacks on Roma/Gypsies, blaming them for siding with the Serbs. Up to 100,000 Roma/Gypsies fled to neighbouring republics. Many of those who remain face grave security problems – continuing revenge attacks or predation which take advantage of their social vulnerability. Restricted freedom of movement limits their access to services and employment. Many remaining communities are sustained only by humanitarian assistance

and the presence of KFOR. The conflict has sharpened three distinct Gypsy identities: Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. Roma lived all over Kosovo and tended to ally themselves with the Serbs. Ashkali and Egyptians, respectively inhabiting east and west Kosovo, only speak Albanian and do not claim any links with the Roma.

Roma/Gypsies and education

Few Roma/Gypsies complete primary school, with many dropping out at an early stage, or not attending at all. This means that very few enter secondary education, let alone higher education. Displacement and lack of physical security have constituted the overriding barriers to education access since summer 1999. Many Ashkali and Egyptian communities in particular suffered a ten-year gap in education provision in the 1990s – caught in the crevice between the official Serbian and parallel Albanian education systems. This has increased illiteracy rates and leaves very few qualified for non-menial jobs. This legacy, together with decades of discrimination against Roma/Gypsies in employment, has created a corrosive intergenerational cycle of low-education and employment ambitions and attainment. With many parents viewing education as a low priority luxury, family poverty impacts immediately upon children's school attendance. Children can be required to work to supplement family income or to help at home instead of going to school. Lack of

adequate clothes and shoes, especially in winter, and of money for exercise and textbooks, often prevents attendance or provides humiliations at the hands of teachers or peers, which prompt drop-out. Indifference on the part of teachers and bullying and name-calling by children from majority communities have made many schools into hostile environments for Roma/Gypsy children, particularly since the 1999 war.

Balance of NGO and government activity

Government policy to ensure access to employment and education for Roma/Gypsies has to date been more declarative than real. Only in spring 2001 did UNMIK conduct comprehensive surveys of Roma/Gypsy children's school attendance. Both UNMIK and NGOs are internationally funded. UNMIK governance is particularly inclusive of NGOs, eg, UNMIK's minorities school-bus project is deployed in support of NGO education projects. The current crop of NGO catch-up class projects, school integration, pre-school and socio-educative projects for Roma/Gypsy children provides pilot experience to UNMIK as it begins to formulate focused policy for Roma/Gypsy education. Although UNMIK itself has failed to provide employment opportunities for Roma/Gypsies, its institution of Local Community Officers, whose brief is to foster social inclusion of Roma/Gypsy communities, has potential.

Kosovo report contents

Introduction	206
The lead-up to war and international intervention	207
Roma/Gypsies and the Serb-Albanian conflict	208
The legacy of summer 1999	208
The Roma/Gypsy population	211
The socio-economic status of Roma/Gypsies in Kosovo	212
Access to property, amenities and services	213
Community leadership and representation	215
Obligations assumed by UNMIK	216
The general legal framework	216
The institutional framework	217
Minority rights	218
UNMIK policy and constraints	218
Minority rights stipulated in municipal regulations	219
Rights of minorities in the Constitutional Framework	220
Promotion of Roma/Gypsy rights	222
The right to education	224
Educational rights of minorities set out in UNMIK documents	224
Kosovo's education system – a legacy of conflict	225
Stages of education and Roma/Gypsy participation in them	232
Government practice	237
Holistic practice – creating conditions for education	237
Education policy	239
NGO practice in the area	245
Case studies	247
Voices of Roma/Gypsy children	258
Recommendations	263
Kosovo: notes on the text	265

Introduction

The legacy of Kosovo's recent conflict has important implications for the education and life chances of the children of its three Roma/Gypsy² communities – the Roma, the Ashkali and the Egyptians. For Kosovan Roma/Gypsies the conflict has added a further dimension of difficulty and danger to the interlocking web of discrimination, poverty and social exclusion which typically confronts Roma/Gypsy communities in Central and Eastern European countries. It has opened up a fault-line between the different Roma/Gypsy communities, with the Roma on one side of a divide, and the Ashkali and Egyptians on the other.

Kosovo's intercommunal conflict became manifest in the late 1980s and degenerated into war from February 1998. Due to its immense impact both on the position of Roma/Gypsy communities in Kosovan society and on education arrangements, many references will be made to it in this report. The structures of administration, rule of law and security provision which have operated in Kosovo under United Nations auspices since summer 1999 are very particular and still evolving. These are also described where necessary to provide a context within which developments can be understood.

Kosovo is currently governed by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) under the authority of UN Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999. The administration is backed by KFOR – a 45,000-strong NATO-led military security force, which was deployed in the province in

June 1999 in accordance with a military-technical agreement reached with Serbia as a result of the NATO bombing campaign. UNMIK's mandate is to build peace, democracy, stability and self-government in Kosovo on a multi-ethnic basis. It organised municipal elections in October 2000, and plans to hold a general election on 17 November 2001 in order to provide Kosovo with a measure of democratically mandated self-government.

Kosovo's future status is yet to be clarified. It presently remains a province of Serbia. The majority ethnic Albanian population clearly wants full independence, and at a practical level has severed all ties and connections with Serbia.

The lead-up to war and international intervention

Under Yugoslavia's 1974 Constitution, Kosovo was granted the status of an autonomous province of Serbia, with its own parliament and institutions, and rights broadly equivalent to those of a Yugoslav republic. It was the poorest, least developed area of Yugoslavia.

Albanians and Serbs form the two main ethnic communities in Kosovo. Their demographic position relative to each other has been the subject of dispute, propaganda, manipulation, resettlement schemes and episodes of mass expulsion. Other smaller ethnic groups in Kosovo such as Roma/Gypsies have faced difficult dilemmas of loyalty and sometimes "double marginalisation" (ie, from both sides) in trying to find a niche for themselves in a fractured society dominated by the Albanian-Serb divide.

Albanians have formed a growing majority of Kosovo's population throughout the post-World War II period of the existence of the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia and its subsequent disintegration. This is despite periodic government schemes and pressure to encourage Albanian emigration and Serbian and Montenegrin immigration. Although the Albanians boycotted the 1991 census after the Serbian authorities' mass sacking of 120,000-160,000 Albanian public-sector workers, including staff of the Kosovan statistics bureau, the estimate made by the Federal Statistical Office is not reportedly disputed by the leading Kosovar-Albanian demographer Dr Hivzi Islami.³ There were an estimated 1,596,440 Albanians (81.6 per cent), 194,190 Serbs and 20,365 Montenegrins (together nearly 11 per cent). Other smaller ethnic groups include Turks, Slavic Muslims (Bosniaks), Goranis and Roma/Gypsies. Kosovo's current total population is estimated at about 2.2 million.

In 1988-89, Kosovo's autonomous status was revoked by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. Serbian direct rule over Kosovo discriminated against the Albanian majority and Serbian security forces enforced their control by means of human-rights violations. During the 1990s, up to half a million of the Kosovan population, mainly young Albanian adults, migrated to Western Europe and North America to seek asylum.

After eight years of civil resistance, in which the Albanian population of Kosovo created and maintained parallel political and social structures, including an alternative education system, armed resistance to Serbian direct rule began in the form of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), a small

guerrilla organisation. Fighting broke out in Kosovo's central Drenica region in early 1998, and spread into other rural areas as the KLA quickly grew into a mass, yet loose, military organisation. Massacres of civilians by Serbian forces and a major internal displacement of population provoked international outrage. Under a threat of possible NATO bombing, in autumn 1998 Serbia agreed to the deployment in Kosovo of the unarmed OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission, which monitored a ceasefire, partial withdrawal of troops and human-rights compliance. Amid a renewed deterioration of the security situation in early 1999, the Contact Group of five major powers called the Kosovar-Albanian and Serbian sides to talks in Rambouillet, France, to reach a political settlement, which was to be guaranteed an international military force. The Kosovar-Albanian delegation eventually accepted the terms, which did not explicitly offer them their goal of independence; but the Serbian side refused them, instead stepping up its military forces and operations in Kosovo. The Kosovo Verification Mission was withdrawn and NATO launched its bombing campaign on 24 March 1999. Serbian forces began orchestrating mass expulsion of the ethnic Albanian population: 850,000 became refugees in Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro, and a further 500,000 were internally displaced. During the 78-day bombing campaign, an estimated 6,000 – 10,000 Kosovar-Albanian civilians were killed by Serb forces.

Roma/Gypsies and the Serb-Albanian conflict

Roma/Gypsies have long been regarded as second-class citizens by Serbs and Albanians alike. Opportunism and short-term alliances of convenience have governed the two main ethnic communities' relations and exchanges with Roma/Gypsies. With most Roma/Gypsies living in extreme poverty and enduring a day-to-day struggle for subsistence, they were not in a position to adopt and maintain a consistent long-term strategy with regard to the Albanian-Serb conflict, and proved vulnerable to manipulation. From 1989 onwards, Kosovan Roma tended to side with the Serbs, although in a dependent relationship. In some Roma communities, many joined Milosevic's Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS). Roma children attended Serbian schools, from which Albanians were excluded. During the war a significant number of Roma men were mobilised into Serbian paramilitary forces. After the Serbian withdrawal, Roma/Gypsy communities reaped the whirlwind for the Roma community leaders' strategic miscalculation.

The legacy of summer 1999

The ethnic Albanian refugees returned swiftly *en masse* in the days and weeks following the initial deployment of KFOR into Kosovo. Many of Kosovo's Serb population departed in the wake of the retreating Serb army. Others moved to areas in Kosovo that still had majority Serb populations. Since June 1999, UNHCR has registered 222,800 internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Kosovo in Serbia and Montenegro. The majority of these post-war IDPs are Serbs and Montenegrins, whose numbers inside Kosovo are estimated to have now shrunk to 100,000 or less. A significant

minority of these IDPs are Roma/Gypsies, whose numbers are harder to quantify. The net effect of outward migration and displacement during the 1990s and since the war has been to reduce the population actually residing inside Kosovo to 1.5 – 1.7 million.

While UNMIK was establishing itself during summer and autumn 1999, ethnic Albanians embarked on a wave of revenge attacks, targeting Serbs and other minorities perceived to have taken their side in the war. Roma were particularly targeted in these attacks, together with other Gypsy communities – the Ashkalija and Egyptians. Many Roma/Gypsies fled the territory, to Serbia, Montenegro and other countries.

The European Roma Rights Centre has described this massive wave of anti-Roma/Gypsy violence as: “the single biggest catastrophe to befall the Romani community since the Romani holocaust in World War II”.⁴ Roma and their property were the prime targets for the attacks of vengeful Kosovar Albanians. Ashkalija and, to a lesser extent, Egyptians were targeted too. Like the Roma, some Ashkalija were seen as having collaborated with the Serbian side in the war. The similar dark-skinned appearance of most Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptians marked them out for indiscriminate attacks.⁵ In the initial weeks of KFOR’s deployment, with attention focused on Kosovar Albanians, and with KFOR’s understanding of local situations refracted



through its mainly Kosovar-Albanian interpreters, there was little awareness of the existence, location and vulnerability of Roma/Gypsy communities. KFOR was therefore ill-prepared to counter the wave of violence that was visited upon them.

Some Roma neighbourhoods and communities were totally purged. The Roma neighbourhood in southern Mitrovica was razed to the ground. Of a pre-war population of several thousand, only three Roma families now remain in Prishtina. The majority of the remaining Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities are depleted, some to the point where a few more departures will render them unviable. Nonetheless, the situation across Kosovo is not uniform. The attacks and ongoing tensions have been harsher in central and eastern Kosovo, with several remaining Roma communities living virtually in siege conditions. Ashkalija also face restricted freedom of movement due to ongoing security concerns, and some communities continue to endure grenade attacks, arson and stone-throwing. The situation in western Kosovo has been somewhat calmer. For example, the large urban Roma and Egyptian populations respectively of Prizren and Gjakova faced a lower level of attacks, remain relatively stable and have local freedom of movement.

Roma/Gypsies have continued to be victimised by elements of the majority Kosovar-Albanian population, but to a lesser degree than in the latter half of 1999. The occurrence of some violent incidents in Serbian areas indicates that Kosovar Albanians are not the only perpetrators of attacks against Roma/Gypsy communities. Motivations

for ongoing attacks on Roma/Gypsies or their property vary. Revenge-motivated attacks occur in some locations where the majority Albanian community blames its Roma/Gypsy neighbours for involvement or complicity in atrocities committed against them by Serbian forces during the war. In other areas, the social vulnerability and outcast status of a Roma/Gypsy community makes it prey to opportunistic attacks and abuses. These are often linked to attempts to seize or execute a forced sale of assets, particularly real estate. Until a few months before the writing of this report, Ashkalija tended to believe that, as only Roma were identified locally as former Serb allies, Ashkalija would not be targeted. However, this was to misunderstand the motivation and the factors facilitating the attacks, which have now spread to affect Ashkalija too.

Attacks and abuses against Roma/Gypsies have continued, yet very few arrests or convictions have been secured. UNMIK police, now numbering roughly 4,200 throughout Kosovo, crucially lack an information-gathering network within the Kosovan civilian population. Working through translators drawn mainly from the majority Kosovar-Albanian population, accompanying mainly Kosovar-Albanian police officers of the nascent Kosovo Police Service, and faced with the internal solidarity of the Kosovar-Albanian majority society, it is difficult for UNMIK police to gain the trust of Roma/Gypsies. Many Roma/Gypsies feel intimidated about approaching the police, afraid that their complaints will be leaked through Kosovar-Albanian networks and provoke further abuses. Bias in favour of ethnic kin and against minorities

such as Serbs and Roma/Gypsies is also often alleged against prosecutors and judges drawn from the majority Albanian community.

An illustration of the primacy of social networks over institutions (and the latter's dysfunction) in the matter of security was given by a sports teacher, whose neighbourhood has recently begun to suffer from attacks. Some of his sports pupils are members of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), and he requested four of them to stay in the neighbourhood to deter night-time attacks. In other areas of Kosovo, members of the KPC have been implicated in beatings and abductions of Roma/Gypsies. His pupils agreed and their presence did indeed deter further attacks in the neighbourhood, something which KFOR patrols had been unable to do. However, they had to give up their vigil for fear of being arrested by KFOR, as such "policing" activities are outside the KPC's mandate. When they did so, the attacks resumed.

The Roma/Gypsy population

Before the Serb-Albanian conflict became manifest in 1988-89, Serbs and Albanians did not differentiate between the different Roma/Gypsy communities, referring to them all as *Tsigani* or *Maxhupët*. Among the Roma/Gypsies themselves, the three distinct group identities – Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptians – were also less developed than they are today. In census statistics they were all grouped together as Roma/Gypsies. Calculating the true number of Kosovo's Roma/Gypsy population has been difficult, as many have identified themselves in censuses as Albanians,

or as other ethnic groups such as Serbs. In the 1961 census their number was reported to be as low as 3,202. Yet in the 1981 census 34,126 (2.2 per cent of Kosovo's total population) were counted. The flawed 1991 census recorded 45,745 Roma/Gypsies (2.3 per cent of the total population). Estimates of the true number of all Roma/Gypsies living in Kosovo prior to 1999, including Ashkalija, Egyptians and Roma, ranged from 100,000 to 150,000.⁶ Up to 100,000 are believed to have fled Kosovo in the wake of the war, and 30,000 are estimated to remain in Kosovo at present, although these figures should be treated with caution.

It is also possible, to a limited degree, to estimate separate numbers for the three groups. Before the summer of 1999, Roma communities could be found across Kosovo. One estimate of their numbers was as high as 97,000.⁷ However the real figure is generally regarded as being considerably lower. Kosovan Roma identify themselves with the broader Roma community found in most European countries. Their first language is Romani and for most their second language is Serbo-Croat/Serbian, although some also speak Albanian.

Ashkali and Egyptians acknowledge themselves to be essentially one and the same people, yet each group disputes the legitimacy of the other's identity. Egyptians believe that Ashkali are really Egyptians, and vice versa. There is a geographic divide between them, with those in eastern and central Kosovo identifying themselves as Ashkalija and those in western Kosovo identifying themselves as Egyptians. Ashkalija and Egyptians

differ from the Roma in that they speak Albanian as their mother tongue and have traditionally been more integrated with the Albanian community. Many Ashkalija can also speak Serbo-Croat as a second language. Most Egyptians speak only Albanian. Neither group aspires to Romani identity, nor has any discernible interest in learning the Romani language. Ashkalija only really began vigorously to promote a separate identity for themselves after the war, to distinguish themselves from the Roma, with whom they have lived in mingled communities in several areas. Ashkalija found a need to distance themselves from Roma because the latter were perceived to have taken the side of the Serbs in the war (as had a minority of Ashkalija). The Egyptian community identity is more long-standing, and moves to achieve its recognition in Kosovo began over a decade ago.

Ashkalija and Egyptians found themselves grouped together with Albanians by Serbian policy measures from the late 1980s. Most had Albanian names and many (particularly Egyptians) could speak only Albanian, so that they had very little contact with Serbs. A number of intellectuals came together in 1990 to define their separateness from the Roma and to promote an identity distinct from them.⁸ A push by Egyptians for recognition in the early 1990s became a subject of Serbian political manoeuvring. The FRY authorities issued new ethnic classifications, which recognised Egyptians as a distinct ethnic group in the FRY for the first time (although Egyptian communities already existed in Albania and elsewhere). Egyptians themselves celebrated it as a liberating move – the *de jure* recognition of a *de facto* community.⁹ However, it was seen by

Albanians as part of a Serbian government strategy to build up other ethnic groups in Kosovo as a counterweight to themselves.¹⁰ This debate reached its sharpest definition at the Rambouillet talks in January 1999, where the Serbian/FRY-government delegation demonstratively included representatives of different Kosovan ethnic groups “loyal” to the regime, which included both a Roma and an Egyptian representative. In the post-war period, many Egyptians have voiced a concern that their inclusion in this delegation compromised the image and legitimacy of their community.

The socio-economic status of Roma/Gypsies in Kosovo

Unemployment in Roma/Gypsy communities is extremely high, and near universal in some communities. Roma have more of a trading tradition than Ashkalija and Egyptians, who tend to rely on selling their physical labour. Limited freedom of movement and the hostility of the majority population have severely restricted Roma trading opportunities. Children often work to supplement the family income. In some communities, such as the Egyptian neighbourhood of Colonia in Gjakova, they join in such marginal livelihood activities as scavenging for scrap metal, salvaging objects on rubbish dumps or looking for discarded food. Porterage in markets and odd labouring jobs are characteristic tasks that Roma/Gypsy teenage boys are engaged in.

In urban settings the biggest employer of Roma/Gypsies is usually the municipal garbage collection and cleaning company. In the mainly Ashkali village of Dubrava outside Ferizaj/

Urosevac, which has no particular security problems, only one in ten of the 156 families has an employed breadwinner. In more beleaguered communities the employment situation is even more desperate. An illustration of the failure of UNMIK to provide employment to Roma/Gypsies is that two Ferizaj/Urosevac Roma teachers were not re-hired after the war, despite there being 15 Roma children who used to go to the town's Serbian school. The children have remained at home with no schooling for two years.

While extremely high Roma/Gypsy unemployment occurs against a background of high unemployment among all Kosovo's communities, including the majority Albanians, there is a perceived failure on the part of UNMIK structures and international organisations to ensure employment opportunities for Roma/Gypsies. When the international security forces and civil administration were recruiting their establishment of local staff, people from Roma/Gypsy communities were too afraid for their safety or too uninformed to put themselves forward for these opportunities. As a result, there is negligible Roma/Gypsy representation in the interim administration at all levels, except in the municipal cleaning and rubbish-disposal companies. International contractors carrying out projects for UNMIK or KFOR also appear to employ very few or no Roma/Gypsies. According to a local Ashkali representative, of the hundreds of jobs created near Ferizaj/Urosevac in the construction and running of Camp Bondsteel for the United States army, not one has gone to an Ashkali or Roma. One international NGO reports that it received threats from local Serbs for having

hired Roma/Gypsy camp residents as guards and cleaners for one of its projects rather than Serbs living nearby.¹¹

With generally low attainment in education, particularly in the wake of what was for many Ashkali and Egyptian communities a ten year education gap in the 1990s, relatively few Roma/Gypsies are able to take advantage of the few employment opportunities that do arise. But discrimination against Roma/Gypsies in employment predates both the UNMIK period and the decade of Serbian direct rule that preceded it. Older Roma/Gypsies who attended school in the 1970s and 1980s recall that even those who completed secondary education and received vocational qualifications found it difficult to get jobs for which they were qualified, with other candidates almost always being preferred to Roma/Gypsies. One interviewee born in 1965 recounted that to secure jobs, some Roma/Gypsies would offer the director of an organisation or enterprise their first six months' wages in return for being hired – only to be dismissed after six months. Decades of discrimination in employment have had a demoralising effect, resulting in a culture of very limited employment ambitions, which affects parents' attitudes towards the value of education for their children.

Access to property, amenities and services

Of the minority of Roma/Gypsies who have managed to remain in their own homes, a significant number continue to face threats to their security that effectively "imprison" them within their own micro-communities, unable to access public services and amenities, including

shops. In autumn 1999, researcher Paul Polansky found more than 30 Roma families in Prishtina who had reportedly not left their homes in several months for fear of being kidnapped or killed. Most of their houses had a walled-in patio where they kept goats and chickens. For months on end they survived on goats' milk and eggs alone.¹² In some areas shops are reported to have refused to serve Roma/Gypsies. Denial of access to amenities and services, harassment and threats continue to cause more displacement.

The social vulnerability of Roma/Gypsies or their physical absence, during a period when Kosovo's property system has effectively collapsed into a free-for-all, threatens to leave many permanently deprived of their property. Occupation of property belonging to Roma is widespread. Even more threatening is the growing phenomenon of Kosovar Albanians clearing land of the remains of burned and abandoned Roma homes to make way for new house building. The removal of all physical trace of what was there before and its replacement with a new building will make it extremely difficult for Roma/Gypsies to reclaim their property in the future.

Lacking a tradition of literacy, and alienated from authority and officialdom during the periods of Albanian and Serbian domination alike, Roma/Gypsies are the least likely of all the ethnic communities to have acquired or retained documentary proof of ownership of their homes. Their adverse security situation and inexperience in dealing with bureaucracy leave them badly placed to lobby for the restitution of their rights. Many Roma/Gypsy settlements were in any case built on the periphery of towns, outside the

planning and zoning regulations of their time, and therefore lack any official documentation. As a result, many Roma/Gypsy neighbourhoods lack essential amenities such as water supply, sewerage systems and properly surfaced roads. Their exclusion from town plans inhibited the development of electricity supply, telephone links and postal coverage. Repair and maintenance of essential infrastructure has allegedly been given a lower priority by new municipal authorities in Roma/Gypsy neighbourhoods than in neighbourhoods housing members of the majority community. Some Roma/Gypsy communities also claim that they have been disproportionately subject to water, electricity and telephone disconnections.

As external funding for emergency assistance winds down, budgets for social and humanitarian assistance have become increasingly restricted. More means-testing and targeting of benefits to elderly and disabled beneficiaries threatens to sideline the "category II" clients of the UNMIK Department for Health and Social Welfare – the able-bodied unemployed. This will disproportionately impact upon Roma/Gypsy communities, whose inability to gain employment, due to discrimination, and a lack of security, freedom of movement and qualifications, makes many families almost wholly reliant on government and NGO assistance.

As institutions and assistance programmes have evolved in the two years since the war, discrimination against Roma/Gypsies and other minorities has become institutionalised in mechanisms for allocating assistance. For example, the task of identifying beneficiary



villages and families in the official reconstruction-assistance programme was taken over in 2000 by municipal housing commissions. These have minimal minority participation, and this has led to allegations of discrimination and unfair distribution of resources. Under the official guidelines five to ten per cent of the funds were to be made available to minority communities, yet by the end of 2000 the actual figure stood at two per cent. A combination of failure to provide security and adequate reconstruction assistance continues to inhibit returns of Roma/Gypsy families and communities.

Community leadership and representation

Factors limiting or hindering Roma/Gypsies' political participation and representation include restricted freedom of movement, low literacy levels and inexperience in dealing with officialdom. These lead to lost votes through failure to be registered and the inadvertent

spoiling of ballot papers. The Ashkali Albanian Democratic Party of Kosovo had a candidate directly elected in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje in the October 2000 municipal elections, and subsequently had additional candidates co-opted onto municipal assemblies. While the party has given Ashkali communities a political voice, there have been complaints that in some locations it has attempted to assume a monopoly role as a conduit for aid distributions to Ashkalija. A political party representing Egyptians contested the elections in Gjakova, and in April 2001 a community leader in the Plementina IDP camp, formed another Ashkali party. Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptians have not sought a unified political voice. At a Kosovo-wide level, the latter two communities have distanced themselves from Roma and argued about which of the two should have the one place reserved by UNMIK to represent both Ashkali and Egyptians on the Kosovo Transitional Council. At a local level, Ashkalija and Roma

communities have initiated contacts with each other in Ferizaj/Urosevac in recognition of the fact that they face common problems.

The social isolation, low levels of education and patriarchal tradition of Roma/Gypsy communities do not lend themselves easily to high-quality community leadership. At a political level, UNMIK's guarantee of representation to the ethnic minority communities in municipal and Kosovo-wide assemblies and government, without, for instance, further stipulating guaranteed levels of women's representation, risks entrenching a patriarchal and isolationist leadership culture.

However, several Roma/Gypsy community leaders are breaking the mould in positive ways. A small number of NGOs such as the Ashkali NGO Democratic Hope in Podjeve/Podujevo and Democratic Hope of Dubrava are making notable efforts to improve the image of their communities and integrate them with the surrounding majority population. Some Roma/Gypsy community activists have made excellent contributions to education. A few have frustrated and blocked sound education initiatives, and some – intentionally or otherwise – have done both.

The establishment of Roma/Gypsy NGOs offers an opportunity to create frameworks for community action, plurality and multi-polarity of leadership, and the building of leadership capacity. The OSCE has encouraged and assisted the establishment of several Roma/Gypsy NGOs. It reports that several Roma NGOs currently exist, or are in the process of registration, in

Prizren, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Kamenica, Rahovec/Orahovac (a women's NGO), Gracanica, Strpce and Mitrovica. Several Ashkali local-community NGOs also exist, such as the two mentioned above and organisations in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. There are also Egyptian associations in western Kosovo. Despite the opportunities, in some locations a plurality of NGOs has not been matched by a pluralistic outlook, and they have instead been employed as vehicles by rival leaders vying for, or defending against the prospect of, monopoly influence. This has particularly been the case in the post-war urban or IDP communities. Leadership of Roma/Gypsy communities in villages tends to be more stable and of a longer vintage.

Obligations assumed by UNMIK

The general legal framework

The UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)¹³ of 10 June 1999 established the framework for the removal of FRY and Serbian police, military and paramilitary formations from Kosovo, and the deployment in their place of an effective international civil and security presence. This was tasked with the demilitarization of the KLA and the establishment of a secure environment. The Resolution authorised the UN Secretary General to create an interim administration to establish and oversee the building of provisional democratic self-governing institutions through which Kosovo could enjoy substantial autonomy within the FRY, pending a final political settlement of Kosovo's status.

The duties envisaged for the interim administration (UNMIK) included:

- supporting the reconstruction of key infrastructure and other economic reconstruction
- supporting, in co-ordination with international humanitarian organisations, humanitarian and disaster relief aid
- maintaining civil law and order, including establishing local police forces, and in the immediate term deploying international police personnel to serve in Kosovo
- protecting and promoting human rights
- assuring the safe and unimpeded return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes in Kosovo.

Although detached from the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Kosovo is unable to develop a full Constitution of its own.¹⁴ The applicable law in Kosovo is decided by decrees (UNMIK Regulations) handed down by the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) in Kosovo, currently Hans Haekkerup. UNMIK Regulations remain in force until repealed by UNMIK or superseded by laws and regulations subsequently issued by future institutions established under a political settlement of Kosovo's status.

Kosovo's present body of law is a patchwork of decrees derived from the authority of Security Council Resolution 1244 combined with elements of domestic law resurrected from Kosovo's pre-1990 autonomy era. An early UNMIK Regulation stipulated that the laws applicable in Kosovo prior to 24 March 1999 would continue to apply in so far as they did not conflict with the

fulfilment of UNMIK's mandate or any UNMIK Regulation. However, this attempt by UNMIK to apply laws passed by Serbia and FRY during the period of Milosevic's direct rule over Kosovo in the 1990s met with such resistance that the SRSG issued new UNMIK Regulations (1999/24 and 25) on 12 December 1999. These changed the applicable law to that which had been in force in Kosovo on 22 March 1989, except where superseded by UNMIK Regulations.

Kosovo's constitutional status is unlikely to be decided for some time to come. The bridging mechanism is the Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government in Kosovo, decreed on 15 May 2001 by Hans Haekkerup.¹⁵

The institutional framework

The UN administration in Kosovo has been constructed with four "Pillars" of government, under overall UN leadership. The post-conflict emergency humanitarian operation was entrusted to UNHCR as Pillar 1, and was phased out in June 2000. The UN took direct responsibility for civil administration, forming Pillar 2. Pillar 3, democratisation and institution-building, has been entrusted to the OSCE, building on the experience of its earlier Kosovo Verification Mission. The European Union is managing Pillar 4: reconstruction and economic development. In practice, these structures (especially Pillars 2 and 4) took several months to establish, during which the administration gap at local level was filled by KLA-controlled bodies.¹⁶ A new replacement Pillar 1 – Police and Justice – was devolved from Pillar 2 on 18 May 2001 "to provide greater focus, centrality and co-ordination" to UNMIK's efforts in that sphere.¹⁷

The military deployment implemented by NATO divided Kosovo into five Areas of Responsibility (AORs), each containing several of Kosovo's 30 municipalities.¹⁸ The five AORs have since served as supra-municipal units for the structuring of civilian policing and civil administration functions. Administration at central, AOR and municipality levels is guided by international staff, who work alongside Kosovan counterparts. Since the October 2000 municipal elections, Kosovan co-heads at municipal level comprise a mix of appointed and elected officials. At central level, the national co-heads have been appointed under a temporary power-sharing arrangement agreed by UNMIK in January 2000 with the main Kosovar Albanian political parties and the on/off involvement of Kosovan Serb representatives. As part of this, the Albanian parties agreed to dissolve their rival self-declared "governments" and assemblies. After the scheduled November 2001 general election, all of the national co-heads will be elected officials.

International judges, prosecutors and police were brought in by UNMIK while Kosovan counterparts were selected and trained to work alongside them, with the ultimate aim of handing over justice and law enforcement to Kosovans. UNMIK also maintains a several-thousand-strong Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), mainly consisting of ex-KLA fighters. Its role is an ongoing source of contention. It sees itself as the nucleus of a future Kosovan army, but UNMIK insists that it must confine itself to civil-defence duties. There are reports of the KPC assuming policing roles for which it has no official mandate. Human-rights abuses committed by uniformed KPC personnel, including beatings and

abductions of Roma/Gypsies, have also been reported.¹⁹

Minority rights

UNMIK policy and constraints

UNMIK Regulation 1999/1 of 25 July 1999 "On the authority of the interim administration in Kosovo"²⁰ stipulated that:

"All persons undertaking public duties or holding public office in Kosovo shall observe internationally recognised human-rights standards and shall not discriminate against any person on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, association with a national community, property, birth or other status."

UNMIK is engaged in a difficult balancing act of building democratic institutions accountable to the majority, while trying also to guarantee the rights of minorities in a territory where a "zero sum" perception of ethnic politics has become ingrained. The Albanian and Serb communities remain highly polarised. Their mutual animosity also influences relations between majority Albanians and other minorities, and in many locations members of minority communities are often denied their basic human rights. At a day-to-day level UNMIK and KFOR operate a stopgap policy of containment, with KFOR maintaining a permanent security presence or mounting frequent patrols in threatened communities. To aid the provision of security to minority communities UNMIK found it

necessary to issue a number of regulations. These include:

- “On the prohibition against inciting to national, racial, religious or ethnic hatred, discord or intolerance” (2000/4 of 1 February 2000), stipulating fines and/or prison sentences of up to five, eight or ten years for violators, and
- “On the exclusion of persons for a limited duration to secure public peace, safety and order” (2000/62 of 30 November 2000), giving the authorities power to serve orders of temporary exclusion from a specified area on persons they suspect of preparing acts of violence.

Chapter 3, Paragraph 4 of the Constitutional Framework of May 2001 reiterates and codifies an ongoing UNMIK commitment to the over 200,000 members of Kosovo’s minority communities who have fled from Kosovo or been displaced within its borders. It states:

“All refugees and displaced persons from Kosovo shall have the right to return to their homes, and to recover their property and personal possessions. The competent institutions and organs in Kosovo shall take all measures necessary to facilitate the safe return of refugees and displaced persons to Kosovo, and shall co-operate fully with all efforts by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other international and non-governmental organisations concerning the return of refugees and displaced persons.”

UNMIK attempts to square the circle of respecting the will of the majority and

guaranteeing rights to the minorities in a number of ways. These include, for example, co-opting minority-community representatives, closely supervising elected officials and retaining certain areas of responsibility within UNMIK’s central departments, which are dominated by international staff.

A mechanism which UNMIK attempts to use is the allocation of posts to members of each of Kosovo’s ethnic communities, whether in the administration, courts, police or KPC, in proportion to their share of Kosovo’s total population. In practice, it has proved difficult to recruit Serbs and other minorities such as Roma/Gypsies to serve on bodies that are dominated by Kosovar Albanians.

Minority rights stipulated in municipal regulations

UNMIK Regulation 2000/45 “On Self-Government of Municipalities in Kosovo” (which preceded the Constitutional Framework by a year) “takes into account” some European regional standards on the rights of minorities: the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Council of Europe’s Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. Section 9 of the Regulation stipulates that:

“Members of communities shall have the right to communicate in their own language with municipal bodies and all municipal civil servants.”

This guarantees, in theory, that all municipal assembly meetings and all official documents are translated into both Albanian and Serbian.

In municipalities where the community's language is neither Albanian nor Serbian, translations are to be made into the language of that community.

Section 47 of Regulation 2000/45 authorises the SRSG to set aside any municipality decision which: “does not take sufficiently into account the rights and interests of the communities which are not in the majority in the territory of the municipality”. This power acts as a back-stop to arrangements made by the Communities Committee and the Mediation Committee.²¹ The SRSG is also given the power to augment the results of municipal elections by co-opting “additional members to the Municipal Assembly if he considers it necessary to do so in order to ensure representation of all communities pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolution 1244”. Only one Roma/Gypsy candidate in Kosovo was elected to a municipal assembly in the October 2000 elections (in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje), and the SRSG has been using this power extensively to co-opt representatives of minority communities to municipal assemblies. In the 27 municipalities where the election results were certified as of 1 March 2001, there were a total of 869 elected representatives and 123 appointees. The latter included ten Ashkali, four Egyptians and nine Roma.²² While this achieves representation for vulnerable Roma/Gypsy communities in an adverse social climate, its short-circuiting of the democratic process also imposes a cost – there is no mechanism for ensuring that co-opted representatives have the genuine support of their communities. As a result, they may be regarded as less legitimate than their elected counterparts (there is anecdotal evidence of Roma/Gypsy

members being sidelined). The practice may also cement ethnic boundaries and divisions, inhibiting the development of an inclusive politics that cuts across ethnic boundaries.

Rights of minorities in the Constitutional Framework

The structure of the Constitutional Framework guarantees representation for minority communities in the assembly and government of Kosovo (due to be elected in November 2001), building on structures already piloted at municipal level. Of 120 seats in the assembly, 20 are to be reserved for parties, coalitions, citizens' initiatives and independent candidates representing non-Albanian Kosovo communities. Their share of the seats will then be calculated in proportion to the number of valid votes received in the election to the assembly. Four of these seats are to be allocated to the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.²³ There are also quotas for inclusion of Serb minority and non-Serb minority members in the presidency of the assembly and in the government.²⁴ Sections 9.1.39-42 of the Framework set out an obligatory mediation procedure in the event of any assembly member objecting to the adoption of a law on the grounds that its provisions:

- discriminate against his community²⁵
- adversely affect rights guaranteed to it under the Framework
- seriously interfere with the ability of the community to preserve, protect or express its ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic identity.

Additionally, a Committee on Rights and Interests of Communities, composed of two members from each of Kosovo's communities elected to



the assembly, may at its own initiative propose laws or other measures to address the concerns of communities, and makes recommendations on any proposed law referred to it by a member of the presidency of the assembly.²⁶

Chapter 4 of the Framework – “Rights of Communities and Their Members” – tabulates a list of rights pertaining to communities for the purpose of preserving, protecting and expressing their ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identities. It further mandates the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government both to create appropriate conditions for these rights and to implement them. The list includes the rights to:

- use their language and alphabets freely, including before the courts, agencies, and other public bodies in Kosovo
- enjoy access to information in their own language
- enjoy equal opportunity with respect to employment in public bodies at all levels and with respect to access to public services at all levels
- enjoy unhindered contacts among themselves and with members of their respective communities within and outside of Kosovo
- use and display community symbols, subject to the law
- establish associations to promote the interests of their community
- enjoy unhindered contacts with, and participate in, local, regional and international non-governmental organisations in accordance with the procedures of such organisations
- provide information in the language and alphabet of their community, including by establishing and maintaining their own media
- promote respect for community traditions
- preserve sites of religious, historical or cultural importance to the community, in co-operation with relevant public authorities
- receive and provide public health and social services, on a non-discriminatory basis, in accordance with applicable standards
- operate religious institutions
- be guaranteed access to, and representation in, public broadcast media, as well as programming in relevant languages, and

- finance their activities by collecting voluntary contributions from their members or from organisations outside Kosovo, or by receiving such funding as may be provided by the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government or by local public authorities, so long as such financing is conducted in a fully transparent manner.

Promotion of Roma/Gypsy rights

One difficulty with the guarantees of minority rights contained in the Constitutional Framework and UNMIK Regulations is that they are decrees handed down over the last two years by international administrators. That is, they are not positions that have evolved and accumulated over time through processes led by the democratically expressed will of Kosovo's population. UNMIK is making various efforts to fill this gap, for example, by promoting the integration and acceptance of Roma/Gypsy communities, and observing their rights at ground level, both through institutional innovation and endorsement of a framework agreement between Kosovar Albanian and Roma/Gypsy leaders.

On 30 June 2000, UNMIK established the institution of the Ombudsperson (UNMIK Regulation 2000/38) to receive and act upon complaints of human-rights violations or actions constituting abuse of authority. The Constitutional Framework states that:

“The Ombudsperson shall give particular priority to allegations of especially severe or systematic violations, allegations founded on discrimination, including discrimination against Communities and their members,

and allegations of violations of rights of Communities and their members.”²⁷

Since 2000, the UNMIK Department of Local Administration has been appointing international Local Community Officers (LCOs) in municipalities where there are significant minority communities. There are currently 28 LCOs. Their primary purpose is to facilitate an improvement of security and freedom of movement for minority communities and to aid the creation of conditions for fulfilment of the right to return. In order that they can achieve this, LCOs enjoy a unique status in the UNMIK structure in that they have the right to liaise with and co-ordinate action with all agencies, including KFOR, at all levels of authority. Their specific delegated tasks include assisting the establishment of the Municipal Assembly Communities Committees and Mediation Committees stipulated by UNMIK Regulation 2000/45, and the establishment of minority Community Offices.²⁸ The intended function of the Community Offices, which seven municipalities had established by 7 March 2001, is to enhance the protection of community rights and ensure equal access for minority communities to municipal services such as health care and education.²⁹

The *Platform for Joint Action Regarding Kosovar Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian Communities* resulted from a declaration agreed by Kosovar Albanian leaders with the leaders of Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian communities following a Humanitarian Roundtable organised by UNHCR in Prishtina on 12 April 2000. It was subsequently endorsed at a special joint session of the Kosovo Transition Council and the Interim Administrative Council

on 28 April 2000, during the visit of representatives of the UN Security Council to Kosovo. The Platform document set objectives to be met in co-operation between Kosovan leaders from all communities and UNMIK, which has also assumed specific obligations set out in the Platform document.³⁰ The community leaders signed up to the goal of: “bring[ing] an end to discrimination, harassment and persecution of members of the Kosovar Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian communities”, with the longer-term objective to “achieve the emancipation of these communities, and to ensure that they fully participate as free and equal members in Kosovo society”.

In the preamble to the Platform document, responsibility for implementation of its provisions is placed upon the leadership of Kosovar Albanians and on the leaders of Kosovan Roma/Gypsy communities, with UNMIK, international organisations and the international community as a whole to provide institutional assistance and support as necessary. The document also places several direct obligations upon UNMIK. The duties of the Kosovar Albanian leaders are to:

- disseminate the agreement and urge support for it
- publicly condemn all acts of violence and harassment
- publicly reject the notion of collective guilt for individual crimes
- make visits to Roma/Gypsy communities to demonstrate support for them and obtain better understanding of their situation
- use influence to promote, and participate in, positive media portrayal of Roma/Gypsies.

Roma/Gypsy leaders are also to work in close consultation with UNHCR towards achieving the return to their homes of displaced and refugee Roma/Gypsies. This includes promptly deciding on their participation in the Kosovo Transition Council, and presenting proposals to UNMIK and the OSCE for establishment of radio and print media devoted to their respective communities.

Provisions under the rubric of “Promoting the rule of law” stipulate shared responsibility for ending impunity:

- “The leaders of [the Kosovar Albanian and Roma/Gypsy] communities will call for their constituents to co-operate fully with legal and judicial processes so that all crimes can be prosecuted and punished according to the rule of law.
- The Department of Justice will see to it that individuals who have committed major crimes during and after the conflict of 1999 are prosecuted and punished according to law.”

The Platform document obliges UNMIK departments to take specific steps to guarantee to Roma/Gypsies their access to assistance and rights, for example:

- “The Department of Social Welfare and the Centres for Social Work will ensure that members of the Kosovar Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian communities are not discriminated against in the allocation of social welfare, food assistance and other humanitarian aid. The Department and the Centres will take a proactive approach to ensuring that the welfare needs of these communities are met.
- The Department of Reconstruction and the Municipal Housing Committees will

ensure that returnees will have access to reconstruction assistance in accordance with existing criteria and procedures, and on a non-discriminatory basis.

- The Departments of Public Services and Local Administration will actively promote the recruitment of members of the Kosovar Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian communities into public functions in accordance with existing criteria.
- The OSCE and the Department of Civil Society and Democratic Governance will take active steps to encourage, develop and support the creation of civil society institutions among the Kosovar Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian communities.”

UNMIK is obliged to report both on Roma/ Gypsy representation in local government and on progress in implementation of all the relevant action points. There are also specific provisions on access to education, which are covered in the following section.

The right to education

Educational rights of minorities set out in UNMIK documents

Chapter 4 of the Constitutional Framework, which lists the rights of communities, includes two provisions guaranteeing specific rights on education. Communities and their members shall have the right to:

- receive education in their own language, and
- provide for education and establish educational institutions, in particular for schooling in their own language and alphabet and in community

culture and history, for which financial assistance may be provided, including from public funds in accordance with applicable law; provided that curricula respect the applicable law and reflect a spirit of tolerance among communities and respect for human rights and the cultural traditions of all communities.

The *Platform for Joint Action Regarding Kosovar Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian Communities* elaborates the following UNMIK obligations with regard to access to education:

- “The Department of Education, in co-operation with the local administrations, will develop a special programme to ensure that all Kosovar Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian children have access to education, particularly at the primary level. This programme will include efforts to promote Kosovar Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian enrolment in secondary and tertiary institutions and to enhance the communities’ awareness of the benefits of formal education.
- The Department of Education, local administrations and UNMIK will promote the introduction of optional non-Albanian language classes in the regular curriculum, and financially support educational institutions that provide instruction in non-Albanian languages.
- In primary and secondary schools throughout Kosovo, civic education classes will be designed to strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to promote understanding and tolerance of all ethnic and religious groups. Lessons will be introduced on the history, culture and traditions of all ethnic communities.”

Kosovo's education system – a legacy of conflict

The history of education in Kosovo in recent decades, particularly the 1990s, is unique to the region. The following summary, charting developments over the last 30 years, aims to provide a context to the challenges facing Roma/Gypsy children and a “lost generation” of Roma/Gypsy young adults today in their educational and life chances.

The period of autonomy, late 1960s – 1989

With Kosovo's acquisition of autonomous status in the late 1960s, formalised by the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution, the province's Albanian majority embarked on a course of cultural emancipation, after several decades of repression. The University of Prishtina was opened in 1970 and educational provision in Albanian was expanded at all levels. Serbian children continued to receive education in their own language, and study of the Albanian language was introduced as a compulsory subject. Albanian children studied Serbo-Croat as a second language. By the late 1970s about 95 per cent of children in Kosovo received elementary education. Illiteracy was reduced from 94 per cent before 1950 to 30 per cent by the 1970s. However, there were gender disparities: in 1981, 26 per cent of women and 9 per cent of men in Kosovo were illiterate.³¹ Subordination of women and high birth rates are features of both Kosovan Albanian and Kosovan Roma/Gypsy communities, particularly in rural locations. According to one Albanian scholar:³²

“Women [in rural Kosovo] are kept secluded at home when they do not work in the fields, get minimal education, and are totally subordinate to male authority ... A community denying half

of its members access to a full education can never be a civilised community.”

Ashkalija and Egyptians also benefited from the expansion of Albanian-language education. Literacy and formal education had not traditionally been given particular importance in many Roma/Gypsy communities, because parents often saw these attributes as irrelevant to Roma/Gypsy livelihood strategies – which were mainly small-trading and labouring. Nevertheless, there was a significant take-up of education by all three Roma/Gypsy communities during this period, though regular school attendance was lower among Roma/Gypsies than among Albanians. Fines were levied against parents who failed to send their children to school. Mefail Mustafa, an Ashkali education activist, commented that in the period before 1990 it was virtually impossible to find any Ashkali without primary education, barring a few girls in rural areas, although some girls would be taken out of primary school a year or two before completion, at the age of 12 or 13. It was during this period that additional classes in Romanes were introduced for Roma children in at least one town where there was a large Roma community (Gjilan/Gnjilane).

Conflict and the parallel systems, 1989–1999

From 1989 to 1992, the Serbian authorities introduced an escalating series of measures intended to reverse the gains in Albanian-language provision of the autonomy years. In September 1989, ethnic segregation of Serbian and Albanian pupils was introduced into schools in the form of physical partitions, separate floors or different shifts, with facilities allocated to the advantage of the relatively small number of Serbian pupils and

teachers. In 1990, all of Kosovo's education legislation of the autonomy era was repealed by the Serbian parliament and a uniform curriculum in the Serbian language was imposed. Albanian teachers attempted to work on as before, rejecting the new curriculum. In 1991, the Serbian authorities ceased paying them and announced a plan to close many secondary schools, leaving places only for 28 per cent of the Albanian pupils finishing primary school. In September 1991, Serbian armed police enforced the exclusion of Albanian pupils from all Kosovo's schools. Protests met with police beatings and detentions. In 1992, Albanian teachers and pupils were able to re-enter most primary school buildings, albeit without pay, heating or any other provision, but many high school buildings were confiscated, their inventories removed, and Albanian books destroyed. Albanians' access to libraries and museums was also curtailed. The University of Prishtina, which acted as the intellectual engine of the Kosovar-Albanian cultural renaissance and new national self-awareness in the 1970s and 1980s, received a Serbian rector in 1991, who regarded it as "a factory of evil" and set about purging its entire Albanian staff.³³

In 1992, high-school classes began to be reconvened by Albanian teachers in residual buildings and private homes. In February 1992, the sacked Albanian staff of Prishtina University reopened a version of it spread across 250 private buildings throughout the city. In 1996, an Italian religious order brokered an agreement with the FRY/Serbian authorities for the return of some university buildings to the Kosovar Albanians. Albanian students staged large demonstrations in

1997 to demand its implementation, but they were violently dispersed by Serbian police and security forces. The agreement was not implemented until spring 1998, after international pressure. Overcrowding and lack of chairs, desks, textbooks and winter heating dogged the emerging Kosovar-Albanian parallel education system. Teachers initially taught for no pay, expecting this to be a short-lived situation. For the first two to three years there was considerable police harassment – seizures of school documents, beatings and detentions of teachers. From 1993, the new shadow state structures of "the Republic of Kosova", established by the Kosovar Albanians as a competing reality to the Serbian takeover, began to pay token wages to the 18,000 teachers, reaching about DM150 per month in 1997. The money was collected as a voluntary tax, paid by virtually all Kosovar Albanian families and businesses and supplemented by funds from Kosovar Albanian exiles. Nevertheless, wages often went unpaid for many months, and maintaining morale and motivation was difficult for teachers and pupils alike. Pupil drop-out rates rose. By 1997, about 25 per cent were failing to finish primary school. Girls, especially in rural areas, were the most likely to drop out or not to progress to high school.

As state education provision now excluded about 90 per cent of the province's children, Serb pupils and teachers worked in conditions of extreme over-capacity, while their Albanian counterparts struggled nearby with overcrowded unheated facilities. Howard Clark, in his book on the Kosovar Albanian civil resistance, cites a village school where eight Serb pupils had at their

disposal nine classrooms, a gym, a science laboratory and two offices. Serb and Albanian children no longer learned each other's language at school and had virtually no social contact.

This drastic ethnic polarisation of education presented the smaller ethnic minorities with difficult choices. In many cases, the Ashkalija and Egyptians were effectively left with no options at all. Turks tended to opt for the Albanian parallel system, while Serbo-Croat-speaking Slavic Moslems (Bosniaks) of linguistic necessity had to opt for Serbian schools. The situation with the three Roma/Gypsy communities was fragmented. Choosing to ally themselves with the now dominant nationality, most Roma opted for the Serbian system.³⁴ Linguistic incompatibility meant that Ashkalija and Egyptians could not do so, but neither were they always able to access the Albanian parallel system. As Albanians struggled to maintain the system, completely reliant on the reserves and resources of their kin and clan networks, Ashkalija and Egyptians "outsiders" were not always welcomed. In Ferizaj/Urosevac it is reported that Ashkalija children who looked white enough could go to the Albanian schools, while the darker-complexioned children had to stay at home. In Gjakova the situation was reportedly easier, with a number of Egyptian children attending Albanian primary schools. In Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Ashkalija and Roma lived in a mixed community. The latter's close relationship with the Serbian authorities reportedly made it awkward for Ashkalija to be seen using the town's Albanian parallel primary school. Some went there initially, but soon dropped out. Thus, for many Roma/Gypsies in

Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, as was the case all over Kosovo, the years of the parallel systems entailed a lost decade, offering no accessible education at all.

War, disruption and subsequent re-establishment of education

By autumn 1998, a sustained offensive by Serbian security forces against the Kosovo Liberation Army caused damage and dislocation across rural Kosovo, driving about half a million people from their homes. In places like Gjakova and Peja/Pec, there was a large influx of children from the devastated surrounding villages into urban Albanian parallel schools. From the beginning of the NATO bombing in March 1999, education in Kosovo effectively ceased as most Kosovans were driven from their homes by Serbian forces. The 850,000-plus refugees and IDPs who poured into Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro included a very high proportion of school-age children. Catch-up classes were organised for refugee and IDP children with the support of UNICEF and other international agencies. UNICEF estimates that 85 per cent of children of primary-school age in camps and host communities attended school outside Kosovo.³⁵ Many Roma/Gypsies who fled to Macedonia registered as Albanians, so it is difficult to gauge what proportion of these children attended school.

By early August 1999, 90 per cent of Kosovar Albanian refugees had returned to the territory. Initial assessment of Kosovo's stock of 1,000 school buildings showed that nearly 40 per cent were destroyed or severely damaged, nearly 25 per cent moderately damaged, and virtually all

needed new furniture and equipment. Many children and indeed teachers were traumatised by their war experiences. The embryonic UN administration (UNMIK) was able to call upon the experienced personnel of the Kosovar-Albanian parallel education network to open catch-up classes in hundreds of schools from summer 1999, some temporarily housed in tents. UNICEF loosely co-ordinated the array of international NGOs and KFOR units which carried out school-repair projects over the following 18 months. Mine and UXO (unexploded ordnance)-awareness classes were introduced into the curriculum by specialist international NGOs, although 130-170 casualties, many of them children, occurred in the first month alone (June-July 1999).

The admirable efforts quickly to reinstate education by and for the returning ethnic Albanian majority were nevertheless occurring while Roma/Gypsies were being terrorised. Many fled Kosovo, while others sought refuge in temporary camps inside Kosovo or hid in their homes. A very low proportion of Roma/Gypsy children dared to attend the re-opening schools at this time, and therefore, the majority missed not only education, but also mine and UXO-awareness classes, vaccination programmes and other health care that was being delivered through schools at that time. In late October 1999, most of Kosovo's 1,000 schools opened, slightly late, for the start of a new school year. UNMIK took responsibility for the payment of 28,000 teachers and education staff. In Serb-dominated areas,



teachers were encouraged by the FRY/Serbian authorities not to get involved with UNMIK. They continued to work to their contracts with the Serbian Ministry of Education, receiving their wages from Belgrade.

The inherited education system and proposed reforms

In their essential structures and practices, both the education systems bequeathed to the new Kosovo in summer 1999 – the Albanian parallel system and the Serbian “official” system – were unreformed from the period of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The system as a whole had been isolated from new trends and advances in pedagogy, methodology and education management.³⁶ Ethnic nationalism, conservatism and, especially in the case of the Albanian parallel system, degradation of buildings, equipment, teaching staff and skills all signified the extent of the regression from the position that had been achieved by the 1980s. Financing of the Albanian parallel system is estimated to have run at only 10-20 per cent of pre-1989 levels.³⁷ By 1997, 20 per cent of the teachers working in the Albanian parallel system were unqualified.³⁸ Even before 1989, pedagogy had a lowly status as an academic discipline, and it was felt that thorough knowledge of a subject was sufficient qualification for teaching it.³⁹ As a result, teaching by rote remains the norm and there is little in the way of child-centred or interactive teaching methods, and coherent learning evaluation.⁴⁰

The legacy of the parallel system is a subject of ongoing debate. Does it provide a solid foundation for a new education system or is it essentially a barrier to progress, requiring

demolition before a modern system, catering to a multi-ethnic Kosovo, can be built in its place? Howard Clark concludes that the parallel system existed “more to strengthen national consciousness than to open minds”.⁴¹ While it provided UNMIK with a viable means of getting the majority of Kosovo’s school-age population back into education after the war, that parallel system’s ethnic particularity also complicated UNMIK’s task of educating the children of Kosovo’s non-Albanian minorities. The curriculum of the Albanian parallel system continues to be used by UNMIK, pending reform. Likewise, UNMIK has had existing textbooks reprinted, pending the development of new ones.

In a discussion paper circulated in January 2001, Michael Daxner, the international co-head of the UNMIK Department of Education and Science (DES), sketches out a vision for educational reform in Kosovo. He envisages that a depoliticised education system will play a key role in nurturing a durable civil society. An overhaul of teacher training is central to the projected reforms. The culture of education should change from a normative and teacher-oriented system to provision of a child-centred learning environment. The focus of education will shift from the building of a particular national identity towards the development of individual personality, to allow young Kosovans to be accepted as well-educated and qualified mature Europeans. The particular importance of this is that the new education system will be partly geared to preparing many graduates for temporary labour migration to Western Europe and North America. Education performance and assessment standards, therefore, are being modelled with the

European labour market in mind. European standards and expectations are intended also to provide a context within which pressure can be brought to bear for the introduction of integrated multi-ethnic education in Kosovo.

The DES was created under UNMIK Regulation 2000/11 of 3 March 2000. It succeeded the earlier Inter-agency Co-ordination Group on Education, chaired by UNICEF. The functions of the DES are to formulate education policy and strategy, with specialist tasks contracted out to “lead agencies” and day-to-day management of schools devolved to municipalities. One of the DES’s responsibilities, defined by the Regulation, is:

“the promotion of a single, unified, non-discriminatory and inclusive education system so that each person’s right to education is respected and quality learning opportunities are available to all, irrespective of their ethnic or social origin, race or gender, disability, religion, political or other opinion”.

The Regulation also requires the DES to “implement non-discriminatory personnel policies designed to ensure that the composition of the staff of the Department reflects the multi-ethnic character of Kosovo”. On behalf of the DES, the Council of Europe is drafting a new law on general and vocational education and school organisation for Kosovo, scheduled for the end of 2001, and a new law to regulate the University of Prishtina. In the meantime, the DES continues to function within the legal framework of the period of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo, such as the 1979 Law on Primary Education (28/79). The 1979 law guarantees education in the pupil’s mother tongue, yet lists

only Albanian, Serbo-Croat and Turkish as applicable languages, with no mention of Romanes (Articles 12 & 13).

The DES has had to issue a myriad of departmental regulations and instructions to address issues and problems as they arise. It plans to have these temporary regulations assembled into an organised volume by July 2001.⁴²

Specialist reform tasks have been delegated to different international agencies. It is envisaged that their functions will evolve into autonomous state agencies during Kosovo’s transition process. The designated lead agencies and their tasks are:

- UNICEF, which is working on curriculum development, early childhood education and psycho-social projects
- the Canadian International Development Agency, which has contracted consultants to develop teacher training
- GTZ, which is taking responsibility for overhauling vocational education, and
- NORAD, which is dealing with education for children with disabilities.

At the time of writing, all of these agencies are still in the early stages of planning their work. The participation of the UNICEF curriculum-development consultant in a meeting with Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian education activists in April 2001 is an encouraging sign.

The relationship between the DES, education officers in the five AOR regions and the 30 municipal authorities is still evolving. Michael Daxner envisages that the future organisation of education will be a quadrangle of: pupil – teacher – municipal environment – local

community.⁴³ UNMIK Regulation 45/2000 “On Self-Government of Municipalities in Kosovo” sets the framework for local officials elected in the October 2000 municipal elections to assume responsibility for education. However, this presents the DES with a problem as:

“It is the policy of UNMIK that no political party or assembly shall have any direct influence on education in Kosovo”.⁴⁴

The DES’s solution has been to limit the responsibilities of the elected directors of the Municipal Education Directorates to the “hardware” of education – maintenance of school buildings and of the learning environment. The DES has in parallel appointed two education administrators in each municipality, who report direct to the DES and are responsible for the “software” of education, ie, management, personnel, curricula, textbooks and teaching methods. In some municipalities, this has resulted in a situation whereby the losing candidates in the October 2000 municipal elections have been appointed by the DES as education administrators, and now hold more effective power than their elected former rivals.

Prior to the Albanian parallel education system, a decentralised system of management of education had been introduced with the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution, which retained locally generated revenue at the municipal level for funding education.⁴⁵ Currently, education and other functions of government continue to be financed in the main by international contributions to the UNMIK budget – contributions that will inevitably diminish. Teachers’ salaries are now pegged only a little

above the level set by the Albanian parallel system, at DM265 per month for primary-school teachers, DM285 for secondary-school teachers, and DM325 for university teachers, far short of their relative pre-1989 rates.⁴⁶ This inevitably affects morale. In one municipality, at least 40 per cent of teachers are estimated to supplement their income with a second job.⁴⁷

The World Bank advocates reforming education funding to institute the allocation of block grants to municipalities on the basis of pupil numbers rather than on the current basis of teachers and buildings. The Bank is already piloting this approach in the framework of its Kosovo Education and Health Finance Project. This could bring about improved provision for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, which were bypassed or given insufficient consideration in pre-UNMIK education planning. It poses a challenge, however, in that estimation and registration of the Roma/Gypsy population is unreliable. Rigidly applied, it may ultimately disadvantage isolated and minority communities, requiring additional teaching inputs, such as classes in Romanes. Although failing to specify compensatory mechanisms to address the particular needs of Roma/Gypsy communities, the Bank accepts that: “The formula can be modified over time to target public resources on disadvantaged groups or areas which are not performing up to established standards.”⁴⁸ For his part, Michael Daxner states that:⁴⁹

“We are strongly committed to a policy of equity in schooling for all Kosovar children and to bridging the gap in educational opportunities between minorities and

majority ethnic groups... (some minorities will be given additional aid, input and resources to encourage their children to return to school so that they can attain the same academic levels of their grade peers).”

Stages of education and Roma/Gypsy participation in them

Community and family poverty and social disadvantage have both immediate and long-term impacts on the participation of Roma/Gypsy children in education. Discrimination and hostility faced by Roma/Gypsy children inside schools from children of other communities or from teachers can also take its toll.

Parents’ inability to clothe their children presentably is frequently cited as a reason for children missing school. A lack of suitable winter clothing and boots increases drop-out rates in cold or wet weather. Roma/Gypsy parents sensibly reason that keeping children at home in bad weather if they do not have warm clothes and shoes reduces the risk of illness. Often, a lack of family funds to buy textbooks and exercise books limits Roma/Gypsy children’s participation in the classroom, and makes them stand out among their peers, causing teachers to become frustrated with them. Families’ immediate income or care needs often claim priority over their children’s education – school attendance is regularly disrupted by withdrawals to care for younger brothers or sisters or to earn some vital extra family income.

Social exclusion, discrimination, chronic patterns of marginal employment and unemployment have instituted a cycle of low educational motivation and attainment from one generation to the next in

many Roma/Gypsy families. Having had few benefits from education themselves, many parents see it as an irrelevant luxury with a high “opportunity cost” that they can ill afford for their children. A corrosive culture of low ambition has been reinforced in many locations by the ten-year education gap of the 1990s. As a result, many Roma/Gypsy communities and families have not embraced educational opportunity even in places where the most obvious external impediments to their children’s participation have been removed. The situation in Podjeve/Podujevo offers an interesting example. The Ashkali community there is well integrated with the Kosovar Albanian population and has few security problems. The local economy holds some of the best prospects in Kosovo for Roma/Gypsies to find employment. Nevertheless, out of a total Ashkali population of 900, from which one could expect up to 300 to be of school age (although community leaders have said that there are 150 such children), only ten children are in regular school attendance.⁵⁰

A tendency of many Roma/Gypsy parents not to view school as a priority for their children is often met by an equally indifferent attitude to Roma/Gypsy pupils on the part of Kosovar Albanian or Serb teachers. There are numerous accounts of teachers placing Roma/Gypsy children at the back of the class. Given the possible security and inter-ethnic problems that could result, many Kosovar Albanian and Serb teachers are reluctant to take responsibility for dealing with the needs of Roma/Gypsy children. Teachers become impatient with children’s irregular attendance, their poor state of preparedness for education in comparison with

other children and their lower standards of personal presentation and hygiene. As a result, they often deal out humiliations that eventually make school a barely tolerable experience for Roma/Gypsy children. The very small number of teachers drawn from Roma/Gypsy communities, and the current lack of training for the majority of Kosovo's teachers to sensitize them to the needs of Roma/Gypsy children, means that, for the time being, there is little to counter a prevailing culture among teachers that dismisses and discriminates against Roma/Gypsy children.

The attitude towards Roma/Gypsy children of Kosovar Albanian peers has been corroded by the war. Children have emulated the heightened hostility of adults towards Roma/Gypsies in the post-war period. Some of the Roma/Gypsy children interviewed for this report had stopped attending school after being attacked on their journey to school by Kosovar Albanian children, or subjected to name-calling in school. There are also reports of bullying of Roma/Gypsy children by their Serbian peers. In summer 2000, there was a dramatic drop in school attendance of Roma children from the IDP camp in northern Mitrovica (from 75 to 10). This was attributed to bullying by Serb children.⁵¹

The war and its aftermath cut Roma/Gypsy IDP communities off from education facilities. Yet, at least within Kosovo, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNMIK and NGO implementing partners gradually instituted or supported schooling arrangements for each of the IDP camps. For several remaining Roma communities however, the war has changed the social and institutional landscape around them to such an extent that their children are totally

isolated from educational opportunity – for example, Roma teenagers in Ferizaj/Urosevac do not speak the language used in any local school.

Preschool education

Preschool education for three to six year olds is neither compulsory nor free in Kosovo, and provision is sparse. Only a very small number of Roma/Gypsy children are recorded as participating in preschool education. A handful of NGO projects are now providing preschool education opportunities for Roma/Gypsy children in a few selected communities: *Solidarites'* project in Gjakova's Colonia neighbourhood; kindergartens run by *Enfants du Monde* in the IDP camps of Leposavic and Plementina; International Rescue Committee's kindergarten projects in *Rufci i Ri*'s Migjeni School in Lipjan/Lipljan municipality, and in Gjilan/Gnjilane.

Just over two per cent of the pre-school child population attend preschool. The Kosovo Education Centre recorded that only 4,821 children attended preschool in 1999-2000, including kindergartens and primary-school preparatory classes (for six year olds).⁵² According to the Kosovo Education Centre, there are Serbian-language preschool institutions in Serb-dominated municipalities, as well as three additional preschools in municipalities with an ethnic Albanian majority.

Primary education

Although primary education is compulsory and free for all children, textbooks and exercise books are not. These need to be purchased by parents (although donations and aid projects have assisted some families to do this in some areas over

the last two years). Poverty, in some cases accompanied by a parental reluctance to devote scarce family resources to non-essentials, means that many Roma/Gypsy children lack the most basic equipment to participate in classes. This is both a practical barrier and a powerful disincentive for children who would prefer not to have their families' poverty exposed on a daily basis.⁵³ Registration of children at a primary school can generally be done only at the beginning of a new school year, and requires presentation of the child's birth certificate and domicile registration. In many cases this acts as a barrier to Roma/Gypsy parents. UNMIK Regulation 2000/51 stipulates that parental failure to enrol a child in a school is punishable by a DM300 fine. But it does not specify penalties for failure to ensure the child's attendance in practice. In addition, there have been cases of teachers citing irregular attendance or failure to have the necessary books as reasons for excluding Roma/Gypsy children from school.⁵⁴ Reliable figures do not yet exist on the proportion of Roma/Gypsy children who complete primary school and thereby qualify for secondary education, but it is a small minority. Many of the Roma/Gypsy children interviewed for this report had completed just one or two years of primary school before dropping out.

Previously, under the 1979 law, primary schooling lasted eight years, from the ages of 7 to 15 years. UNMIK Regulation 2000/51 "On the Age of Compulsory School Attendance in Kosovo", issued on 30 August 2000, extended the period of primary education to nine years, now from the ages of 6 to 15 years. Primary education takes place in two cycles. In some rural areas there is a

central primary school teaching both cycles, with satellite feeder schools in surrounding villages teaching only the lower cycle. In the lower cycle, which takes in the first four grades, children are taught mainly by one teacher. For lower-cycle primary school teachers, the qualifications required are either a higher school degree in teaching or a university degree in education. The upper cycle (grades five to eight) is sometimes referred to as "subject teaching", and is taught by different specialist teachers, who are required to have a higher school or university degree in the relevant subject.⁵⁵ On successful completion of all grades, primary school pupils receive a certificate, which is essential for their access to further education and to many types of employment. Of a total of 534 recognised primary schools in Kosovo, 456 are Albanian language only, 57 Serbian language only, 7 Bosniak only, and 14 mixed consisting of Albanian, Bosniak and Turkish.⁵⁶

Secondary education

Secondary education is not compulsory, but is free and lasts for four years, from age 15 to 19 years. As such a small minority of Roma/Gypsy children complete primary education, the number of Roma/Gypsy high-school and vocational-school students is small. This pool is further undermined by the demands and constraints of poverty, and by a culture of low expectations, in that many Roma/Gypsy adults have little or no evidence of the supposed benefits to be derived from secondary education. Interviews with Roma/Gypsy teenagers conducted for this report, together with enthusiastic take-up of vocational training projects provided by NGOs, demonstrate that many would like to train for a

profession. However, lack of literacy and/or a primary-education completion certificate prevents them from accessing the secondary vocational-education system.

Secondary-school teachers are expected to hold a university degree in the subject that they teach. As with primary education, secondary education is managed at municipal level. Children who progress to this level choose between attending a high school or a vocational school, where they learn a particular trade or profession. There are general high schools, usually in areas of dispersed population. More common are two-branch high schools, which are usually in urban areas. These offer alternative streams in social sciences and

linguistics or science and mathematics. There are also philological and pedagogical high schools. Currently, 52 per cent of high school pupils study science and mathematics, 30 per cent social sciences and linguistics, 9 per cent “general”, 7 per cent pedagogy and 2 per cent philology.⁵⁷ During the years of the parallel education systems in the 1990s, a majority of secondary-school pupils opted for high schools. One reason for this was that vocational-school buildings and their specialist equipment were denied to the majority Albanians by the FRY/Serbian authorities, as were the state-sector jobs that the vocational schools prepared students for. As a result, many vocational schools fell into disuse. Large numbers of young Albanians migrated to Western Europe



after finishing their secondary education to escape inevitable unemployment and/or conscription into the FRY/Serbian army, and to earn vital remittance income for their families. High-school education was more useful for this than a narrow vocational education. There is a reversal of this trend in the new Kosovo. In 1999-2000, 60 per cent of secondary school pupils opted for vocational schools, and just 40 per cent for general high schools. The World Bank estimates that 70 per cent of secondary students are now enrolled in vocational schools or programmes.⁵⁸

The vocational schools offer 16 different fields of study, with between five and seven different career paths available within each of them. Currently, the most popular fields of study in the vocational schools are health and social welfare (26 per cent of vocational students), electrical engineering (20 per cent), economics, law and administration (19 per cent) and machinery and metal processing (17 per cent).⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the inherited vocational school system is a long way from meeting Kosovo's current and future labour-market needs – where broad-based skills, flexibility and continuous learning are required. The World Bank has argued that there should not be a rush to re-establish and re-equip the secondary-education system along its traditional lines, but that a thorough reform agenda should be shaped.⁶⁰

Higher education and teacher training

There are only a handful of Ashkali and Egyptian students at the University of Prishtina. Aside from the fact that virtually all Roma/Gypsy families would be unable to afford to support a child to study away from home, Prishtina does

not provide a comfortable or particularly secure study environment for Roma/Gypsies. In the initial months after the war, Prishtina was very dangerous for them and all but a few families from the city's Roma population fled at that time. The situation has calmed since then and some Ashkali are occasionally seen on the streets, but security remains a concern for any Roma/Gypsy in Prishtina. Six higher schools in other Kosovan towns, and one in Prishtina, come under the umbrella of the university. Four of the higher schools – in Prishtina, Prizren, Gjilan and Gjakova – are pedagogical. Many high-school graduates from outside Prishtina who have no means to support themselves away from home turn to the pedagogical higher schools for a chance of higher education. Prizren and Gjakova, respectively, still have quite large and relatively secure Roma and Egyptian communities, so the higher schools in those two towns offer a possibility of higher education and teacher training to those young Roma/Gypsy adults who have completed high school there.

The University of Prishtina is centrally funded. Although UNMIK intends it to be multi-ethnic, in practice it currently serves the majority ethnic Albanian community, a reversal of the situation that prevailed until June 1999, when the university facilities were the preserve of the Serbian community and denied to the Albanians. The university has 14 faculties, including the Teachers' Faculty. University professors and lecturers are arguably worse off now that they receive their salary from the UNMIK budget rather than from students' contributions, as was the case during the parallel system.

Adult education

The primary-education system in theory provides education to illiterate adults aged over 15.⁶¹ Institutions of adult education – “night schools” – existed in the former Yugoslavia, but have disappeared over the last decade.⁶² Given the high proportion of illiterate adults in Roma/Gypsy communities, there are many who could benefit from adult-literacy programmes if these were organised in accessible locations at accessible times and were affordable. This would improve employment prospects and, in turn, improve the educational chances of children or younger siblings.

Although no permanent adult education institutions have yet been established, some project and programme initiatives do provide opportunities for adult-literacy training to Roma/Gypsy communities in a few areas. The Forum for Democratisation (FID), a Gjakova NGO, hopes to gain funding for a literacy and catch-up class project for Roma/Gypsy adults. In addition, a large-scale literacy project for women and girls recently started, funded by UNICEF, co-ordinated by the Kosovo Foundation for Open Society and implemented by the Kosovo Education Centre and an umbrella of 21 local women’s NGOs. Its aim is to educate illiterate adults throughout Kosovo. In its first phase it will focus on illiterate women and girls in rural areas. Three of the implementing women’s NGOs are Roma/Ashkalija groups, working with Roma/ Ashkalija women.⁶³

The World Bank advocates the development of adult training in business management, technical and engineering skills needed to ensure the effective operation of public-sector resources and utilities. It envisages the development of a network of public, private and NGO/non-profit training providers, funded partly by government funds and partly by cost recovery from clients.⁶⁴ However, currently the World Bank’s vision does not appear to include adult-literacy education, nor does the Department of Education and Science give any signs of prioritising the creation of sustained institutions of adult learning.

Government practice

While it is still too early to speak with confidence about good government practice in relation to Roma/Gypsy education, there are signs of positive practices that could be augmented and scaled up.

Holistic practice – creating conditions for education

A multifaceted approach fostering social inclusion is required to identify and eliminate the multiple constraints on Roma/Gypsy access to education both at a local and at a Kosovo-wide level. The most fundamental task is to secure the viability of Roma/Gypsy communities in the new Kosovo – their physical security and opportunities to earn a living. Communities that cannot secure these essentials will inevitably follow the tens of thousands of Roma/Gypsies who have already left Kosovo.

At local level

UNMIK Local Community Officers (LCOs), whose function has been described earlier, could provide a linchpin for a comprehensive social-inclusion approach. Their ability to collaborate with all agencies at all levels should allow them to identify impediments to community well-being in general and to educational access in particular. They could also bring to bear the necessary combination of institutional authority, expertise and resources to resolve them. The potential for LCOs to develop a presence in Roma/Gypsy communities should enable them to identify specific measures to address local problems. In some areas, it is still necessary for KFOR to provide escorts for Roma/Gypsy children making the journey to and from school. The presence of security checkpoints or escorts can reinforce isolation and stigmatisation in the long term, but their premature removal can expose children to unacceptable risks. LCOs will be well placed to give advice regarding the timely reduction of security measures as the level of threat to the community reduces.

The local community office arrangements made by the Ferizaj/Urosevac LCO since December 2000 are notable for the level of direct access and interaction they provide to the municipality's Ashkali and Roma communities. Importantly, they employ Ashkali and Roma as staff. From his arrival in October 2000, the LCO has built upon existing community capacity, developing premises that were already being used by Ashkali as community meeting points into "advice centres", where people can get information or raise concerns about access to social services, welfare

assistance, health care and education. More ambitiously, it is also hoped that the local community offices will provide an organisational focus for community development projects. The LCO has engaged six local staff to work in the central local community office and its three satellites – four Ashkali, one Roma, and one Bosniak/Gorani. They are paid local salary rates, with the intention that the positions should be sustained and ultimately paid for by the municipal budget.

Being able to generate a reasonable and regular income will remove a key impediment to Roma/Gypsy families' ability to ensure their children's full participation in education. The Ferizaj/Urosevac LCO is also working with Ashkali community representatives on a two- to four-year development plan that includes specific income-generation schemes for the community.

At Kosovo-wide level

Detailed, regular monitoring and reporting of the human-rights situation of ethnic minority communities, including Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, has been instituted jointly by UNHCR and the OSCE, collated through the Ad Hoc Task Force on Minorities. Beginning with a preliminary assessment published in July 1999, the Task Force has been issuing reports at two- to five-month intervals. These *Joint Assessments of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo* provide a valuable information and reference resource for policy-makers, NGOs or any interested observer – chronicling attacks on minorities and analysing patterns of discrimination and human-rights abuses. Each report now devotes attention and

analysis to particular sectors in which the different ethnic minority communities face barriers in realising their rights. The *6th Joint Assessment*, covering October 2000 to February 2001, devoted particular attention to the issues of security and return, access to health services, employment, and political structures, and property rights. A particular emphasis on education is planned for the *Joint Assessment* due to be issued in about July 2001.

From late 2000, an encouraging development in several UNMIK departments has been the establishment of specialist Minority Officer positions, which will result in more attention, policy focus and sustained programming for minorities across a range of sectors. In December 2000, the Department of Health and Social Welfare appointed an international Officer for Minorities. This officer has initiated the survey of vaccination coverage of Roma/Gypsy children which is being implemented through the LCOs. Thus two new posts, created respectively at local and Kosovo-wide level, have started working together. The Department of Education and Science has followed suit with a dedicated officer.

As security and sustainability of Roma/Gypsy communities can only be guaranteed in the long term by their acceptance by the majority population, UNMIK has been implementing a range of activities at different levels to promote inter-ethnic dialogue and agreement. UNHCR's organisation of humanitarian roundtables, with the participation of the political leaders of the Kosovar-Albanian community and Roma,

Ashkalija and Egyptian community leaders, resulted firstly in an agreed declaration of principles and then the UNMIK-endorsed *Platform for Joint Action Regarding Kosovar Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian Communities*. The latter document led to the organisation of two technical consultation meetings, in September 2000 and January 2001, to review its implementation. This had been followed by a process of breaking down consultation on the Platform document into its constituent parts, such as Access to Education, Access to Social Welfare and Humanitarian Assistance. Fulfilling an obligation entered into under the Platform document, the leaders of the main Kosovar Albanian political parties made a series of high-profile visits to Roma/Gypsy communities, meeting communities in Prizren and Ferizaj/Urosevac in June 2000, and in Peja/Pec in September 2000. Kosovo-wide intercommunity dialogue was augmented by the participation of municipal assembly members from a wide diversity of ethnic communities, including Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptians, in the Airlie House II conference in the USA in February-March 2001, which provided training to mayors and municipal officials.⁶⁵

Education policy

UNMIK has been slow in implementing the education-access obligations it assumed in the Platform document in April 2000. Until early 2001, a scattering of NGO projects substituted for a coherent UNMIK strategy in this regard. For clear political reasons, policy-making and provision for the Serbian community has taken precedence over consideration of the other smaller, non-Serbian minority communities.

Roma/Gypsy communities' lack of a strong international political lobby and their marginalisation at local level have rendered them particularly prone to invisibility as far as policy-makers are concerned. A position articulated by the DES is that minority-community problems cannot be solved without resolving the problems of the majority community first. At one level this is practical and correct, but it is also an approach which places Roma/Gypsies firmly in their usual position at the back of the queue. Nevertheless, at the time of writing (May 2001), there does appear to be a new UNMIK focus on the issue of Roma/Gypsy access to education. Dedicated personnel, surveys, consultations and policy-drafting have been instituted. It is hoped that the experience gained over the previous year by the various NGO projects run in loose co-ordination with the DES will now be mobilised and scaled up, resulting in an informed and holistic approach to the issue.

The scope for more NGO minority education projects may be increasing. As overall aid funds for Kosovo fall, the share being allocated for development of minority communities in this post-emergency phase is rising as a proportion of the whole. More NGOs are therefore likely to be attracted to working in this area. It is therefore important that the DES grasps this opportunity for co-ordination, for dissemination and replication of approaches found to have been successful, and for learning from those which were not successful.

Focused Department of Education personnel and policy

In February 2001, the DES appointed an international staff member to the newly created post of Minorities Officer, providing for the first time a consistent point of contact for minority education issues. This officer has responsibility for developing a comprehensive Policy Development and Action Plan for non-Serb Minorities. At the time of writing the Action Plan is still at a draft stage.⁶⁶ It is intended to address not only all major issues pertaining to non-Serb minority children and students, but also the ethnic composition of the educational teaching and administrative staff at all levels, and of the DES staff. The intention is to integrate the Action Plan with all the reforms in education which are being planned: the new education law; the vocational education system, teacher training and curriculum development. The latter three reforms are being developed outside the DES by lead agencies. In relation to these three reforms, the DES role will be to outline the policy framework and political intentions and to provide co-ordination.

A range of possible projects has been suggested for implementation within the framework of the Action Plan. Replication is proposed of projects which have already been implemented in one or two locations, such as:

- catch-up courses for students who have been out of school for a significant period of time or who have never attended school, such as the Emin Duraku school pilot project in Gjakova, and
- integration programmes, where appropriate, such as the work of the International Rescue

Committee (IRC) on integrating Ashkali children into the Salman Reza School in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.

A wider range of possible proactive measures is suggested, all still at a hypothetical stage:

- “assistant teachers” in selected schools to assist with language problems and students who have fallen behind the regular curriculum
- non-formal adult education including literacy and numeracy
- equivalency courses and certification for adults who would like to have a secondary diploma
- special programmes for minorities entering vocational schools
- programmes to promote attendance in school in general, and in secondary school and university in particular, including public-awareness programmes aimed at parents
- programmes for minorities with disabilities
- scholarships for university, including teacher training.

Education surveys of Roma/Gypsy communities

In spring 2001, the Department of Education and Science began the process of undertaking a Kosovo-wide survey of the numbers of non-Serb minority children both attending and not attending school. Prior to this survey, no comprehensive reliable data were available to UNMIK to enable it to begin formulating policies and programmes for the education of Roma/Gypsy children. The DES survey is designed to provide “a baseline from which priorities, policy and plans can be developed”.⁶⁷

In the DES survey questionnaire, children or their parents are asked to provide a range of

information, including their nationality, their mother tongue, and whether they have been displaced from their permanent place of habitation. They are asked to identify the school attended, the language of instruction used and the language of instruction the children or their parents would prefer. Children who do not attend school are asked which year they stopped attending or if they never went at all, and to give reasons. A large field is provided for comments.

The survey is being routed through the LCOs in nearly all municipalities, who can delegate the task of conducting the survey to a competent local agency. In some areas, implementation of the survey has been the responsibility of NGOs doing educational work with minorities (for example, *Solidarites* and Bethany Christian Services in Gjakova).⁶⁸ A possible problem with this approach is a potential for uneven implementation of the survey, with the best coverage in areas already served by NGO programmes, and weak or patchy coverage in areas or communities where such capacity is currently lacking. In at least one respect the design of the questionnaire may lead to misleading results, since it does not sufficiently differentiate between enrolment in a school and actual or regular attendance. An example of this misunderstanding is research carried out by IRC on school attendance of Roma and Ashkali children in Podjeve/Podujevo. Although it was plain that hundreds of children were not attending school, only 20 or so children were revealed by the survey as not attending school, since “attendance” was understood to be the same as “enrolment”.⁶⁹

The DES survey will not be the exclusive source of information on Roma/Gypsy communities' access to and attitudes towards education. It is being conducted at a time when several other arms of the UNMIK and collaborating agencies are likewise planning research on Roma/Gypsy education. UNICEF intends to perform research on children not attending school.⁷⁰ After consultation with the DES, in May 2001 the OSCE Human Rights Department carried out a detailed sample survey of the attitudes to education of roughly 20 Roma/Gypsy families in each of the five Kosovo regions/AORs (ie, 100 questionnaires in all). The questionnaire asked for details of children in school, children out of school and parental plans for their preschool-age children. It solicited comments on such themes as the quality of education provided, the state of relations with non-Roma/Gypsy co-pupils, the benefits and difficulties of the language of instruction. It included questions such as:

- What has the children's experience been in school?
- What would help the children have a better experience in school?
- How do you think school should best prepare your children for life and work in Kosovo?
- How would you like to see your culture represented in school?
- Do you think it is necessary for children to have an education to succeed here?
- What can be done to encourage your children to attend school?

This depth of questioning will serve as a useful supplement to the DES research. With the appointment of the Minorities Officer in the

DES, information can be collated, pooled and made available to policy-makers more efficiently than it has been in the past. The previous lack of a "fixed abode" in UNMIK for Roma/Gypsy education complicated the collation, distribution and analysis of pilot surveys undertaken in some locations during 2000 by a variety of NGO and OSCE actors, despite efforts to distribute them through inter-agency working groups.

A local survey conducted in summer 2000 by an OSCE Human Rights Officer in Ferizaj/Urosevac offers a positive example of how a research exercise can itself draw attention to education at local level with tangible results, even in the absence of resources for a sustained follow-up programme or project. The idea for the survey arose from the discussions of two local working groups. An inter-agency education group sought different initiatives to increase the enrolment of Roma and Ashkali children in schools, including the arrangement of meetings between local school directors and representatives of the Roma and Ashkali communities. A weekly Ashkali/Roma roundtable, held at the OSCE field office, brings together Ashkali and Roma community leaders, UNMIK, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNMIK police, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and NGOs such as ADRA and the Norwegian Refugee Council. It was within this framework that the education survey was agreed upon, implemented and followed up.

A "Day of Education" event was organised in each of the municipality's four Roma/Ashkali neighbourhoods. There were organised games for children. Volunteers interviewed children who approached them, using a highly structured



one-page questionnaire.⁷¹ The questions focused particularly on what was preventing children attending school. According to the UNHCR/OSCE:⁷²

“There was a very limited response from the Roma community. The Ashkaelia, however, did respond, and the information collected by OSCE with respect to the educational needs of the children of primary-school age revealed the following: of 398 children interviewed, 237 (60 per cent) were not attending school; 133 (56 per cent) of those who were illiterate or excluded from education were females, and 142 (60 per cent) of this category were aged seven to nine and potential candidates for enrolment in the current educational cycle 2000-2001. The results of this survey serve to underline the kind of intensive efforts that need to be made to address the educational needs of minority communities. As follow-up,

OSCE has engaged the community representatives and the educational authorities in order to promote school attendance, particularly for the seven to nine year olds. On 23 September the Council of the Mahalla of the Roma/Ashkaelia stated that 324 Ashkaelia children attend primary schools (first to eighth year) in Urosevac/Ferizaj municipality. Only eight Roma children attend primary school. However, 56 out of 139 illiterate children (40 per cent) have successfully enrolled in the school year 2000-2001. This still left approximately 35 per cent of Ashkaelia children who were not enrolled.”

Consultation of community representatives in education design

Two technical consultation meetings were held by UNMIK, in September 2000 and January 2001, to follow up on the *Platform for Joint Action Regarding Kosovar Roma, Ashkcalija and Egyptian*

Communities. Both meetings included consideration of education. Roma/Gypsy political leaders were able to discuss the subject with department officials of the Joint Interim Administrative Structure. Subsequently, because the DES felt it was important to focus community consultation on education at a different level, to avoid its undue politicisation, in April 2001, it organised the first of what is intended to be an ongoing series of meetings specifically with Roma/Gypsy education activists. The meeting was attended by seven or eight Roma/Gypsy activists (most of them Ashkali, with one or two Roma), three Kosovar Albanian education activists and seven “internationals” – from the DES, UNICEF and the OSCE. Thus, Roma/Gypsy representation was uneven and in the minority. There were no Egyptian representatives or Serbian-speaking Roma and all of the Roma/Gypsy activists were men. Nevertheless, a foundation for future meetings was laid, and there is scope for the DES to work proactively to expand and vary Roma/Gypsy representation at future meetings to include, for example, representatives of Roma/Gypsy women’s groups and the parent committees being developed by some NGO education projects. Discussion at the April 2001 meeting focused on curriculum development. This initial dialogue was only partially successful. The meeting demonstrated tensions and misunderstandings, with some Roma/Gypsy activists suspecting that the “internationals” were seeking to impose a separate, socially isolating curriculum on their communities. There was a clearly expressed wish for a curriculum that enabled integration into Kosovan society, yet with the possibility of add-on classes for Roma children in subjects such as Romani language

and culture. Some of the Roma/Gypsy activists pointed to the education arrangements of Kosovo’s autonomy era in the 1970s and 1980s as an excellent model for successful multi-ethnic education.⁷³

UNICEF Pilot Schools

UNICEF has designated two pilot schools in each of the five Kosovan regions/AORs for the development of best practice to be replicated in other schools. Of the ten schools, one is Serbian and four have mixed Albanian and minority pupils. The pilots are intended as a testing ground for building an inclusive, multi-ethnic system of education with increased school-community interaction as a driving force. The schools are thus at the first stage of attempting to realise an ambitious, and still largely theoretical, vision.⁷⁴ Community outreach activity will include proactive work to bring in out-of-school children and to help children make the transition from primary to secondary school – particularly targeting girls and children from minorities, who are most prone to dropping out at this stage. Retraining of teachers will emphasise promotion of psychosocial sensitivity, enabling them to adopt alternative approaches, promoting the acceptance of diversity and the piloting of human-rights-based elements in curricula.⁷⁵

DES School Bus Project

The DES Minority Bus Project intends to provide 20 school buses for minority communities throughout Kosovo, both Serb and non-Serb. The depletion and/or displacement of many minority communities throughout Kosovo since June 1999 has left several of them effectively cut off from education facilities, due to a

combination of practical transportation difficulties and security concerns. While most of the buses scheduled for introduction in April 2001 are designated for Serb communities, two of the ten buses designated for the central Prishtina region/AOR are likely to be allocated to Roma/Gypsy communities. One will be for Roma and Ashkali children of the Plementina IDP camp, to take them to local Serbian and Albanian schools respectively. The other will be for Ashkali children of villages in Lipjan/Lipljan municipality, where security concerns and long travelling distances to schools have combined to severely limit Roma/Gypsy education opportunities.⁷⁶

NGO practice in the area

In Kosovo, NGO work is not as clearly differentiated from government work as in most other European countries. In Central and Eastern Europe in particular, internationally funded NGO programmes often attempt to plug large gaps in Roma/Gypsy education provision that are the result of governments' reluctance to devote national revenue to it. In Kosovo, the work of both government and NGOs is currently funded from international donations. The question of the sustainability of individual NGO projects and/or their outputs is a constant. The acid test of financial and political sustainability will come when the DES budget makes the transition from international subventions to domestically generated revenue, and when international administrators fade into the background to be almost wholly replaced by national staff and leadership.

Various international and local NGOs are, or have been, implementing projects for Roma/Gypsy education in several locations. Typical projects include the organisation of:

- **Temporary catch-up classes:** for children whose education was disrupted by the war or earlier, as a result of social, economic and cultural factors. Catch-up classes are designed to ease children's integration into regular schools. Many Roma/Gypsy children have missed several years of schooling and are much older than other children in the grade they would be expected to join at their current literacy level. UNICEF has worked with Ashkali community representatives to organise attendance at a catch-up school it provided in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje in 2000, followed by integration of the children into local schools where IRC has been working. IRC is planning more catch-up classes in 2001. In Gjakova, two local NGOs have managed a six-month catch-up class project, which ended in May 2001, for up to 120 Egyptian children and young adults at the town's Emin Duraku Primary School.
- **New community schools:** within isolated or displaced Roma/Gypsy community enclaves, where security concerns have prevented children from attending schools outside. ICS, IRC and *Enfants du Monde* have been supporting the Jeta e Re School at the Plementina camp for Ashkali and Roma IDPs, established by the initiative of camp residents. In Gjilan/Gnjilane, a school was created within the beleaguered Roma community by the joint efforts of the community and UNMIK.

- **Preschool orientation, kindergartens, facilities for socio-educative adaptation:** to increase Roma/Gypsy children's chances of attending school and of their success once there. Examples are in Gjakova, where *Solidarites* is establishing a socio-educative centre for the children of the Egyptian shanty neighbourhood of Colonia. IRC has organised a kindergarten in Rufe i Ri/Rufcini village school in Lipjan/Lipljan municipality where one of the purposes is preschool integration of Albanian and Ashkali children.
- **Psychosocial activities:** organised leisure activity, such as arts, games, sport, artistic workshops, summer camps and expeditions are often used as a means of integrating Roma/Gypsy children with those from majority communities, through playing and creating together.
- **Vocational and apprenticeship programmes:** to increase Roma/Gypsy teenagers' and young adults' employability. In the case of computer and English-language courses, a particular aim is to increase their prospects of employment with international agencies present in Kosovo and to enable them to negotiate with those agencies. In Gjilan/Gnjilane, IRC has organised hairdressing and computer courses in a youth centre open to all communities – it is located close to the Roma neighbourhood. Currently, three Roma girls and seven Albanian girls are doing the course (three more Roma girls intend to join), and Roma boys are attending the computer course. In Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, premises owned by Ashkali community NGO leaders within the Roma/Gypsy neighbourhood are being used for internationally funded vocational courses – computers, hairdressing and dressmaking. In at least one case, vocational classes have been offered as a stopgap to children for whom no regular education is currently available. Computer classes organised by the World Assembly of Muslim Youth in Ferizaj/Urosevac have been offered to 14 non-Albanian-speaking Roma and Gorani/Bosniak 14-18 year olds, for whom no Serbian-language school is now available or accessible (they have expressed a wish to learn English too, if such classes can be organised).
- **Adult-literacy programmes:** to empower Roma/Gypsy adults, increasing their employability, parenting skills, and enabling them to provide a more supportive home environment for their children's education. A Kosovo-wide phased programme has recently started, to be implemented by 21 women's NGOs. The programme is not exclusively targeted at Roma/Gypsies, yet the inclusion of three Roma/Gypsy women's NGOs and the profile of the programme's intended beneficiaries indicate that many of them will be Roma/Gypsies.
- **Integration programmes:** either as a follow-through of catch-up class projects, to manage the integration into regular schools of Roma/Gypsy children who have been attending catch-up classes, or as stand-alone projects to integrate Roma/Gypsy children into local schools. From September 2000 the local Ashkali NGO "Future for All" and IRC worked together in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje to integrate Ashkali children who had

completed the UNICEF catch-up school into the Selman Reza primary school. Seventy of the 200 children aged seven to ten years old made the transition. The two NGOs met parents every two or three days and escorted children to school in order to achieve this result. Integration projects require sustained work with both Roma/Gypsy and majority communities and a commitment to monitoring and follow-up. In 2000, a Save the Children integration project in Decani/Decan municipality illustrated the problem of attempting such a task as a short-term intervention. A mix of community work and transport provision was applied to bring Roma/Gypsy children from the village of Hereq, where there was no school, to the school in the neighbouring Kosovar-Albanian village. The project initially delivered results. However, the closure of Save the Children's branch office in Gjakova, which managed the project, meant that no monitoring took place for several months. In June 2001, it was reported that the children were no longer attending the school.

Case studies

Not by bricks and mortar alone

With funding from the Arabic Humanitarian Association, British KFOR mounted a project in late 1999/early 2000 to build a new school in the mixed Albanian-Ashkali village of Hallaq i Vogel/Mali Alas, in Lipjan/Lipljan municipality. A narrow focus on creation of the school building, a lack of understanding of the history and depth of intercommunity tensions and a failure to consult, both at community and UNMIK level, resulted in the project's failure.

During the NATO bombing campaign in 1999, Serbian paramilitaries killed 21 Kosovar-Albanian men in the village.⁷⁷ The Kosovar-Albanian population of the village was compelled to leave, returning after the arrival of international forces in summer 1999. The Serbs allowed the Ashkali population to remain. Allegedly, members of some Ashkali families had assisted the Serbian paramilitaries by identifying the Kosovar-Albanian men who were subsequently killed. After the war, tensions between the returning Albanian villagers and the 220-250 Ashkali inhabitants were extremely high. British KFOR established a permanent security presence in the village. Nevertheless, there was a wave of grenade attacks against Ashkali homes from August to October 1999, and further incidents in 2000, which resulted in the death of three Ashkali.

Hallaq i Vogel/Mali Alas did not have its own school. Children travelled to the Migjeni Primary School in the neighbouring Kosovar-Albanian village of Rufci i Ri/Rufcini, 3km away. Without undertaking any community work or consulting any other UNMIK bodies, British KFOR began to construct a new school building next to the site of the mass grave in Hallaq i Vogel/Mali Alas.

The building was completed in early spring 2000 and the invitation of UNMIK representatives to its opening provided the latter with their first knowledge of the project's existence. At the opening ceremony, Albanian children immediately attacked Ashkali children with stones. The school was abandoned and remains locked and unused at the time of writing. Albanian children continue to travel to the school in Rufci i Ri/Rufcini, and Ashkali children stay at home.



Keeping education in communities – providing a safe education or reinforcing isolation?

Some Roma/Gypsy communities, such as the mixed communities of the IDP camps at Plementina and Leposavic, and the diminished urban Roma community of Gjilan/Gnjilane, reacted to security risks by creating schools within their own safe but narrow confines. The opening of these schools had a morale-raising impact in the communities and provided an education where none would otherwise be available. However, the continuation and consolidation of these schools poses difficult strategic questions. Should they be further developed as valuable education incubators for these communities, or does this risk ultimately cementing their social and educational isolation?

The Jeta e Re (“New Life”) School was created in August 1999 from the initiative of members of an Ashkali/Roma IDP camp based in Plementina. *Conзорzio Italiano di Solidarietà* (ICS), the camp’s managing NGO, and UNHCR assisted in establishing the school, and IRC has been involved in its further development, with some inputs from *Enfants du Monde*. Camp residents took on the teaching roles themselves. None of the six teachers were qualified, having had other jobs before the war. However, they were enthusiastic and dedicated. IRC secured some training for them and they are now reportedly employing methods recommended in teacher-training programmes. They teach only the lower cycle of primary education (years one to four). Because the school and its teachers are not certified as a part of Kosovo’s official education system, UNMIK pays the teachers as notional support staff of a nearby village school. Until

May 2000 only one room was available, and teaching was conducted in three daily shifts. Three more classrooms have since been built. From a total camp contingent of 250-300 children aged 6-18, about 80-100 children aged 6-14 attended the school in 1999 and 2000. Most of the attending children are Ashkali, with about 28 Roma. Many of the children had not been to school before, or had dropped out at an early stage, so the camp teachers interviewed and tested the children who wanted to attend and placed them in multi-age classes according to their academic level. Six classes were taught, five of them in Albanian, and one in Serbian for the Roma children.

The teacher-activists of Jeta e Re School are pressing for its formalisation. However, it has not proved possible to recruit qualified teachers from outside the camp to come into the school, either to teach subjects of the upper-primary cycle or to augment the teaching of the lower cycle. IRC has focused its efforts on negotiating with the directors of nearby Albanian- and Serbian-language schools to accept, respectively, Ashkali and Roma children from the camp who are ready for the upper cycle. The DES minority school bus project will be engaged, and it is hoped that 20-30 children from the camp will go to these schools from September 2001. It is reported that in 2001 attendance at the Jeta e Re School has dropped from a peak of 107 in 2000 to about 60-80 children. The IDP camp is meant to be a temporary arrangement. A mixture of returns and emigration has seen its population drop from a total of 900 in December 1999 to approximately 700-750 at the time of writing. None of the camp’s residents is reported to be in employment

outside the camp, and all are dependent on humanitarian food assistance, which is gradually being reduced. This is therefore not a stable population upon which to plan a formal school. Extending teaching to the upper cycle of primary education at the camp school could contribute to perpetuating the camp's isolation, and lose the opportunities for integration that could result from camp children attending local village schools with children from the surrounding community.

In Gjilan/Gnjilane the remaining Roma community, down to about 320 from its pre-war population of several thousand, lives compactly on two streets in the centre of the town, with a KFOR security checkpoint, surrounded by a mainly hostile Kosovar-Albanian population. With their freedom of movement curtailed since summer 1999, the Roma community has been physically cut off from the Serbian-language education provision. Since UNMIK took over, Serbian-language education has been re-established in a catch-up school elsewhere in the town and a school in a nearby village. In January 2000, a catch-up school was therefore established within the Roma community as a temporary measure. Under the agreement signed between UNMIK and the Roma community leader, two to three Serbian teachers would be paid by UNMIK to teach catch-up lessons, which would enable Roma children to integrate into Serbian or Albanian schools by September 2000. The school, housed in a private home in the community, was renovated and equipped with the help of international organisations and NGOs.

Subsequent developments at the temporary Roma catch-up school diverged substantially from UNMIK's intentions. Instead of integrating children into regular Serbian- or (in the case of younger children) Albanian-language schools, the Roma school grew and consolidated. Its complement of two to three UNMIK-paid teachers has been reinforced by another ten Serbian teachers, who also teach at the catch-up school in the town and are being paid by the Serbian Ministry of Education. The school provides both the lower and upper cycles of primary education. Apart from Serbian, languages taught in the upper cycle include English and Russian, but not Albanian. Attempts to find a suitably qualified teacher to teach some classes in Romanes have proved unsuccessful. Attendance at the school has been relatively low. Of roughly 100 school-age Roma children, teachers have reported 38 in regular attendance, while children themselves estimate the number to be 25. The security risk for Roma children living outside the quarter has been cited as the reason for irregular attendance. Teachers explained that KFOR stopped providing these children with escorts. KFOR responded that the escorts stopped because the children stopped going to school.

Although the availability of KFOR security escorts and an easing of the security situation offer opportunities for educational integration of the children of the Gjilan/Gnjilane Roma community (three of them do in fact attend a Serbian secondary school), the "temporary" school as it is presently structured risks solidifying the Roma community's isolation.

Catch-up classes – the Gjakova Emin Duraku School pilot project

A six-month project of primary school catch-up classes for up to 120 Roma/Gypsy children (and some adults who missed out on education) commenced at Gjakova's Emin Duraku School in autumn 2000, and finished in May 2001. It was organised and implemented jointly between three local Gjakovar NGOs, and funded through the Kosovo Foundation for an Open Society, with the encouragement of the DES.

The catch-up classes were organised for three hours per day, in the afternoons. Four grades of classes were established, each to cram in the learning equivalent of two years of primary school, from class one to eight. Demand for classes one and two was high, so two parallel classes were laid on for this level, making a total of five classes, each with a register of roughly 22-25 pupils. Usual regular attendance of 18-19 per class was reported. Upon completion of the project, pupils of the first three levels received certificates respectively attesting to their completion of the second, fourth and sixth classes of primary school, which will allow those who are still of school age to join a regular primary school from September 2001. Those in the project's most senior class group, covering years seven to eight of primary school, received primary-education completion certificates. Applications for entry into regular school are made in June for the start of the school year in September. With DES support, the managing NGO has been negotiating with the directors of Gjakova secondary schools to try also to secure

some places on an affirmative-action basis for graduates of the Emin Duraku project who have not passed the school entrance exam. The project manager has said that even if only 5 of the 20 in the project's senior class register at a secondary school, he will consider it a good result.

Two Gjakovar Kosovar-Albanian NGOs, the Forum for Democratisation (FID) and *Elita*, have had responsibility for the project's implementation and its financial management. The Albanian-Egyptian Association surveyed and mobilised Egyptian families and communities to provide lists of out-of-school children for the project, and to encourage and maintain their participation. FID has provided project management, including negotiation with the Emin Duraku School and the hiring of eight teachers. *Elita* has provided minibus transport for some of the children, and a school lunch every day. The project has been resource-intensive. The teachers were hired at a premium DM500-per-month wage. Additional incentives have included distributions of clothes to attending children. In setting up the project, its leaders placed little emphasis upon exploration of why so many Egyptian children have not been attending school. The project manager expresses confidence that the reasons are to be found exclusively in Roma/Gypsy cultural tradition.⁷⁸ Before embarking on this project, he visited NGOs in Bulgaria to learn from their experiences.

Beyond incentives, a monthly meeting of teachers and parents was instituted to bind communities to the project. Avdullah Qafani, who is its deputy

director, a leading member of the Albanian-Egyptian Association, a co-opted vice-president of the Gjakova Municipal Assembly and a hospital doctor, also helped to sustain the project. The project's opening day featured an incident that could have damaged its viability from the outset. On seeing the Egyptian children arrive at the school, Kosovar-Albanian construction workers on a building site nearby incited some of the Albanian children to demonstrate against the Egyptian pupils. In front of the audience of officials, journalists and NGO representatives assembled for the opening, the children shouted slogans such as "Blacks, out of our school!" The then president of the Gjakova Municipal Administrative Board and prominent ex-KLA member, Mazllom Kumnova, made a helpful speech, emphasising that "We can never have freedom if we are against somebody". Avdullah Qafani went from class to class to try to reassure the pupils, telling them that what they had experienced was a normal reaction from children who had suffered in the war.⁷⁹

FID reports that it already has some funding to replicate the project in Peja/Pec, where collaboration with the Albanian-Egyptian Association and Roma representatives has produced a list of 120 Roma/Gypsy children who could benefit from catch-up classes. Some live in outlying villages, and FID hopes that the DES minorities school bus project will provide transportation for them and an additional 20 children from Klina municipality to the planned classes. FID is also considering a more intensive version of the project for Egyptians in Gjakova who are above school age. The DES has scrutinised the Emin Duraku project as a guide

for the implementation of further projects throughout Kosovo. IRC has also examined it for its replication possibilities in the IRC Program for Roma and Ashkalia Education, which is being implemented in the central Prishtina region/AOR. IRC is adopting elements of the teaching methodology, including the deployment of the Emin Duraku project teachers to help train teachers for its own programme. However, IRC is understood to have concerns about the viability of replicating project incentives such as high teacher salaries and the provision of school lunches.

Implanting education orientation into a community – the Colonia socio-educative project

In April/May 2001 the French NGO, *Solidarités*, set up a preschool/back-to-school orientation facility in the Egyptian neighbourhood of Colonia on the periphery of Gjakova, the poorest, most run-down Roma/Gypsy neighbourhood in the town. Initially accommodated in two large tents on open ground beside the neighbourhood, the facility will eventually be housed in a building to be specially constructed for it in Colonia. *Solidarités* has hired a multi-ethnic team consisting of a Kosovar-Albanian full-time educator and three part-time facilitators (one Albanian, two Egyptians) to conduct the orientation activities. Children will be organised into different morning and afternoon groups, one for those aged three to seven years, the other for those aged 7-14 years. (At the time of writing, while the project is housed in tents, only morning activities are undertaken, since it is too hot under the tents in the afternoons.) Different programmes of organised play, drawing, singing, reading and writing classes, are organised for the two groups.

It is hoped that the presence of the facility in the neighbourhood will establish and build a school/educational culture within the community. While children's readiness to accept and adopt that culture is readily apparent, the facility also has an important role to play in nurturing its acceptance by all parents. The project's educators and animators act as advocates for children's educational rights on two fronts – with their parents and with their teachers. One of the animators interviewed for this report had immediate plans to intercede personally with the director of Emin Duraku School to allow a boy from Colonia back into regular classes – his teacher had refused to allow him back after his parents had withdrawn him for a week to do some labouring work. Sustained functioning of the facility holds out a prospect of gradually changing the social climate in Colonia until it becomes socially unacceptable for parents not to send their children regularly to school. The question of sustainability continues to exercise *Solidarités*. They are attempting to establish the facility in a way which will lend itself to a hand-over in future to the municipal education authorities.⁸⁰

Seeking integration – Enfants du Monde's programme for displaced children in Leposavic

Since January 2000, the NGO *Enfants du Monde – Droits de l'Homme* has been working on the provision of education to both Roma/Gypsy and Serbian children living in the nine collective centres and one camp that accommodate 700 IDPs in Leposavic, a Serbian-dominated municipality in northern Kosovo. The camp, located in a warehouse and managed by Caritas Belgium, houses 180 Roma/Gypsies. Most are Roma displaced from southern Mitrovica. There

are also some Egyptians and Ashkali from other areas of Kosovo. They do not face particular security problems, being generally accepted by the local Serb population.

When *Enfants du Monde* began its work, none of the children in the Roma camp were attending school. The NGO's goal has been to get as many as possible of them integrated into regular schools. Moreover, it has provided a supporting framework for Roma/Gypsy children's education to compensate for their poor living conditions. Given a general lack of parental engagement, *Enfants du Monde* has been trying to improve the prospects of children attending school beyond the life of the programme by attempting to stimulate and nurture parents' sense of responsibility for supporting children's education.

As a first step, the NGO assessed the children's educational level. They were allocated into groups according to their age and attainment, and catch-up classes were instituted. Those who were too old to be enrolled in regular schools and had not attended school before were taught basic literacy, while school-age children were prepared for integration into regular schools from September 2000. As most of the children were more accustomed to speaking Albanian than Serbian, one of the main tasks was to improve their grasp of Serbian language.

By September 2000 it had still not been possible for *Enfants du Monde* to gain the agreement of the director of the primary school in Leposavic to admit the Roma children. He was dubious about their grasp of Serbian and not particularly sympathetic to their needs. A solution was found

by transporting 20 children who were ready for regular school, ranging from grades one to eight, to the Branko Radicevic Primary School in northern Mitrovica, where the director was welcoming. Transport has been provided every day by Caritas Belgium, and attendance is generally good. *Enfants du Monde* has continued to run catch-up classes at the camp for 36 other children aged from 7 to 16 years old. The NGO has tested the children every term to measure their progress, and presently estimates that a further 20 of these children will be ready to attend school in the following school year. Continued effort by *Enfants du Monde* in developing a dialogue with the director of the Leposavic Primary School has resulted in his agreement to admit Roma IDP children from September 2001. Thus 17 of the 20 currently being bussed to Mitrovica will transfer to the Leposavic Primary School, where they will be joined by a new group of children from the catch-up classes. Three children currently in the eighth grade in the Branko Radicevic Primary School will enrol in secondary schools in Leposavic or Mitrovica. However, there is likely to be no provision at all for 16 children who are either too old for primary-school enrolment or whose educational attainment is too low.

Enfants du Monde provides a range of support to the children's education and development that is missing from their home and social environment. The NGO offers homework-support sessions to all school-going children, whether studying in the catch-up classes or regular school, in the mornings and afternoons. It has taken over the running of the camp kindergarten from ICS, and in September 2000 transferred it from tents inside

the camp to larger premises with better facilities next to the camp. About 25 children attend, aged from three to six years old. A range of activities is organised for the three to five year olds in monthly project cycles – games, arts, stories and shows. Children of six years old undergo preparation for primary school in a separate classroom. They are taught Latin and Cyrillic letters, numbers and Serbian language, enlivened by poems, songs and play. *Enfants du Monde* also uses the kindergarten facilities to teach children about cleanliness and personal presentation to reduce their chances of being taunted by other pupils. The NGO sees these classes as vital in assisting Roma/Gypsy children's integration into mainstream education, as local Serbs often cite poor personal hygiene as a ground for discrimination against Roma/Gypsies. According to Roma/Gypsy parents, poor sanitary facilities at the camp make it difficult for them to maintain their children's personal hygiene. Children's enthusiasm for the kindergarten is manifest, yet the *Enfants du Monde* programme manager has commented:

“As with school, the lack of interest of the parents is blatant. Indeed, they do not care that much about the implemented activities and if the animators do not go into the camp to take the children, the parents will not take the initiative to bring them to the kindergarten.”

For psychosocial stimulation of the children, and to aid their cultural and social integration with the surrounding Serb population, *Enfants du Monde* organises a range of activities. These include daily workshops in premises it has rented next to the camp, open to camp children and local

Serb children alike, in theatre, plastic arts and photography. Children themselves choose which workshops to participate in and must commit themselves to attending on a regular basis. There has been a good level of participation in the workshops by local Serb children, and of socialisation between the Roma and Serb children. Nevertheless, Serb children recently refused to participate any more if Roma children were there. This appears to have been prompted by Serb parents. In March 2001, *Enfants du Monde* invited a French stilt-walking troupe to perform in the Roma IDP camp and local schools. They held workshops for Roma and local and IDP Serb children in stilt-walking, as a result of which the children worked together on a show, which they performed in Leposavic's Primary School and cultural centre, and then on the streets of the town.

Although both regular schools and *Enfants du Monde's* catch-up classes break for the summer in June, the NGO plans to continue study-support activity over the summer, particularly targeted on the children earmarked for enrolment in primary school from September 2001. With the prospect of the programme being wound up by late summer 2001, its manager has commented on this and the general prospects of the sustainability of the Roma children's education:

“Thus, September will be a deciding period and will tell if we reached our objective regarding schooling. This success not only depends on the children and their capacity of learning, but mainly on the involvement of the adults. Indeed, the parents from the Roma community do not care a lot about the

scholarship of their children and are not a strong support in this process. Most of the parents are illiterate, have never been to school and often do not understand why it is important for their children to go to school and that it could be a way to grant them a better future. We have been trying for several months to make the parents feel more responsible for the education of their children, through regular meetings and the appointment of delegates for the class meetings, but this is a long and hard road. Moreover, if the director of the school of Mitrovica was understanding towards absences of the children and the lack of involvement of parents, it will not be the same with the director of the school of Leposavic, who is more rigid and less understanding towards the Roma issue.”

Enfants du Monde also has concerns for the future sustainability and profile of the kindergarten it has established next to the Roma camp. The NGO does not want kindergarten provision for the Roma children to end when it has to pull out from late summer 2001, nor does it want the kindergarten to have a future as a socially isolating parallel structure for Roma children only. The regular kindergarten of Leposavic has limited space and its director is reluctant to admit Roma children, knowing that the parents of Serbian children would be likely to protest or withdraw their children. The best compromise *Enfants du Monde* is currently hoping for is for the Roma kindergarten to be adopted as a branch of the regular kindergarten of Leposavic, with frequent exchanges and joint activities between the two.⁸¹

Intensive community work for educational integration – the IRC programme

The International Rescue Committee's approach to Roma/Gypsy education projects emphasises community capacity-building, promoting intercommunity dialogue and educational integration of Roma/Gypsy children with the majority community. It is an approach with a long-term perspective, requiring intensive and sustained input from IRC staff, without the use of incentives and inputs that could produce immediate results, but which would be unlikely to be sustained beyond the short term. IRC is implementing its Program for Roma and Ashkalia Education in several locations in the central Prishtina region/AOR: Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, villages of Lipjan/Lipljan municipality, Plementina IDP camp and its surroundings in Obilic municipality, and also in Gnjilane/Gjilan.

The IRC programme manager commented: "If you do the community work at the outset, it has knock-on benefits for the whole programme later." IRC attempted to pick up the pieces in Hallaq i Vogel/Mali Alas after the failed school-opening described above. Forty Ashkali children of school age were not attending school, while the village's Albanian children continued to travel to the Migjeni primary school in neighbouring Rufci i Ri/Rufcini. IRC and UNICEF visited in April 2000 and consulted with teachers, parents and Albanian and Ashkali community leaders to seek out ways of reintegrating the Ashkali children into education. But neither community was ready for this. Four months later IRC returned, having been informed by UNMIK that some tentative intercommunity communication had restarted in the village. IRC embarked on an

intensive process of community work – supporting parents' groups in both communities, initially organising separate meetings for them with teachers, and then eventually bringing the groups together, persuading them to find common ground at least in the sphere of the education of their children. IRC carried out educational assessments of the Ashkali children and, using teachers from the UNICEF catch-up school in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje as trainers, gave teachers of the Migjeni School orientation in the programme's teaching approaches and their own experiences. IRC worked together with the director and staff of Migjeni School to plan the integration of Ashkali children.

IRC distributed clothes and shoes to the Ashkali children and UNMIK co-ordinated a KFOR security escort for the 3km walk to the school. The Ashkali parents' group nominated one of their members to accompany the children with KFOR. However, on the first day of the planned integration in October 2000, a grenade attack was launched on an Ashkali household. Ashkali parents reacted by refusing to send their children to school. Nevertheless, at the time of writing the younger children, studying at class one level, have been largely able to integrate into the school. However, there has been resistance from their Albanian peers to the idea of accepting older Ashkali children, and they do not attend.

Many of the Ashkali parents have had no education and some appear to seek out reasons to avoid sending their children to school. To keep the grade one pupils attending school has required sustained, intensive efforts from IRC, working with a core group of parents of both



communities and arranging and managing a large number of community meetings. IRC has also held regular meetings with a teachers' council at the school, discussing integration issues and monitoring security – which could include threats and fights between children of the different communities. Building this capacity will enable the school staff to take over responsibility for calling joint Ashkali-Albanian parent meetings, approaching UNMIK police and KFOR for security support, and contacting DES staff when they perceive action to be needed on the part of policy-makers to support and promote progress. IRC is seeking to increase the numbers of Ashkali parents willing to escort their children to and from school, to build routines which can be continued when the KFOR security escorts

can be dispensed with – routines which will themselves contribute to the creation of a climate that will allow the downgrading of the security measures.

In addition to supporting Roma/Gypsy children's integration into existing educational institutions, the IRC programme has created additional institutions for preschool and vocational education, which contribute to the social integration of Roma/Gypsy and majority-community children. IRC supported the establishment of a kindergarten at Migjeni School in order to integrate Ashkali and Albanian children from the age of five, and give them an educational head start. The NGO has established youth centres in some of the programme's

locations, sited where youth of both Roma/Gypsy and majority communities can use them. Organised youth groups, from the ages of 15 to 24, are used as a focus for raising awareness of education and the delivery of apprenticeship and vocational courses.

In Hallaq i Vogel/Mali Alas, a room in a disused private house has been renovated for use as a youth centre. Its owner has made it available rent-free for the next ten years. IRC has declined to pay rent for and equip existing youth centres, as it is determined that the facilities it establishes are seen as being “of” the community rather than “provided” by IRC. It has also avoided perpetuating Roma/Gypsy communities’ social isolation by locating youth centres where they are accessible only to Roma/Gypsy youth. IRC declined offers to establish facilities in premises belonging to the families of Roma/Gypsy community leaders, fearing that this could make relationships difficult in the longer term. IRC’s emphasis on building a broad base of community support and involvement in education through the creation and sustenance of parents’ groups has clashed on occasion with the desire of some individuals to have status by being the sole interlocutors in dialogue with “internationals”. The formation of parents’ groups to support education integration proved difficult in neighbourhoods where two or more community leaders have established separate community initiatives and are competing for funding and loyalties. On occasion, IRC has had to deal with this by bypassing leaders and establishing dialogue directly with families, slowly and laboriously establishing a group of parents’ representatives.⁸²

Voices of Roma/Gypsy children

Ashkali, Egyptian and Roma children were interviewed for this report in different settings, including conversations in their homes, an impromptu meeting in an urban Ashkali/Roma neighbourhood, and in the context of organised education activities – Egyptian and Ashkali pupils who were attending preschool classes arranged respectively in a peri-urban and a village community, and Egyptian children attending catch-up classes in an urban school. Children’s voices reported by other sources have also been included.

A high proportion of the children interviewed expressed considerable enthusiasm about the idea of receiving education. Yet their accounts reveal how so many factors beyond their control make their attendance at school fragile and conditional, causing so many to drop out at an early stage, and to be adrift from their peers in the majority community by many years. Pressures from parents were cited – to work or to look after younger children. A particular factor that emerged, blighting Roma/Gypsy children’s experience of education, was their experience of suffering humiliations at school, due to their poverty, difficulties in turning themselves out smartly, and bullying or intolerant behaviour by children of the majority community, or by teachers.

Lots of the children interviewed exhibited an air of fatalism about their future and were vague about what they would do in their adult life. Many of those who did express a career aspiration appeared to lack any kind of plan of how they

would achieve it. Quite a few expressed interest in becoming doctors or teachers, yet this will be an uphill task for children who have already missed several years of education. The social isolation of Roma/Gypsy communities and a paucity of role models within them limited the range of careers to which the children aspire.

Some children said they were hungry most of the time. The majority of the children interviewed were short for their ages, indicating long-term undernourishment.

L, Roma boy, 13 years old, has become fluent in Italian by fraternising with Italian KFOR troops. Attending the first/second class in the Emin Duraku School catch-up class project in Gjakova, he was interviewed by Avdullah Qafani around February/March 2001

“The day when I started going to school again I was the happiest child in the world. After we were expelled from my village, Zatriq, after the war and came to the Colonia settlement in Gjakova I was feeling very bad. I knew that other children were going to school. They were learning and playing. My only joy was my friendship with the Italian soldiers. Next year I will go to a regular school. I want to become a pilot.”

Interviewed for this report in May 2001

“Before I went to school in Vranice village. I completed two classes there. I used to want to be a pilot, but I’ve changed my mind. Now I want to be a teacher.”

Question: “Why no longer a pilot?”

Answer: “Because I can’t fly a plane.”

Q: “But you know how to teach?”

A: “No, but I can learn.”

Q: “And you can’t learn to fly?”

A: “It’s better to be a teacher.”

B, Roma boy, nine years old, completed the first class in a Serbian school in Ferizaj/Urosevac, but with its disappearance has been unable to continue his education for the last two years, spoke haltingly in Albanian, a language in which he is not fluent

“I enjoyed school. I liked maths. I am not going any more. I’ve just been playing for the last two years. When I grow up I want to work in a factory.”

Q: “If you had a choice, which language would you like to study in – Romanes, Serbian, Albanian?”

A: (with trepidation and hesitation) “Serbian. I’ll go to any school, even if it’s in Albanian.”

H, Roma girl, 12 years old, in the sixth class of primary school, Prizren, interviewed by Avdullah Qafani, around February 2001

“I am one of the best pupils in my class. I am now doing an English course. I can’t do the computer course though, because my father doesn’t have money for both. I hope to be a nurse. Later, if we can afford it, why not even a doctor? I don’t have the complex that I am worth less than the others.”

Four Roma and Ashkali children interviewed at Plementina IDP camp by IRC 83

“I don’t want to go to school with Albanian or Serbian children because the teacher will put me at the back of the class.”

“We lived with Albanians, played with them, and they were our friends. But they told us to leave because we were Gypsies.”

“They burned our houses. I don’t want to learn with them.”

“We’ve heard that there might be Albanians coming to teach, but I don’t agree. I’ll throw my bag away and never come back to school.”

D, Ashkali boy, 12 years old, in preschool orientation classes in Dubrava village, near Ferizaj/Urosevac, preparing to try again attending the primary school in a neighbouring Albanian village. Albanian children reportedly took against D because of his poor clothes. His family is particularly poor. He is one of six children, whose father will not send them all to school

“I never went to school before. I was scared. I tried once, two years ago. But it lasted two weeks. When I walked to school and back the Albanian kids attacked us – all of us. I’ll start school again now, and I’ll take it to the end. I want to be a doctor.”

Q, Ashkali boy, 13 years old, Dubrava village

“Of course I have Albanian friends. Lots of them. I visit their homes and they come to see me too. I’ve been at Zaskok School for six years. I’ll finish in two years time. I’ve kept going to school all the time, except during the war. We hid at home. We wanted to go abroad, but it was impossible. Maths is my favourite subject. I am excellent at it. My family didn’t have money to buy the books I need, but the school gave them. I want to go to high school in Saudi Arabia and be a doctor there.”

A and D, two deaf Ashkali boys, 13 and 3 years old, with their mother, southern Kosovo

Mother: “A has never been to school. When he was seven I sent him to a school for deaf

children in Prizren, but he came back after a month. I can’t send him there now. I know that we are poor, but at least we could have education. My husband is sick and paralysed. He gets DM120 government assistance per month. We have five children. The money is not enough.”

A: (in sign language interpreted by his mother) “I want to finish school and work. I want to be someone.”

D: (with gestures, to his elder brother) “Go and wash your face first.”

N, Ashkali girl, 16 years old, Ferizaj/Urosevac (with her elder brother)

N: “I started school when I was nine, but I left after three months because my brothers were jealous and the teacher was bad and used to beat us.”

Brother: “Tell the truth. You didn’t have exercise books or shoes.”

N: “I’d love to go to school now. If there was an intensive school to learn Albanian and other things. I can’t go back with the little kids now. I want to be an interpreter. If people here offer us a course I am willing to learn English.” (To the translator indicating the author) “Tell him to find us shoes.”

L and B, Ashkali sisters, 14 and 10 years old, Ferizaj/Urosevac. L was “married” at the age of 12 and now has a 7-month-old baby.

L: “I never went to school. We have a tradition that if we get married we don’t go to school any more.”

B: “I just started the 1st class in primary school. I’m enjoying it. I like Albanian literature the most. I want to be a teacher, to teach the others. But we always feel hungry – all the time. Including in school.”

H, Ashkali girl, 11 years old, Ferizaj/Urosevac. She and her 12-year-old brother stand out in their local Ashkali community as the only children of their age to have kept going to school from the age of 7

“I’m in the fourth class now. I can read and write. My brother is very good and we go to school together. I want to carry on with school. After I finish university I’ll learn English and use it to translate and help others. I won’t get married before then.”

B, Ashkali young man, 19 years old, Ferizaj/Urosevac

“I started school when I was eight and went for two years. I stopped because I didn’t have any of the things I needed. No books, clothes, shoes. My father was not working. But I’m studying karate now. If I have a chance to finish my education I’d like to be a karate champion. If I had money I’d study karate abroad. Money is stopping us from going to school.”

M, Egyptian boy, seven years old, in first class of a regular primary school, Gjakova

“At school when Albanian boys argue with each other they fight one to one. But if one of us Egyptians gets in a fight with an Albanian boy, all the other Albanians gang up on you. They surround you in a circle and beat you.”

P, Egyptian girl, 13 years old, Colonia neighbourhood, Gjakova, attending both the Solidarités preschool centre and the second class in the Emin Duraku School catch-up class project

“I’ll go to a regular school after this, then maybe secondary school. Emin Duraku School is a good place. The teacher is nice. I like mathematics. My parents didn’t have money to buy all the things I need for school, but they’ve got some money now – my two brothers are working in Qabrati.” (She shrugged when asked what she thought she would do when she grows up.)

E, Egyptian boy, 14 years old, Colonia neighbourhood, Gjakova, attending the Solidarités preschool centre

“I was in regular school. I was in the first class in the Emin Duraku School. I was one of the best in my classroom. I sat in the first row and I had Albanian friends. I had good relations with all my class. But I stopped a month ago. I worked one week for money and the teachers told me I couldn’t come back. But the school director said I do have the right to come back. I was loading and unloading cement. My family needed the money.”

“At school I like mathematics and reading and writing. I’d like to learn the computer, and to work as a surveyor. I want that job because I’ll learn everything and be smarter and happier. It’s very hard for me to study. It’s difficult at home. Only my father works and all he gets is DM100 per month.”

R, Egyptian girl, 11 years old, in first/second class of the Emin Duraku School catch-up class project in Gjakova

“I used to go to Mustafa Bakija School [a Gjakova primary school]. I finished the third class there. I went back there for one week after the war, but I couldn’t continue because of the name-calling. All the other children called me a *maxhup* and I couldn’t take that. They didn’t do it before the war. I’ll go back to a regular school after this.”

Question: “Which one?”

A: (Hesitation)

Q: “Mustafa Bakija?”

A: “Oh well, I suppose so. Let it be Mustafa Bakija.”

Q: “What do you want to do when you grow up?”

A: “I want to do dressmaking.”

Q: (from teacher) “You wanted to be a doctor. Why did you change your mind?”

A: “Oh well, let it be a doctor then.”

Q: “Where do you want to live when you grow up?”

A: “Germany. It’s a better life in Germany than here.”

S, Egyptian boy, 14 years old, in first/second class of the Emin Duraku School catch-up class project in Gjakova

“I’m worried that I’m too old for regular school now. I got to the third class before, but I didn’t finish it. I was in Germany and I went to school there, but we were sent back to Kosovo, and I couldn’t go back to a regular school here. I want to go to Germany and live there forever. To Munster.”

V, Egyptian girl, 15 years old, in first/second class of the Emin Duraku School catch-up class project in Gjakova

“I’d like to continue school, but I know it’s impossible because I’m too old. I went to [a]

primary school in Piskota village. I had lots of friends there and I went for four years. I stopped because we couldn’t afford the books. That was the only reason. I made the decision – it was five years ago. My mother found a job after that. I wanted to go back to school, but I was too old by then. I’d like to continue in a secondary school, but I don’t know how. I enjoy hairdressing – I cut my friends’ hair.”

R and E, Egyptian sisters, 16 and 14 years old, from Colonia settlement, in fifth/sixth class of the Emin Duraku School catch-up class project in Gjakova

“Until the war our neighbours were Serbs and with their dogs they made it uncomfortable for us to go to school. They called us *Tsigani*.”

F, Egyptian young man, 18 years old, in fifth/sixth class of the Emin Duraku School catch-up class project in Gjakova

“I decided to come here to finish primary school and find a good job as a car mechanic. I hope to continue in a vocational school.”

P and S, Egyptian young women, 21 years old, from a village near Gjakova, in fifth/sixth class of the Emin Duraku School catch-up class project in Gjakova

S: “I had a younger brother and both my parents were working, so there was no-one to take care of him. I didn’t go to school regularly so I stopped altogether.”

P: “I had the same problem. I had to look after my younger sister. I completed six classes back then and I left six years ago. I hope this project will be prolonged.”

S: “I regret that I can’t go to a regular school now. I wish we could have an opportunity to go to a secondary school, and then get good jobs.”

P., Egyptian young man, 25 years old, in seventh/eighth class of the Emin Duraku School catch-up class project in Gjakova

“I am working in the municipal cleaning company Qabrati. If it’s possible it would be a good idea to find another job – I only get DM150 per month. The certificate from here will help. I’d like to be a driver.”

Recommendations

Provision 3.2 of the Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government in Kosovo, promulgated on 15 May 2001, stipulates that the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government shall observe and ensure internationally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights and freedoms set forth in:

- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the Protocols thereto
- the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Protocols thereto
- the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

- the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- the International Convention on the Rights of the Child
- the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
- the Council of Europe’s Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

The Secretary General of the United Nations has highlighted the responsibility of UNMIK to place human rights at the core of its mission and its special responsibility to uphold the human-rights standards that it has created.

Given that Provision 3.2 states that: “The provisions on rights and freedoms set forth in these instruments shall be directly applicable in Kosovo as part of this Constitutional Framework”⁸⁴

Save the Children recommends that:

The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)

- Intensifies efforts to promote and support the implementation of the objectives set out in the “Platform for Joint Action Regarding Kosovar Roma, Ashkalija and Egyptian Communities” and ensures that these efforts are maintained and supported by the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, including the new Assembly and Government due to be elected in November 2001.

- Implements the commitments it has itself entered into under the Joint Platform guaranteeing Roma/Gypsies' access to education, social welfare and assistance, and employment.
- Commissions participatory surveys in Roma/Gypsy communities on the impact of poverty, poor health and nutritional status and other socio-economic barriers to Roma/Gypsy access to education, in order to provide an informed basis for actions which will address these.

The UNMIK Department of Education and Science (DES)

- Prioritises, without further delay, the development of its policy on Non-Serb Minorities (Roma/Gypsies and others) and measures for its implementation including costings, schedules and the identification of designated personnel responsible for implementation.
- Consolidates and expands consultation on education with Roma/Gypsy representatives, ensuring that all communities are represented and that plural voices from within communities are heard, including those of women, parents and children.
- Establishes adult education and training institutions accessible to Roma/Gypsy communities in which both adult-literacy courses and the skills training are available, thus providing a bridge into education, the Kosovan economy and wider society for motivated Roma/Gypsy adults.
- Institutes measures to bring about a classroom culture that is supportive to Roma/Gypsy children, including training for teachers, school directors and municipal education administrators in human rights, and sensitisation to Roma/Gypsy culture. Efforts should be made to train and employ more teachers of Roma/Gypsy ethnicity.
- In furtherance of the above, considers the introduction into schools of Roma/Gypsy teacher assistants or animators.
- Ensures that resources are available to allow for the teaching of Romani culture, history and language, where communities and parents have requested it, and for the provision of teaching assistants, animators, or catch-up classes as necessary.
- Provides incentives and additional resources for Roma/Gypsies wishing to enter further or higher education and gives consideration to affirmative-action measures to increase the numbers of Roma/Gypsies represented in further and higher education.
- Ensures the restructuring of Kosovo's education system in a way that affords the greatest prestige to schools and other education institutions which feature and promote an intake of mixed ethnicity, have a multicultural ethic, and where teaching is conducted in the different languages of Kosovo *and* international languages.

The international organisations, including the UN Commission on Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education and the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, and the European Union

- Closely monitor developments in Kosovo with respect to the right to education of Roma/Gypsy children.

Kosovo: notes on the text

1 It should be noted that continuing instability in Kosovo has impacted upon the gathering of information for this report. Security considerations made it difficult to conduct research in the Serbian-dominated municipalities of the north and also resulted in more first-hand research being conducted among the Ashkali and Egyptians, to the disadvantage of the Roma.

2 In Kosovo only one of the three Gypsy communities self-identifies as “Roma” or “Romani”, and the other two (Ashkali and Egyptians) reject such description of themselves. In this report we will use the term “Roma/Gypsies” to refer to the three communities collectively, the term “Roma” to refer to the Roma alone, and the term “Gypsies” to refer to the Ashkali and Egyptians collectively.

3 Conversation of Dr Islami with his University of Prishtina colleague Dukagjin Pupovci, Director of the Kosovo Education Centre, 2001, reported to the author. Dr Islami’s booklet *Demographic Reality in Kosova* was published by the Kosovo Information Centre in 1994. His more detailed study *Evolucioni dhe Transicioni Demografik* was published in Albanian by Dukagjini press, Peja/Pec, 1999.

4 Tatjana Peric, “Kosovo Roma today: violence, insecurity, enclaves and displacement” in *Roma Rights* No. 1, 2000, http://errc.org/rr_nr1_2000/kosovo.shtml

5 The anti-Roma/Gypsy “pogroms” of summer and autumn 1999 have been documented by several organisations and individuals. The ERRC has compiled its writings on the situation of Roma/Gypsies in Kosovo into a publication entitled *Roma in the Kosovo Crisis*, available online at <http://errc.org/publications/indices/kosovo.shtml>. Human Rights Watch published a report in August 1999, documenting *Abuses against Serbs and Roma in the New Kosovo*, available at www.hrw.org/hrw/reports/1999/kosov2/. Nicolaus v. Holtey, *Zwei Reisen zur Erkundung der Lage der Ashkali und Roma im Kosovo*, 22 February 2000, available online at: www.bndlg.de/~wplarre/na000302.htm, details the attacks in the form of a diary – in German.

6 See the OSCE report: *Kosovo/Kosova As Seen, As Told, Part IV: The Impact of the Conflict on Communities and Groups in Kosovo Society: Kosovo "Gypsies" (Maxhupet) – Roma*, available online at www.osce.org/kosovo/reports/hr/part1/ch20.htm, and Paul Polansky, *The Gypsies of Kosova: A Survey of their Communities after the War*, available online at www.decani.yunet.com/gypsies.html

7 Z. Andjelkovic, S. Scepanovic and G. Princevic *Days of Terror (in the Presence of the Internal Forces)*, Centre for Peace and Tolerance, Belgrade, 2000.

8 Mefail Mustafa, Ashkali education activist, Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, interviewed by the author May 2001.

9 *Identity formation among minorities in the Balkans: The cases of Roma, Egyptians and Ashkali in Kosovo*, Minority Studies Society Studii Romani, Sofia, 2001, p. 33.

10 For example, some believe that many were inclined to over-estimate the numbers of Roma who were generally aligned on the Serb side of the Albanian-Serb conflict in the 1990s, such as in the case of Z. Andjelkovic, S. Scepanovic and G. Princevic *Days of Terror (in the Presence of the Internal Forces)*, Centre for Peace and Tolerance, Belgrade, 2000. The authors in this case are closely linked to the former FRY/Serbian authorities in Kosovo.

11 Ana Simic, *Assistance Programme to the Displaced Children of Leposavic and Plementina*, report from *Enfants du Monde*.

12 Paul Polansky, *The Gypsies of Kosova: A survey of their communities after the war*, 31 October 1999, available online at www.decani.yunet.com/gypsies.html

13 The full text of the resolution can be accessed at www.un.org/Docs/scres/1999/99sc1244.htm

14 During the period of its political autonomy within Socialist Yugoslavia, Kosovo did have a Constitution of its own.

15 This was born out of the failure to reach a negotiated formula that satisfied all the four Kosovan members of the Interim Administration Council – a consultative body representing Kosovo's main political factors: three Albanian parties and a Serb representative.

16 This period, in summer, autumn and winter 1999, when UNMIK had not fully established its control on the ground and municipal administrations were run by the KLA, is documented in the International Crisis Group's Balkans report No. 79 of 18 October 1999: *Waiting for UNMIK: Local Administration in Kosovo*, available online at www.crisisweb.org.

17 Gary Matthews, Principal Deputy SRSG, UNMIK press conference, 21 May 2001.

18 British KFOR was allocated the central AOR, based on Prishtina; US KFOR – the south-east, based on Gjilan/Gnjilane; German KFOR – the south-west, based on Prizren; Italian KFOR – the west, based on Peja/Pec; and French KFOR – the north, where the now-divided city of Mitrovica is the largest population centre.

19 Nicolaus v. Holtey, *Zwei Reisen zur Erkundung der Lage der Ashkali und Roma im Kosovo*, 22 February 2000, available online at: www.bndlg.de/~wplarre/na000302.htm, page 18 – abduction on 13 October 1999 of Xhemajl Qizmolli, an Ashkali man from Vushtri/Vucitrn who has reportedly not been seen again; Emily Shaw: "Unprotected: attacks continue against Kosovo's Romani minorities", in *Roma Rights*, Newsletter of the European Roma Rights Centre, No. 3, 2000, p. 66-67 – alleged beatings of Ashkali by KPC in Mitrovica in summer 1999 and September 2000.

20 All the UNMIK regulations are available online at www.un.org/peace/kosovo/pages/regulations/

21 Described and analysed in some detail in the UNHCR/OSCE *7th Joint Assessment of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo (period covering October 2000 to February 2001)*, pp. 23-24. Available online, together with previous such reports, at: www.osce.org/kosovo/publications

22 Ibid, p. 22.

23 Section 9.1.3 of the Constitutional Framework.

24 Respectively 9.1.7.(e) and 9.3.5.(a) & (b) of the Framework.

25 “His” as given in the Framework. For all the attention given to mechanisms for ensuring representation of ethnic minority communities, the Framework is notably gender-blind – making no provisions to promote the participation of women, and using the male personal pronoun throughout.

26 Provisions 9.1.12-17 of the Framework.

27 Provision 10.3.

28 Jim Adams, Gjakova LCO, author’s telephone interview, May 2001.

29 UNHCR/OSCE *7th Joint Assessment of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo (period covering October 2000 through February 2001)*, p. 24.

30 UNHCR/OSCE *6th Joint Assessment of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo (period covering June through September 2000)*, p. 17.

31 Hivzi Islami, *Demographic Reality in Kosova*, p. 48.

32 A Pipa, “The other Albania: A Balkan perspective”, in A Pipa and S Repishiti (eds), *Studies on Kosova*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1984. p. 250.

33 See Howard Clark, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*, Pluto Press, London, 2000, for a fuller description of the Serbian authorities’ measures and the Kosovar Albanians’ response to them.

34 Ibid.

35 UNICEF – *Education Situation Report No. 1: Bringing Children Back to School in Kosovo*, Prishtina, 27 July 1999.

36 World Bank, “Education” chapter in *Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Economic and Social Reforms for Peace and Reconciliation*, 1 February 2001, p. 109. Available online at: <http://www.seerecon.org/Kosovo/KosovoDonorPrograms/WBEconReport/wb-kosovo-econreport.htm>

37 Ibid, p. 109.

38 Clark (see note 33), p. 100.

39 Dukagjin Pupovci, Director of the Kosovo Education Centre, author’s interview, May 2001.

40 World Bank, “Education” (see note 36), p. 116.

41 Clark (see note 33), p. 104.

42 John Holmes, DES legal officer, author’s interview by telephone, April 2001.

43 Michael Daxner (international co-head of the UNMIK Department of Education and Science), discussion paper, unpublished, circulated by email in January 2001, p. 7.

44 UNMIK Press Release 528, Department of Education & Science, to advance decentralisation with introduction of education administration on municipal level, 9 March 2001.

45 World Bank, “Education” (see note 36), p. 113.

46 World Bank, “Education” (see note 36), p. 117-118.

47 Zef Osmani, Director of Gjakova Municipal Education Directorate, author’s interview, April 2001.

48 World Bank, “Education” (see note 36), p. 121.

49 Daxner (see note 43), p. 13.

50 Prachi Srivastava, UNMIK regional education officer (Prishtina – central region/AOR), author’s interview, May 2001.

51 UNHCR/OSCE *6th Joint Assessment of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo (period covering June through September 2000)*, p. 45.

52 Kosovo Education Centre, *Education in Kosova: Figures and Facts*, Prishtina, November 2000.

53 Author’s field research, Ferizaj/Urosevac, April 2001.

54 In Gjakova an enthusiastic 14-year-old Egyptian pupil was refused readmittance to a primary school in May 2001 after his parents removed him for a week to do some paid labouring work – author’s field research. In Ferizaj/Urosevac, an Ashkali parent described how one of his two children was told by the teacher to leave after he could only muster enough money for one child’s contribution to a DM18-per-pupil levy charged by the school to finance a new winter-heating system. Both these individual cases were resolved after NGO or parental lobbying of the respective schools’ directors, yet they illustrate a tendency which has probably resulted in many Roma/Gypsy pupils dropping out.

- 55 Michael Daxner has suggested using the new ninth grade as an intermediary phase to aid orientation in children's transition either to general or vocational high schools or to employment. Daxner (see note 43), p. 3-4
- 56 Kosovo Education Centre (see note 52), p. 16-17.
- 57 Kosovo Education Centre (see note 52), p. 26. The Kosovo Education Centre's data on Serbian schools are less precise than its data on education in the Albanian-dominated areas.
- 58 World Bank, "Education" (see note 36), p. 116.
- 59 Kosovo Education Centre (see note 52), p. 26.
- 60 World Bank, "Education" (see note 36), p. 116.
- 61 Kosovo Education Centre (see note 52), p. 16.
- 62 Dukagjin Pupovci, Director of the Kosovo Education Centre, author's interview, May 2001.
- 63 Dukagjin Pupovci, email communication with the author, June 2001.
- 64 World Bank, "Education" (see note 36), p. 116.
- 65 US Institute of Peace press release, *Kosovo Mayors Offer Bold Vision for Future*, 6 March 2001. Available online at <http://www.usip.org/oc/newsroom/pr20010306.html>
- 66 UNMIK DES draft paper *Preliminary Policy Development and Action Plan for Non-Serb Minorities*, 11 December 2000.
- 67 Ibid, p. 1.
- 68 Jim Adams, Gjakova LCO, author's telephone interview, May 2001.
- 69 Anna Lucia D'Emilio, UNICEF Head of Education in Kosovo, author's interview, April 2001.
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 Information on the Ferizaj/Urosevac survey was provided by the former regional OSCE Human Rights Officer who implemented it (now transferred to the Prishtina Region), interviewed by the author in April 2001, and an emailed statement from the Human Rights Division of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.
- 72 UNHCR/OSCE *6th Joint Assessment of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo (period covering June through September 2000)*, p. 21.
- 73 Christina Davis, OSCE Minority Adviser, Human Rights Dept; Katharina Ochse, DES Minorities Officer; Anna Lucia D'Emilio, UNICEF Head of Education, Kosovo; Mefail Mustafa, Ashkali education activist – author's interviews, April and May 2001.
- 74 *Building a Vision for Pilot Schools in Kosovo: The conceptual framework*, UNICEF Kosovo discussion paper, 2001.
- 75 UNHCR/OSCE *6th Joint Assessment of the Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Kosovo (period covering June through September 2000)*, p. 20.
- 76 Prachi Srivastava, UNMIK Regional Education Officer, Prishtina, author's interview, May 2001.
- 77 OSCE, *Kosovo/Kosova As Seen, As Told*, p. 13, available at www.osce.org/kosovo/reports/hr/part1/p5lip.htm
- 78 Bashkim Rrahmani, author's interview, May 2001.
- 79 Information on the Emin Duraku school catch-up class project was provided by the author's April and May 2001 interviews with Avdullah Qafani and Bashkim Rrahmani, and a visit to the project in May 2001.
- 80 Information on the *Solidarités* project was provided by the author's visit to it in May 2001, discussions with project staff and subsequent email communication with its manager Yael Aberdam.
- 81 Information about the *Enfants du Monde* programme, and quotations, are sourced from an *Enfants du Monde* document, *Assistance Programme to the Displaced Children of Leposavic and Plementina*, emailed to the author in June 2001 by its author, the programme's manager, Ana Simic.

82 Information on the IRC Program for Roma and Ashkalia Education was provided by the author's April and May 2001 interviews with Manjola Kola, the present programme manager, Prachi Srivastava, the former programme manager and two IRC documents written by Prachi Srivastava: the *Program for Roma and Ashkalia Education (PRAE) Final Program Report*, January 2001, and a *Discussion Paper on the Results of Phase 1 of the Roma/Ashkalia Education Program and Implications for Future Program Design*, 24 May 2000.

83 Prachi Srivastava, *Discussion Paper on the Results of Phase 1 of the Roma/Ashkalia Education Program and Implications for Future Program Design*, IRC, 24 May 2000, p. 17.

84 At a technical level, the applicability and line of responsibility for the implementation of these instruments is rather confused. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

(UNMIK) has adopted these standards, but is not bound to these treaties in the usual manner of a State Party. As Kosovo is still notionally a part of FRY/Serbia, the FRY government continues to bear responsibility for reporting to the relevant international monitoring bodies on the implementation in Kosovo of those of the above instruments to which it is a State Party (all bar the Second Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Although not yet a full member of the Council of Europe, FRY acceded to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities on 11 May 2001, to take effect from 1 September 2001), although it ceded control of Kosovo to NATO and UNMIK in June 1999.