

Council of Europe: Directorate of Youth and Sport

Report of Advisory Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Executive Summary

Introduction

In Bosnia and Herzegovina it would appear the concept of ‘structure’ is privileged above that of ‘content’. Given recent history and the painstaking construction of a constitution and form of governance that is designed to minimise the possibility of discrimination against any of the three main ethnic groups, this is perfectly understandable. However, without necessarily disturbing the foundations of the devolved federal structure of government, there does need to be a move towards a culture based on the rights of the individual citizen. A perspective that is currently dominated by the discourses of ‘ethnicity’ and ‘entity’ should be replaced by a sharper focus on the individual citizen. In the case of youth policy, this simply means that the rights of the individual young citizen – irrespective of ethnicity or place of residence – should be expressed in terms of entitlements which are universally available to all young people within the state of BiH. These individual rights of entitlement are uncontentious and can be adopted and adapted form best practice in European youth policy. A policy for BiH, in common with other states, should clarify the areas in which a young person is entitled to individual support. These packages of support should include:

- Ø Access to properly accredited, training and work experience – as far as possible tailored to individual needs;
- Ø Access to independent specialist careers information, advice, counselling, guidance and support;
- Ø Access to support, counselling and advice in the main areas in which young people might experience personal difficulties;
- Ø Clear information and advice on health, housing, social benefits and other related issues.
- Ø Access to recreational, sports, arts and outdoor experiences that are designed to develop talents and broaden horizons – including experiences that have an international dimension.

A Statutory Framework

It is not a requirement that youth policy should be regulated by a discrete and comprehensive legal framework. Nevertheless, it can be helpful to have a framework that covers the salient areas affecting young people. These might include such matters as the legal definition of youth (in terms of age) and the rules and procedures governing the registration of NGO’s working in the field. The Team was presented with a translation of the *Law on Organising Young People*; a piece of legislation drafted and enacted in

Republika Srpska. A critique of this document is presented in the substantive report. Summarised below are the main recommendations arising out of that critique.

1. Like any law, the statute (*Law on Organising Young People*) is not perfect. It does, though, represent a serious attempt to provide a rational statutory framework for youth policy in RS. Moreover, the text of the statute has drawn upon progressive examples of European practice in order to facilitate the introduction of European standards in youth policy. In the circumstances it deserves to be considered outside of RS. We do not suggest that the statute be accepted uncritically in the whole of BiH. Nevertheless, as so much hard work has already been undertaken, it would be churlish and wasteful not to learn from what has already been accomplished. As an example of good practice it should therefore form the basis of a framework law that has coverage across BiH. Having said that, improving amendments and additions should naturally also be considered.
2. The definition of youth (in terms of age) should be harmonised across BiH.
3. Youth impact assessments should be undertaken in respect of the privatisation programme.
4. It would be helpful if clarification of certain issues raised in the critique (contained in the substantive report) could be undertaken.

Policy Domain: Learning and Access to the Labour Market

Summarised below are the recommendations that relate to the broad policy domain of Learning and Access to the Labour Market.

Schools

1. It is important that the practice of ‘two schools under one roof’ is ended at the earliest possible time.
2. The History curriculum should (a) acknowledge and represent the complexity of the region’s past; and (b) develop skills of critical inquiry in students. Textbooks that support the above aims should be produced and reviewed on a regular basis.
3. If not already in place, comprehensive monitoring systems need to be established in order to analyse attendance and educational outcomes in terms of ethnicity (not merely in relation to the constituent nationalities of BiH), gender and locality. It is important to identify those groups of children and young people most likely to be vulnerable to truancy, exclusion, under-achievement and early exits from formal education. In BiH the position of Roma children requires close attention.
4. Equal Opportunities and Anti-Harassment /Bullying policies need to be in place in every school. Such policies should be communicated clearly to teachers, students and parents. It should also include the use of ‘home-school’ contracts in which students, parents and teachers would be signatories. This has implications for the training of teachers/headteachers in terms of policy awareness-raising, implementation and evaluation. Once again we would urge that particular

attention is given to the vulnerability of Roma children to both overt and covert forms of discrimination.

5. Teacher training should give due prominence to interactive teaching methods. Moreover, students and parents should be recognised as partners in education. This could be formalised in greater use of 'home-school' learning agreements.
6. Pupil/Student Councils should be established in schools. Specially designated teachers should be responsible for the development of such participatory structures within schools. Both teachers and pupils/students should have appropriate training available to them.
7. Where Schools Councils exist, they should be consulted by all levels of government.
8. Greater power and autonomy should be devolved to headteachers who, in consultation with students and parents (perhaps through locally constituted governing bodies in which they are represented), should be able to have the freedom and flexibility to make policy and operational decisions in respect of their schools. It should not, for example, be necessary to secure the consent of an elected politician or senior bureaucrat before inviting youth workers and Health Promotion practitioners to contribute to the local school curriculum.
9. Non-formal and informal education should be promoted within schools. Youth workers, Health Promotion professionals, careers advisors and other appropriate practitioners should be brought into the school environment in order to broaden the curriculum and enhance the democratic ethos of schools. It will also facilitate the widest possible coverage of important age-appropriate consciousness-raising campaigns (e.g., substance use, safe sex, diversity, anti-racism, etc.).
10. The value of non-formal education should be recognised through appropriate certification.

Higher Education Recommendations:

1. Independent quality assurance systems for higher education need to be put in place in respect of teaching, assessment and research.
2. A Charter of Entitlement for all students in higher education should be drafted.
3. All institutions of higher education should have clear and transparent complaints procedures in place.
4. Every institution of higher education should have in place departmental and/or faculty Staff-Student Consultative Committees.
5. Every higher education institution should appoint a senior member of staff to take responsibility for student welfare.
6. Those working in higher education should have access to staff development courses in such areas as teaching skills.
7. The funding arrangements for higher education in BiH should be reviewed and reformed. Ideally, funding should be at the level of the state.
8. A state-level law on higher education needs to be adopted as a matter of some urgency. The higher education system of BiH should be harmonised across the state's territory.
9. There should be compliance with the Bologna criteria and the Lisbon Convention.

10. When some of the above-mentioned measures have been taken, the European Credit Transfer System should be introduced.
11. Participation of staff and students in European exchange programmes should be maximised.
12. It is important to consolidate and support the development of research in higher education. State-wide networks of researchers in the main disciplines should be established. These can then be linked to European research networks. It is most important that such developments take place in the field of youth policy.

Access to Labour Market: Recommendations

1. Whilst it is recognised that the aims of education are wider than merely servicing the demands of the economy, the courses provided in schools, colleges and universities must bear some direct relationship to the labour market.
2. It is a cause for concern that many young people appear to be ignorant of those areas of the economy in which growth is most likely to occur. This results in many young people making ill-informed choices about their education and vocational training paths. The Team is not clear about what form career guidance takes in BiH. It would appear, though, to be rather ineffective. In the circumstances the present arrangements should be reviewed critically. We would recommend the establishment of a Vocational Training and Careers Advice Service that provides guidance to young people from at least 12 years of age until early adulthood. Such a service obviously needs to be provided within different settings: school, community, higher education and outreach. This will ensure maximum coverage of children and young people. As far as possible in an under-resourced society, the service provided should be individualised. This is consistent with the European ideal of providing “*personalised action plans*” (Commission of the European Communities, 2005: 16).
3. Those groups of young people that are most vulnerable to unemployment should be identified, targeted and engaged via appropriate outreach strategies.
4. The development of “*entrepreneurial mindsets*” amongst young people (Commission of the European Communities, 2005: 6) is a European priority. In the case of BiH this would seem to be a particularly important aim of youth policy. In the circumstances appropriate training, advice, seedcorn funds and other incentives should be made accessible to those young people with the potential to realise their business plans.
5. An expansion of participation in European educational, internship, work experience and training programmes should be given a high priority. We would recommend, in particular, the SOCRATES and Leonardo da Vinci Programmes.

Policy Domain: Youth Work

Summarised below are the recommendations in relation to the policy domain of Youth Work.

1. As far as existing resources permit, there should be an expansion in youth centres. Such centres play a vital role in engaging young people in constructive, creative and rewarding activities. In some cases youth centres are extremely important places for vulnerable young people to meet. As such, youth workers can be effective in reducing the risk of potentially harmful behaviours, as well as diverting some from crime. Indeed, it is acknowledged that for many hard-pressed parents, youth centres fulfil an important child protection function.
2. Ideally, a co-management model should be introduced into all youth centres. Training programmes (for young people and youth workers) should be made available to facilitate the expansion of this form of management.
3. The privatisation of facilities used by youth should be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the money raised will be reinvested in youth centres and/or activities that are more effective and appropriate. A youth impact assessment should be undertaken in relation to any programme of privatisation.
4. The use of detached youth work projects should obviously be targeted in those areas where particular groups of young people are disengaged from mainstream youth centre provision. If required, training should be made available. Exchanges with successful schemes and projects in other parts of Europe could be organised.
5. There is a long-term need to develop training, qualification and career structures for youth work in BiH. In the meantime, some education and training programmes could be accessed via distance learning and mentoring.
6. A number of existing training programmes are considered relevant to this area of work. These are detailed in the substantive report.

Policy Domain: Health, Welfare and Social Protection

Summarised below are the recommendations in this area of policy.

Health: Recommendations

1. More data need to be collected in relation to the health of young people.
2. The development of age-appropriate, de-medicalised counselling services for young people is a high priority. This should include confidential telephone helplines and websites (with email contacts). Such resources are important for all young people, but particularly for rural youth.
3. There would appear to be the need for a major information campaign in respect of sexual and reproductive health. This should commence in schools, but also be promoted via youth work activities and the mass media. A strategy needs to be developed in relation to providing accessible, reliable, confidential and age-appropriate advice and guidance. Teachers, youth workers, health promotion practitioners and young people (as peer educators) all have important parts to play within this strategy.
4. Within the general information and advice strategy, specific groups of young people will need to be identified and targeted. An obvious example would be gay and lesbian youth. It is important to 'normalise' issues of sexual preference and choice.

5. The importance of sporting and recreational activities in promoting good health is well understood. It is noted that sports facilities are, for perfectly understandable reasons, currently underdeveloped in BiH. It is, however, extremely important that a sporting and recreational programme aimed at youth is promoted vigorously.
6. Team sports are widely recognised as offering an opportunity to impart key lessons in social learning and citizenship. The negotiation of inter-community relations in sporting settings is also a feature of this approach. In the circumstances the expansion of such initiatives across BiH should be supported.

Welfare and Social Protection: Recommendations

1. Policy and service delivery in relation to children and families need to be aligned carefully with the main domains of youth policy.
2. The Team is unclear about the organisation and delivery of the personal social services in BiH. A review of the training needs of those working in the personal social services should nevertheless be undertaken. It is important that social work in BiH draws upon best practice from the rest of Europe and beyond.
3. The role of family group conferencing in the area of child welfare and protection should be considered. This working method may be particularly appropriate in a society where the 'state' may still be viewed with a high degree of suspicion.

Policy Domain: Housing

Summarised below is the recommendation in respect of this particular policy domain.

1. A review of youth housing issues needs to be undertaken and a strategy developed. Whilst acknowledging the considerable difficulties of the present situation, it is important that young people have access to good quality and affordable accommodation. Quite apart from the fact that this will benefit young people, it should also facilitate the greater mobility of labour.

Policy Domain: Criminal Justice

Summarised below are the recommendations in respect of this area of policy.

1. The need to collect reliable data and conduct research (e.g., patterns of crime, effectiveness of sentences, etc.) is an essential pre-requisite for developing evidence-based policy.
2. There should be closer co-operation between Social Welfare Centres and other agencies (education, health, NGO's, etc.). This will help to reduce delays in the sentencing process and lead to more effective delivery of criminal sanctions (including community-based sentences).
3. The practise of exposing juveniles to the company of adult prisoners in custodial institutions should be ended as soon as humanly possible.

4. In line with international conventions, the deprivation of liberty and the use of custodial sentences should be used only as a last resort for children and young people. International research also shows quite clearly that custodial institutions (a) expose young people to physical and moral danger; (b) weaken ties between young people and their families and communities (thus making community reintegration more problematic); (c) increase the likelihood of recidivism; and (d) are cost ineffective. In the circumstances it makes more sense to strengthen those community-based sentencing options that aim to address the underlying reasons for offending (family problems, low income, poor education, under-developed social skills, substance misuse, etc.).
5. Improved training for social welfare and criminal justice practitioners (including police officers) is a high priority.
6. Good practice in such areas as restorative justice and diversion from the formal criminal justice system needs to be shared across BiH. Examples from other countries should also be explored.

Policy Themes and Issues

The following sections present the recommendations in respect of salient youth policy themes and issues.

Information: Recommendation

1. A Youth Information Strategy needs to be devised. Particular attention should be given to prioritising public information campaigns and identifying high risk groups. The Youth Information Strategy in BiH should be integrated into European information networks.

Mobility: Recommendations

1. Participation in European mobility programmes needs to be increased.
2. It is important to establish a good national agency to manage the European Youth Programme.
3. The internal administrative processes for issuing visas should be reviewed. Particular attention should be given to exploring the possibility of streamlining the system and, possibly, devolving some functions to a more local level.

Equal Opportunities and Diversity: Recommendation

1. The issue of equal opportunities needs to go beyond the understandable preoccupation with the three constituent national communities of BiH. The discourse must be expanded to include such areas as gender, sexual orientation and people from minority ethnic communities such as the Roma. The three aforementioned areas need to be prioritised in terms of youth policy development.

Research: Recommendations

1. The establishment of a research and evaluation culture is an essential pre-requisite for the development of evidence-based youth policy. Accordingly, we would recommend that a Youth Research Network is established in BiH. This could, in turn, be linked to the existing European Youth Research Network. The representation of the BiH youth research community at the European level is extremely important. The linkage of these two Networks should lead to good practice being shared and disseminated.
2. The possibility of expanding research capacity in BiH should be explored in terms of holding training events in respect of research methods. Academic staff from universities across Europe could contribute to such events.
3. A needs analysis of children and young people should be undertaken as soon as is practicable.
4. Attention is drawn to the European Knowledge Centre, the SALTO SSE Website and other resources.

Training: Recommendation

1. In the substantive report attention is drawn to a variety of training programmes for young people, youth workers, policy makers and administrators.

Youth Participation: Recommendations

1. The formation of local youth councils across BiH should be given every encouragement and support.
2. The establishment of a state-wide National Youth Council is an absolute priority. This democratic forum should be an influential social actor in the development of youth policy in BiH. Moreover, the existence of a National Youth Council would entitle BiH to membership of the European Youth Forum and access to other European networks. It is important to state that the Council of Europe can be approached for consultancy in respect of establishing a democratic and functioning National Youth Council in BiH.
3. The National Youth Council of BiH should be entitled to automatic representation on the Youth Commission.

Youth Commission: Recommendations

1. The proposed Youth Commission could play a key role in the development of an integrated youth policy. It should assess and evaluate all aspects of government policy in relation to the impact it may have upon young people. This, however, is a daunting challenge. The adoption of the 'youth paragraph' principle by the various levels of government in BiH would, perhaps, enable the Youth Commission to audit the work of the different domains of social policy more effectively.
2. The process of selection to the Youth commission should be as transparent as possible.

3. The elected Youth Council sector should be represented on the Youth Commission. Ideally, once formed, the state-wide Youth Council should elect its members to the Youth Commission.
4. The ideal of 'representativeness' should not be confined to issues of ethnicity. An inclusive approach to membership of the Youth Commission should be encouraged to include representatives from diverse social and educational backgrounds. Needless to say, the matter of gender should not be forgotten.
5. The agenda of the Youth commission should be open. It should be set by the widest possible cross-section of youth policy actors.
6. The budget of the Youth Commission should be commensurate with its wide terms of reference.

Volunteering: Recommendation

1. Volunteering programmes should be expanded.

Delivery: Recommendations

1. Given the complex system of governance within BiH it is absolutely essential that Youth Policy officers are identified at every level of government (state, entity, municipality, canton, etc.). Policies need to be formulated in terms of strategies, action plans and measurable objectives. This will ensure that there is measure of accountability inscribed within the system. Youth Policy ministers and local government officers must be clear about their role in both engaging with young people in decision-making processes and delivering policy on the ground. Management training should be made available to policy makers and administrators at every level of government.
2. Although comprehensive data on the socio-economic condition of youth is unavailable, it is safe to say that many young people are living in circumstances of deprivation. Consequently, it is important that all localities form partnership fora in which the key economic players (businesses, Chambers of Commerce, local government, donor organisations, etc.) meet in order to develop local action plans to address the salient issues affecting young people.

Conclusion: Recommendations

This concluding section proposes recommendations not included in the body of the Report. These are summarised below.

1. BiH should develop a National Youth Policy.
2. BiH should invite the Council of Europe to conduct an International Review of its National Youth Policy.
3. If not already in existence, BiH should establish Inspectorates in the key domains of youth policy. In line with the previously mentioned practice of 'youth paragraphs', these Inspectorates should be tasked with addressing the impact of specific social policies on young people.

4. BiH should establish the independent office of Commissioner of Children and Youth. Children and young people should play a role in appointing the Principal Commissioner. As it is to this constituency that s/he should be accountable, young people therefore need to be represented on a management board. The focus of the work of the Commissioner would be on broad issues of policy rather than the championing of individual cases (unless such cases represented issues of wider concern).
5. Every encouragement should be given to supporting co-operation in youth policy across the region of South-East Europe. BiH should also support moves to institutionalise regional frameworks of co-operation in relation to youth policy.

In conclusion we would emphasise the hope that this Report marks the beginning of a dialogue between the CoE and BiH. This dialogue should be open and inclusive. We trust that this conversation will prove to be of value to all of those concerned with the future of youth policy in BiH and Europe. Youth policies are often expected to bear the unfair burden of our societies' hopes and ambitions for the future. This unfair burden can, however, be lightened just a little through international co-operation.

Council of Europe: Directorate of Youth and Sport

Report of Advisory Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Jonathan Evans (Rapporteur Generale to the Advisory Mission)

1. Introduction:

The Council of Europe's Directorate of Youth and Sport undertake two main types of report in relation to member-states. The first, and more well-established, is the product of an international youth policy review. The Review has three clear aims: to advise on national youth policy; to identify components of youth policy which might inform an approach to 'youth policy' across Europe; and to contribute to a learning process about the development and implementation of youth policy (Williamson, 2002: 5). This is an open-ended process in the sense that member-states engage with the Council of Europe on a voluntary basis. As Peter Lauritzen puts it:

"It consists in principle of inviting a member country to produce a national youth report in the first place and then inviting a team of international experts to take a look both at this report and at a number of selected situations in the youth field within the country. Through this 'foreigner's eye', we believe we create a critical distance from, and positive contribution to the National Report and situation, to:

- *contribute to improved good governance in the field of youth;*
- *create a body of knowledge which will slowly grow into an evidence-based system of youth policy and co-operation in the youth field at European level;*
- *promote examples of good practice;*
- *contribute to the development of standards on good youth policy at national, European and international level."*

(Lauritzen, 2004: 5)

The Report by an International Review Team on a national youth policy is, of course, published and subject to subsequent discussion and debate within the member-state, the Council of Europe and beyond. Whilst an Advisory Mission Report is also requested by the government of a member-state, it is not a public document in the sense that it has a much more limited circulation. It remains the decision of the member-state government as to whether this document is released for a wider audience. Three other important distinctions need to be made. Firstly, an international review of a national youth policy requires the prior production of a national youth policy document by the host member-state. Secondly, such international reviews ordinarily involve two visits by the international team of

experts, whereas Advisory Missions tend to make one short visit. Thirdly, in the case of Advisory Missions, the government of the member-state invites a panel of international experts to focus on particular questions or issues. These more limited terms of reference mean that a comprehensive evaluation of youth policy is not required in this case. Indeed, given the constraints on time and resources, such an evaluation is impracticable.

In light of the above comments, it might be helpful to offer some general comments about the Advisory Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Firstly, the members of the Advisory Mission comprised Mr. Jan Vanhee (Belgium Youth and Sport Service in the Ministry of the Flemish Community), Ms. Sunduss Al-Hassani (Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisations), Ms. Zsuzsanna Szelenyi (Deputy to the Executive Director of the European Youth Centre in Budapest), Mr. Peter Lauritzen (Head of the Youth Department, Directorate of Youth and Sport) and Mr Jonathan Evans (Cardiff School of Social Sciences, Youth Researcher and Rapporteur-Generale). Fuller biographical details of the team members are provided in Appendix 3. Whilst the production of this Report was the result of a collaborative process, it is important to make the point that the rapporteur takes full responsibility for the document as a whole.

Secondly, the main sources of information for this Report comprised the visit to Bosnia & Herzegovina by the Advisory Mission between 29th March and 2nd April (see Appendix 2 for details of the full programme); a variety of documents presented to the Mission during our visit (see Appendix 4 for a full list of documents presented); and individual research conducted by the rapporteur and other members of the Team (see the References section of this Report). Whilst the Team did not have the benefit of working within the framework of a national youth policy report – for perfectly understandable reasons, one might add – some documentation produced within Bosnia & Herzegovina proved particularly helpful: those produced by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia & Herzegovina (2004); the Youth Council of Republic of Srpska (2005); the Republika Srpska Government (2004); and Mujkic & Vasic (2004 and 2005). It will be noted in the text, moreover, that information provided by such key organisational players as GTZ and the UN has been invaluable. Crucially, of course, it was the Programme of Meetings, chance encounters and journeys through the country that made the deepest impressions on the international team. Our meetings with politicians, policy makers, administrators, practitioners and young people helped us to develop insights that would not have been possible by merely perusing documents and visiting websites. It should be recorded here that we were invariably met with warmth, generosity and candour. Moreover, given the recent traumas of the region, the legacies of war and the challenging nature of present socio-economic difficulties, one is reminded of Baudelaire's observation about 'the heroism of everyday life'. The people we met were remarkable and we wish to convey our gratitude to them for the time they spent with the Team. Inevitably, historical undercurrents influence contemporary life in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nevertheless, on the whole we encountered people who wished to find a

negotiable route to a shared future. We trust that this Report goes some small way towards assisting that process.

Notwithstanding the above comments, it is important to issue a few cautionary 'health warnings' in respect of the Advisory Mission's Report. As has already been stated, this document should not be regarded as an evaluation on the state of youth policy in Bosnia & Herzegovina. As previously mentioned, the Team has not had the advantage of receiving a National Report nor has it had the amount of time required in the country to explore all lines of inquiry and interest. Inevitably, we have relied heavily upon the documents presented to us and the programme of events organised on our behalf. There may well be relevant research and policy documents of which we remain unaware. Other documents, moreover, may be inaccessible to the rapporteur because English language translations are unavailable. Time, of course is always too short. We would very much like to have met more people and spent a longer period in the country. For the rapporteur the process of writing this Report on Youth Policy has been rather like assembling a jigsaw without being in possession of all of the pieces. It is not entirely clear whether the missing pieces are mislaid, concealed from view because one is looking in the wrong place, or simply non-existent. In the circumstances the observations and conclusions of this Report can only be provisional. Hopefully, they can be regarded as the opening remarks in a dialogue between BiH and the Council of Europe. If the Team has overlooked important issues, policies, practices and research then we must be told. People resident in BiH are the experts on their own country: obviously they will have a much better idea of what is happening on the ground. If there are lacunae, then we must identify them together. Moreover, if there are differences in understanding and sharp divisions of opinion, then we must debate these matters further. The Report is not, therefore, presented as an adjudication. Rather, it is offered in a spirit of critical friendship: it raises questions, makes criticisms and offers tentative proposals for future action.

Although a written brief was not presented to the Team by the state of Bosnia & Herzegovina, a number of issues seemed to emerge as being important to those we met. Firstly, the concept of a Youth Commission. Secondly, the legislative framework within which youth policy should take place. An example of this was presented to us in the form of the Republika Srpska's proposal for a *Law on Organising Young People*. Thirdly, the question of youth participation. Finally, the practical ways in which Bosnia & Herzegovina might be assisted to align its policies, practices and general service delivery more closely to that of the Council of Europe and the European Union member-states. A number of people we met were quite open about their long-term commitment to accession to the European Union. Indeed some perceived it as the best hope for the future health and well-being of the country's citizens. The assistance requested of the Team was twofold: firstly, a general critique of how policy compares with best practice in the rest of Europe; and secondly, advice on how to access certain programmes for young people through the Council of Europe, European Union and other

funding streams. The latter request is particularly important. It would be easy enough to produce a Report that simply comprises a ‘wish list’ of best practice in the field. It is recognised, however, that certain measures can only be facilitated with the support of additional resources. As far as possible, we have attempted to identify areas where youth policy can be supported by European/international programmes and/or other funding streams. Having said that, there are certainly some areas where changes in practice are resource-neutral. As far as possible, the Report’s recommendations combine high challenges with practical solutions.

2. Context:

2.1 The European Context of Youth Policy

Given that this Report is the product of an Advisory Mission from the Council of Europe, it seems logical to provide an account of the context within which youth policy in Europe has developed in recent years. The development of policy indicators by the Council of Europe is, perhaps, particularly relevant. Whilst it is not our intention to present a detailed summary of the Council of Europe’s report on youth policy indicators (Council of Europe: 2003a; see also Appendix 1), we considered it helpful to highlight some of the salient ideas contained within this document. Whilst the youth policy of BiH was not ‘inspected’ in strict accordance with the indicators, our approach has inevitably been influenced by this framework – along with other ideas contained in key European documents. In the circumstances it therefore seems only fair to devote some space to those ideas that have come to form the common currency in contemporary discourses on European youth policy. This is not to suggest that these ideas and concepts are beyond challenge. However, it is important that policy actors in BiH understand the perspectives that have informed the production of this Report.

As mentioned previously, a substantial body of international policy statements and declarations on youth policy have emerged over recent years. These include the final texts of the Council of European Ministers Responsible for Youth; the United Nations First Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth in Lisbon in 1998; the reference to youth contained in the Declaration of the European Council in Laeken in 2001; and, of course, the publication of the European Commission’s seminal white paper, *A New Impetus for European Youth* (2001). Significantly, the 6th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth (Council of Europe, 2003b) agreed that – despite the wide diversity of social and economic conditions of the member states - there should be a common commitment to the citizenship rights of young people. This included,

“...access to fundamental rights, to education, the labour market, health care, culture, technological innovations and the possibility to enjoy decent living conditions as a prerequisite for their active participation in society.”
(Council of Europe, 2003a).

These important policy commitments are inevitably, perhaps, rather broad. Ultimately, though, they require further development. It is in that spirit that the ‘youth indicators’ paper poses a series of interrelated questions:

- *“Are young people, in Europe and worldwide, carrying a distinctly new set of values, attitudes and lifestyles? What social changes could predictably come about as a result of young people’s activity? What are the implications for the social and political institutions, as we know them?”*
- *Are youth trends global, and how do they translate locally in western, as well as in the transition countries in Europe, in conflict areas and the developing world?*
- *How do social structures and institutions favour and/or obstruct young people’s influence? What strategies could help young people have more influence on social development; individually, as well as collectively?*
- *What are the indicators allowing to measure young people’s influence on social change? How does young people’s action or inaction alter the landscape of knowledge, work, leisure, community and power?*
- *What are the indicators to assess governance in the youth field? What is a youth policy, what does it aim at and how can its impact be highlighted in terms of accountability, effectiveness and coherence?”*

(Council of Europe, 2003a: 3)

The Report notes that youth ministers have identified a number of trends affecting the lives of young people across Europe:

- “1. *The experience for young people of longer and more complex transitions to adult life (examples: extended full-time education and training and longer stay in parental home).*
2. *High youth unemployment and over-representation of young people in marginal and precarious employment.*
3. *High economic reliance on families and social network and support systems.*
4. *Increasing inequalities of educational opportunity.*
5. *Insecurity, increasing violence suffered by youth and committed by them, fears of globalisation and the destruction of the environment; in some cases fear of armed conflict, incalculable health risks.”*

(Council of Europe, 2003a: 4-5)

The governing ideas of youth policy have clustered around concepts of ‘learning’, ‘inclusion/social cohesion’, ‘citizenship/participation’, and ‘safety/health/well-being’ (Council of Europe, 2003a: 4). Arising out of these ideas, the Report argues that youth policy should have the following aims:

- “a. *To invest purposefully in young people in a coherent and mutually reinforcing way, wherever possible through an opportunity focused rather than problem oriented approach.*

- b. *To involve young people both in the strategic formulation of youth policies and in eliciting their views about the operational effectiveness of policy implementation.*
- c. *To create the conditions for learning, opportunity and experience which ensure and enable young people to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies to play a full part in both the labour market and in civil society.*
- d. *To establish systems for robust data collections both to demonstrate the effectiveness of youth policies and to reveal the extent to which policy gaps exist in relating to effective service delivery to young people from certain social groups, in certain areas or in certain conditions.*
- e. *To display a commitment to reducing such policy gaps where they demonstrably exist.”*

(Council of Europe, 2003a: 4)

The notion that young people are not merely the passive recipients of policy is something that has been recognised by European ministers with responsibility for youth. According to the Report, this perspective is crystallised in the ideas expressed below:

- “1. *Creativity and innovation and a tendency to understand oneself as a cultural producer, both individually and within reference groups.*
- 2. *A high level of ethical standards when judging institutions both nationally and at a European level indicating deep democratic convictions.*
- 3. *Active participation in community affairs, at local level and within networks and action groups.*
- 4. *Open and positive attitudes to a heterogeneous Europe, standing up for cultural, ethnic and social diversity, even if intolerant social and xenophobic attitudes of some cannot be ignored (summary of final declaration).”*

(Council of Europe, 2003a: 5)

In recognition of the interactive relationship between policy designers and young people as active agents, the youth policy product is conceptualised in terms of packages of opportunity and experience. These packages are listed in the Report as follows:

- “1. *Learning: (lifelong, formal and non-formal) education and training, recognition of non-formally acquired skills and competencies.*
- 2. *Access to new technologies.*
- 3. *Specialist personal advice and support, career guidance.*
- 4. *Information.*
- 5. *Access to health services and social protection.*
- 6. *Access to housing.*
- 7. *Access to paid work.*
- 8. *Mobility.*
- 9. *Justice and youth rights (for example to assistance).*
- 10. *Opportunities to participation and active citizenship.*
- 11. *Recreational, cultural and social.*

12. *Sports and outdoor activities.*
 13. *Away from home, youth exchange and international experiences.*
 14. *Safe and secure environment.*
- (Council of Europe, 2003a: 6-7)

Such packages of opportunity and experience are typically delivered by ministries across the policy domains of education and training; employment and youth employment; health and well-being; housing; social protection; family policy and child protection; leisure and cultural policy (sports, arts and volunteering); and youth justice (Council of Europe, 2003a: 7). Common to all domains are the cross-cutting themes of information, participation and active citizenship, and power (Council of Europe, 2003a: 7). The issue of power, it should be noted, needs to be considered at two levels. The first concerns the legal status of young people in its application to participation.

“Can young people claim certain youth policy opportunity packages for themselves? On measures imposed on them – can they veto them?”
(Council of Europe, 2003a: 7)

The second level at which power should be considered concerns the extent to which declared policy aspirations are supported in practical, material terms. It relates to,

“...the budgets put at the disposal of special youth policy measures: when are they enlarged, when are they cut back? Does this mainly refer to local policies, does it intervene into ministerial domains? Are these movements co-ordinated or separate? What is the hard core of youth policy items in budget terms – what cannot be touched and how can youth budgets be defended in legal terms?”
(Council of Europe, 2003a: 7)

The implication is quite clear. Adequate resourcing and the effective management of delivery systems are critical if policy aims are to be translated into tangible opportunity packages. Failure to address critical questions of practical application will inevitably lead to policy gaps and shortfalls in service provision.

“The reasons for this policy gap may be resource constraints, inappropriate structures, an absence of a suitably skilled workforce, a poorly designed policy, unrealistic objectives, or an absence of a sufficiently broad range of measures. This list is not exhaustive, but different reasons for the policy gap may overlap. Moreover, this gap may affect different sub-groups of young people to a different degree; hence there may be disproportionately negative consequences for groups such as rural young people, minorities, those who leave school prematurely, or young women. The resultant policy challenge will be, how to improve the package of opportunity and experience to ensure that access to it is created for such disproportionately disadvantaged groups of young people.”
(Council of Europe, 2003a: 9)

The Report reminds us, moreover, that youth policy is values-based and therefore concerned with such essential principles as human rights; equality of opportunity; the affirmation of multiculturalism and the heterogeneity of all national populations; and access and inclusion (Council of Europe, 2003a: 7). The centrality of these values to youth policy and practice is at the heart of any evaluation.

Policy analysis in the youth field has, of course, been greatly influenced by the *European Commission White Paper – A New Impetus for European Youth* (European Commission, 2001a). Its impact has, indeed, caused ripples well beyond the European Union. According to this document and the *White Paper on European Governance* (2001b), European public policy should be based on clear, transparent and democratic principles. Five fundamental principles are duly cited: openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence (European Commission, 2001a: 7). These are summarised as follows:

“Openness: providing information and active communication for young people, in their language, so that they understand the workings of Europe and of the policies which concern them.

Participation: ensuring young people are consulted and more involved in the decisions which concern them and, in general, the life of their communities.

Accountability: developing a new and structured form of cooperation between the Member States and the European institutions, in order to find ways, at the appropriate level of accountability, of meeting the aspirations of young people.

Effectiveness: making the most of what young people have to offer so that they can respond to the challenges of society, contribute to the success of the various policies which concern them and build the Europe of the future.

Coherence: developing an overview of the various policies which concern young people and the different levels at which intervention is useful.”
(European Commission, 2001: 8)

The aim of developing coherent and ‘integrated’ national youth policies within this European framework has been conceptualised by Williamson (2002: 35) in terms of ‘the five ‘C’s’ (or components) for effective delivery: coverage, capacity, competence, co-ordination and cost. ‘Coverage’ relates to geography, age groupings and social groups. The geographical dimension can, for example, be very important in those countries where policy is developed within an urban context (the majority?) and the implications for delivery to rural youth are thereby neglected. ‘Capacity’ refers to the horizontal and vertical structures that are in place to deliver policy and includes the effectiveness of the relationship between government and youth non-governmental organisations. ‘Competence’ addresses workforce development issues such as professional training, development and qualifications. ‘Co-ordination’ refers to the vertical and horizontal links in the administration of youth policy in such key domains as health, education,

accommodation and criminal justice. An analysis under this heading would investigate the extent to which services are 'joined-up'. Finally, 'cost' covers the resources committed to the delivery of services. An analysis of the distribution of budgetary support to the various departments yields a reasonable exposition of the priorities of a specific youth policy. The five 'components' described provide a useful framework within which national policies can be analysed. Such an analysis has not been applied in the case of Bosnia & Herzegovina because this is an Advisory Mission rather than a Review. Moreover, a great deal more evidence would be required in order to conduct such an analysis. Nevertheless, the framework has influenced the way in which the Team has reflected upon the condition of youth policies in BiH.

Some more recent references in respect of European Youth Policy should also be mentioned: the *European Youth Pact* (Commission of the European Communities, 2005: 14-17), *Communication from the Commission to the Council on European policies concerning youth* (Commission of the European Communities, 2005) and the *Presidency Conclusions* (Council of the European Union, 2005). There is insufficient space here to provide a detailed summary of the contents of these texts. Suffice to say, these documents represent a serious attempt to address many of the concerns of young people already mentioned. The *European Youth Pact*, in particular, promotes the concept of active citizenship. On 30th May of this year the *Communication on European Policies concerning youth* was adopted by the European Commission. The text is a follow-up to the adoption of the *European Youth Pact* by the European Council in March 2005. The document gives young people a key part in the renewed Lisbon partnership for economic growth and employment. Additionally, it proposes taking action for young people in the fields of employment; integration and social advancement; education and training; mobility; and the reconciliation of work and family life.

2.2.: The National Context of Youth Policy: Preliminary Observations about Bosnia and Herzegovina

It would be presumptuous to attempt a comprehensive account of the recent historical events that have shaped the current national context. It would be presumptuous on three grounds. Firstly, no-one within the international team would claim expertise in the history, politics and culture of the region. Secondly, the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina do not need to be lectured by foreigners about what they already know. Thirdly, in common with all histories, the country's past is the subject of contestation: there are no authorised versions of history on which everyone can agree. The purpose of what follows is, therefore, quite simply to share some of the Team's observations about the background and context within which future policy must be developed and delivered. Our interest in so doing is to acknowledge some of the possible obstacles and difficulties that might impede progress towards the realisation of a modern, prosperous and democratic state. Our priority, after all, is on helping to facilitate a consensus about the future of youth policy rather than a common view of the past.

There are a number of points and assumptions that should to be shared before proceeding to specific proposals in relation to youth policy in Bosnia & Herzegovina. Firstly, as foreigners, we need to state our complete rejection of some of the essentialised notions and stereotypes that circulate in respect of the people who live in the former Yugoslavia. For people in Western Europe, the Balkans has historically been regarded as a mysterious, inscrutable and - periodically - perilous region. This image was partly dispelled when the Former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia became a cheap and popular destination for Western tourists in the 1970's and 1980's. Anecdotes about beautiful beaches, stunning landscapes and friendly local people displaced the old mythologies. It was, therefore with a mixed sense of horror and incredulity that people in the West watched the disturbing scenes on their TV screens as the former Yugoslavia imploded: surreally, familiar postcard images formed the backdrop to sustained and bloody fighting. Most people, of course, had only the faintest idea of what had caused this violent denouement to the communist state in the region. Thus, the old clichés about ethnic hatreds were rediscovered and recycled uncritically. Stereotypes were dusted down and used as distancing devices so that the Balkans region was presented as somewhere 'other' than Europe. Glenn (2003: xxi) comments upon the process.

“For many decades Westerners gazed on these lands as if on an ill-charted zone separating Europe’s well-ordered civilization from the chaos of the Orient.

Today the language of observers is less romantic but the sentiments that distance and mythologize the Balkans persist. It is in fact only recently, since the turn of the 20th century, that the world has adopted the adjective ‘Balkan’ and derivatives like ‘Balkanization’ as pejorative terms. If somebody displays a ‘Balkan mentality’, for example, it implies a predilection for deceit, exaggeration and unreliability. As Yugoslavia began to disintegrate in 1989, generalizations about the peoples who inhabit the region, and their histories, were spread by media organizations that had long ago outlawed such clichés when reporting from Africa, the Middle East or China. The Balkans apparently enjoys a special exemption from the rules against stereotyping.”

The power of these negative stereotypes and clichés continue to exert an influence on the way in which the people of the former Yugoslavia are regarded abroad. This may not be true in the case of foreign academics, policy advisors, diplomats, politicians and friends. Nevertheless, this image of the Balkans, minted during the armed conflicts of the 1990's, continues to shine brightly in many circles of the international business community. Places like Bosnia and Herzegovina – though not necessarily regarded as on the brink of war or civil disorder - are still perceived as essentially unstable and unpromising territories for the potential investor. Despite the excellent work being undertaken by many in the field, Bosnia & Herzegovina - along with some of her close neighbours - is not considered to be a particularly attractive investment opportunity. The 'image problem' presents a major challenge to the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As unfair as all of this may seem, it is important to acknowledge that no nation has complete control over its 'image rights'. In the circumstances, there is little choice other than to construct the best possible social, political and economic environment under these very

difficult conditions. In so doing, it is to be hoped that investment and prosperity will follow. Youth policy obviously has a very important part to play in building the new infrastructure of Bosnia & Herzegovina.

The second point that should be acknowledged relates to the international community - of which, of course, this Team is a small part. One of the themes in the history of this region is the role that has been played by the 'great powers'. As mentioned previously, this is not the place to engage in a detailed historical disquisition, but there needs to be recognition by the international community that empires and powerful political interests have often played a less than helpful role in the region. The attribution of responsibility for the difficulties of the Balkans does not reside solely with the people who live there. The international community must take its share of the responsibility and acknowledge that sometimes the actions of foreigners, though doubtless well-intentioned and in many cases right, will be perceived by local people as high-handed, insensitive and autocratic. Perception may not be everything in politics, but it is a very significant element in any political action. The fact that those working for international bodies and agencies may consider themselves to be working in the best interests of the people of Bosnia & Herzegovina does not alter the fact that their actions will sometimes be interpreted as bordering on neo-imperialism. That Bosnia-Herzegovina is essentially an international protectorate and, to a great extent, animated by the presence of international donor organisations on the ground inevitably distorts the nature of civil society. The fact that this international presence is widely accepted as being necessary and largely beneficial to the local population does not prevent the twin dynamics of dependency and resentment from souring relations. This must never be forgotten by those of us who have been invited to offer advice.

A third point relates to the fact that Bosnia & Herzegovina is obviously a state that has emerged out of the former communist Yugoslavia. It is, therefore, still a post-communist society in transition. Although the process of transition has been complicated by the intervening war, the communist legacy is still much in evidence. Many aspects of this legacy need not concern us here, but some should be mentioned. The communist inheritance of duplicative and sclerotic bureaucracies continues to be a factor in the life of the country. Needless to say, these continuing practices represent an inefficient waste of precious resources in a depleted social environment. Apparently, corruption has also yet to be eliminated entirely from some of these bureaucracies. The creation of the entities within a set of complicated federal and local systems of government adds a new dimension to a tradition of unwieldy and unresponsive bureaucracy. The reasons for this particular constitutional structure of government is understood and accepted as the present political reality within which decisions must currently be made, but the ways in which policy decisions are administered clearly requires reform. The importance of professional training in modern, 'light touch' styles of management perhaps needs to be more widely recognised. Ideally, all staff involved in the administration of youth policy should receive such training.

Whilst the old communist state bequeathed many negative practices, it is important not to ignore some of the state's achievements. The former Yugoslavia did engineer a

reasonably viable form of economic co-operation between the different parts of the Federation. This is within the living memory of most citizens and should help to make the reinvention of this 'Yugoslavian' co-operation possible. Economic and social co-operation with neighbours is, after all, a prerequisite for future prosperity. The other achievement of former Yugoslavia was a reasonable degree of social solidarity between the different ethnic groups. This is not to suggest that ethnic tensions were completely absent in the former communist state, but for the most part there was 'actually existing' co-operation. This collective memory has not been erased totally by the conflicts of the 1990's.

There have, of course, been 'natural' communities where co-operation between ethnic groups has grown 'organically'. This leads to the fourth point and concerns the periods of history during which peaceful co-existence between the different ethnic groups were a reality. As has already been mentioned, the history of this territory is often represented as a bubbling cauldron of mutual resentments and hatreds between ethnic groups. This is a very selective reading of the past and constitutes a dangerous misrepresentation of the very complex history that has taken place within and beyond the borders of BiH. Indeed, heterogeneity and plurality have been the common experience of many people within the region (Coward, 2003). Hayden (1996: 788) has observed that in the period before the war,

“Heterogeneity was concentrated in the central part of the territory of Yugoslavia (in particular) the republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina (and those areas bordering it)... In these parts of Yugoslavia, the idea that the Yugoslav peoples could not live peacefully together was empirical nonsense.”

Local histories of peaceful co-existence must be re-discovered and retold in order that the rising generation can learn that it does not need international intermediaries and adjudicators to negotiate its future. To borrow the phrase of an historian writing about a very different country, they need *“a usable past to achieve an attainable future”* (Williams, 1985).

The fifth point relates to the degree of internal popular support for the nation-state of BiH. To what extent are the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina 'signed up' to the project of their nation-state? The federal state, with its two entities (the Federation of BiH and the Republika Srpska) and quasi-autonomous Brcko District, was a necessary compromise. Whilst this has been accepted by the majority, it is difficult to gauge the extent to which the state commands the loyalty of its citizens. Surveys and opinion polls, such as those contained in the Report of the International Commission on the Balkans (2005) and the regular Early Warning System Reports published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2005), suggest that there is a measure of pragmatic support for the state. This pragmatism is partly, perhaps, recognition of the fact that the territorial boundaries of modern nation-states are not coterminous with homogenous ethnic communities. In fact the whole notion of homogenous national communities is misguided. As Giddens (1998: 131) comments,

“...all nations, without exception, are ‘mongrel nations’. The nation is not given in nature, and whatever remote connections they may have to earlier ethnic communities, nations are a product of relatively recent history. They have all been built from a diversity of cultural fragments.”

In the contemporary context of globalisation and permeable borders, the concept of a ‘cosmopolitan nation’ (Giddens, 1998: 130-141) that respects heterogeneity and celebrates cultural diversity is pertinent. If the nation-state is to support and protect such pluralism within its borders, though,

“...the nation should develop state structures that allow citizens to decide for themselves matters of general importance.”
(Giddens, 1998: 131)

The state of Bosnia-Herzegovina is, of course, in the process of trying to build such structures. The need to establish responsive representative systems based on human rights of citizenship and democratic values is now a matter of some urgency. The achievements of the Office of the High Representative have been considerable, but the time to transfer full responsibility to democratically elected representatives cannot be postponed indefinitely if BiH wishes to become an active partner in the wider international community. Indeed, in August 2004 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe expressed concern about the health of democracy in BiH and questioned,

“...the extent to which the current role of the (High Representative) is compatible with the membership of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Council Europe.”
(Council of Europe, 2004: Resolution 1384)

The movement towards a fully representative form of democratic governance in BiH must also be accompanied by competent management of the economy and the development of efficient systems of service delivery. All democracies are endangered if delivery of the essential goods and services of life are not forthcoming. There appears to be a widespread sense of frustration that the understandable pre-occupation with the structures of governance is now seriously impeding progress towards the establishment of a viable and modern state. The post-Dayton political culture that has evolved in BiH is characterised by blockages in decision-making processes and manifest failures at the level of practical policy implementation. The acute and ever-present awareness of inter-ethnic community relations is manifested in the honourable efforts expended to achieve an equitable distribution of opportunities between the three main ‘nationalities’. However, in the field of politics and government administration, it would appear that a transparent and healthy ‘equal opportunities’ culture has not been created. Rather, there seems to exist a rather ritualistic form of tokenistic power-sharing that can result in the best people not necessarily being appointed to the most appropriate posts. Given the remarkable achievements of the Dayton Accords in achieving a cessation to the

hostilities, there are clear risks and dangers in undermining the processes and practices that have been established in the intervening period. By the same token, though, there are risks and dangers in remaining entrenched in the *status quo*. The prospect of almost complete political gridlock under the present system risks undermining the very stability of this fledgling state. Ultimately, every citizen of BiH wants food on the table, the refuse collected, the children educated, the sick treated and the lawless called to account. If these core functions are not honoured, then the social contract between the individual citizen and the state is weakened. For obvious political reasons that situation cannot be allowed to happen in BiH. The International Team met people who believed that politics in BiH needs to move beyond its natural concern with structures and concentrate instead on policy content and practical mechanisms of delivery. This is easier said than done, but there are certainly people in the country who earnestly wish to move in this direction.

Another pragmatic reason for supporting the state of BiH and the process of democratisation is linked to the sixth point we would wish to raise: namely, that many people now appear to hope that accession to the European Union is a tangible prospect. Commenting on a recently published *Early Warning System Quarterly Report*, Jens Toyberg-Frandzen observes,

“It is no surprise to find that the dream of European integration is attracting an appreciable measure of popular support. This remains the one realistic goal which leads citizens to apply pressure on politicians and political parties to implement reform at a pace that will stimulate economic growth and make BiH a country where poverty is not correlated to ethnicity, and where young people will choose to remain by choice.”

(UNDP, 2005: 2)

One does not have to be a Europhile or expert in international relations to appreciate that the future prospects of Bosnia-Herzegovina are bound up in its relationship with the European Union. This Report has been written in the shadow of a more substantial and wide-ranging Report (International Commission on the Balkans, 2005). Under the Chair of Giuliano Amato, the Commission considered many matters that are well beyond the terms of reference of this more modest Report. Nevertheless, the Report of the Commission does highlight the challenges and choices open to the states of the former Yugoslavia. The Dayton Agreement was a remarkable achievement in that it secured a ceasefire. Clearly, though, there is now a need to build upon that consensus and strengthen democratic structures within countries like BiH. According to the Commission the region is currently “...a mixture of weak states and international protectorates” (ICB, 2005: 7). The choice for the states of the former Yugoslavia is clear: Europe or the poverty and international isolation that attend a peripheral existence. According to the Commission the options are no less stark for the European Union: “*Enlargement or Empire*” (ICB, 2005: 11). According to the Commission,

“...the EU itself faces a significant dilemma as it has the capacity to absorb only reasonably functioning and legitimate states. But now that Croatia appears on the verge of the full accession process, there are no more of these left in the

region. The classical enlargement model that worked for Central and Eastern Europe in 1990 simply does not fit the conditions prevailing in the Balkans. If this region is to become part of the EU, it needs to undergo significant changes. But success also requires a concomitant shift in policy thinking towards the region in Brussels.”
(ICB, 2005: 8-9)

This ‘shift in policy thinking’ is characterised in the following terms:

“If the EU does not devise a bold strategy that could encompass all Balkan countries as new members within the next decade, then it will become mired instead as a neo-colonial power in places like Kosovo, Bosnia, and even Macedonia. Such an anachronism would be hard to manage and would be in contradiction with the very nature of the European Union.”
(ICB, 2005: 11)

Whether one concurs with this rather bleak analysis or not, it would appear that the long term interests of BiH lie within the European Union. The EU offers the prospect of greater economic prosperity, improved social protection and the enhancement of democratic values. Being an integral part of an enlarged Europe within which there will be complete freedom of movement, the political significance of BiH’s internal ethnic differences is also likely to diminish over time. However, BiH’s accession to the EU is far from being inevitable. It is, therefore, imperative that the project of ‘member-state’-building continues apace. The need to create the required domestic conditions for accession is now a high priority. Many citizens may be agnostic or unenthusiastic about their nation-state, but the fact of the matter is that the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina still represents the best chance they have of a European future. For all its faults and mechanical peculiarities, BiH remains the only available vehicle travelling the road to Strasbourg and Brussels.

The final observation we would wish to make is obvious, but by far the most important one. It is a simple acknowledgment that Bosnia-Herzegovina has experienced enormous suffering. Many of its people, including the young, continue to have to come to terms with the traumas of the past. Whilst the need to find swift political solutions to contemporary difficulties is urgent, it is recognised by all concerned that the healing process takes time. By the same token, the people of this country have already demonstrated enormous resilience and resourcefulness. Whatever challenges lie ahead, there is every reason to suppose that the people of BiH are equal to them.

3: Memorandum on Youth Policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina

3.1: Introduction:

The Memorandum section of this Report deals directly with Youth Policy issues in BiH. It commences with a brief consideration of whether a statutory framework for youth policy is required. It then moves on to consider the main policy domains of youth policy: learning and access to the labour market; youth work; welfare and social protection; housing; and criminal justice. This is followed by a discussion of some of the broader themes of youth policy, as well as some of the issues specific to BiH. These are organised under the following subject headings: information; mobility; equal opportunities and diversity; research; training; youth participation; volunteering; the youth commission; and, delivery. Although recommendations and suggestions are made throughout the text, the Conclusion indicates the direction in which it is felt youth policy needs to move in the coming years.

As has already been mentioned, what follows cannot be regarded as a comprehensive critical review of youth policy. It is based on the programme of meetings we attended, the documentary evidence presented to us and additional research undertaken by the rapporteur and the rest of the international team. That research, however, is far from being exhaustive. There may well be important documents of which we remain unaware. What follows, therefore, should be represented as opening remarks in a conversation with youth policy actors in BiH.

Before proceeding to the specific areas detailed above, it might be helpful to make two preliminary comments. Firstly, it is important to state that we encountered examples of good practice wherever we visited: in the Federation of BiH, Republika Srpska and Brcko. In Brcko, for example, we were greatly impressed by the way in which the different communities are working together within local democratic structures for the common good. Whilst there may well be especially favourable local conditions that make such democratic renewal somewhat easier, the tangible achievements in Brcko are concrete evidence of what is possible in BiH. What was perplexing for the international team, though, was that the good work being undertaken in all of the areas was not being clearly communicated beyond entity or, in some cases, local level. Sharing good practice is absolutely essential if there is to be consistent progress in the youth field across the whole territory of the state. This does not imply that uniformity of practice is desirable. Local service delivery must always take account of local social, cultural and geographical conditions. However, lessons can be learned from other places and adapted to local circumstances. We are sure that the inherent wastefulness involved in the proverbial reinvention of the wheel does not need to be spelt out here.

The second comment relates to our perception that across the state of BiH ‘structure’ appears to be privileged above ‘content’. Given recent history and the painstaking construction of a constitution and form of governance that was designed to minimise the possibilities of discrimination against any of the three main ethnic groups, this is perfectly understandable. However, without necessarily disturbing the foundations of the devolved federal structure of government, there does need to be a move towards a culture based on the rights of the individual citizen. A perspective that is currently dominated by the discourses of ‘ethnicity’ and ‘entity’ should be replaced by a

sharper focus on the individual citizen. In the case of youth policy, this simply means that the rights of the individual young citizen – irrespective of ethnicity or place of residence – should be expressed in terms of entitlements that are universally available to all young people within the state of BiH. These individual rights of entitlement are uncontentious and could be adopted and adapted from best practice in European youth policy. Such a policy needs to clarify the areas in which a young person is entitled to individual support. These packages of support might include:

- § Access to properly accredited education, training and work experience – as far as possible tailored to individual needs;
- § Access to independent specialist careers information, advice, counselling, guidance and support;
- § Access to support, counselling and advice in the main areas in which young people might experience personal difficulties;
- § Clear information and advice on health, housing, social benefits and other related issues.
- § Access to recreational, sports, arts and outdoor experiences that are designed to develop talents and broaden horizons – including experiences that have an international dimension.

An additional entitlement would include the right to participate in the design and the delivery of youth policy. An equal opportunities statement would also need to be drafted that took account of equal rights and freedom from discrimination in respect of language, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability and ethnicity (including groups outside of the three main ‘national’ groups). Policy would also be supported by a research, evaluation and training strategy.

The above ‘sketch’ of what a youth policy might look like is obviously not comprehensive and it is certainly not intended to be prescriptive. It is, rather, a very simple example of what a citizenship-based, entitlement driven policy might resemble. This ‘draft’ policy, because it is based on European experience, is uncontentious and would be relevant to young people residing in Brcko, Republika Srpska and the Federation of BiH. Such a policy would, indeed, be acceptable anywhere in Europe. Which young citizen doesn’t want to have access to good quality information and advice on issues ranging from vocational training to international travel and sexual health to substance use? Such entitlements can be agreed upon by all. The ostensibly complicated structure of government in BiH should not obscure the reality of what is to be young and unemployed in Banja-Luka, Sarajevo or Brcko. Ultimately, youth policies are about meeting universal needs, rights and practical issues in local places.

None of the above implies a centralisation of powers in terms of policy formation and mechanisms of delivery. As noted above, young people experience youth policy in their local communities. Nevertheless, what is being suggested here is a framework policy of youth entitlements on which a broad consensus could be reached - and would thus have coverage across the whole territory of BiH. The role of local governmental structures (at entity, cantonal and municipality level) is to facilitate the participation of young people

and, in partnership with them, work out the detail of how these policies will be applied at ground level in the different parts of BiH. Other nation-states have devolved, federal and local structures of government that allow for diverse approaches to policy innovation and implementation. BiH need be no different to such countries. As the ICB comments, there is,

“...a tendency to see the federal system as a problem to be overcome, rather than as a promising model which allows ethnic communities to flourish side by side and facilitates healthy policy competition.”
(ICB, 2005: 24)

The focus at all times, though, must be the young individual service user. The question to be asked is whether local structures are delivering on these entitlements. Of course, a statement of entitlements is an aspirational document. These aspirations must be translated into the language of measurable objectives. If these objectives are not met, then there must be local and state-level mechanisms of accountability. The issue of accountability is revisited elsewhere in this document. At this juncture, suffice it to say that young people must be able to hold politicians to account if policies do not deliver their entitlement rights.

The sections that follow vary in length. This is a reflection of our uneven understanding of the policy terrain in BiH. It will be noted that there are many areas in which the Team simply require more information. In the circumstances we thought it important to identify the gaps in our local knowledge so that these can be addressed in any subsequent dialogues we may have with the representatives of the state.

3.1.1: A Statutory Framework:

Preamble:

It is certainly not a requirement that youth policy should be regulated by a discrete and comprehensive legal framework. In many European states youth policy is distributed across different statutes. Nevertheless, it can be helpful to have a discrete legal framework that covers the salient areas affecting young people. These might include such matters as the legal definition of youth (in terms of age) and the rules and procedures governing the registration of NGO's working in the field. At the time of writing the International Team is unaware of a statute that covers the whole of BiH. We were, however, presented by a translation of the *Law on Organising Young People* that was enacted in Republika Srpska. A detailed critique of this statute is not presented here. On the whole, though, we would commend this document as a serious attempt to address the youth policy issues in the Republic. Crucially, it defines key terms such as 'youth and young people', 'youth policy', 'youth organisations' and 'youth work'. The process of registration required of youth NGO's is clarified and a clear commitment is given to the funding of youth councils. Whilst there will, no doubt, be much debate about the size of the allocation, this funding commitment is to be welcomed as a progressive measure. From our meetings with the RS Secretariat for Youth and Sport and representatives of the

Youth Council of RS, we know that the latter was closely involved in consultations on the design of the statute. We would wish to congratulate all concerned for the considerable work invested in this piece of legislation as well as the manner in which it was drafted. Summarised below are some additional comments.

Ø In Article 7 it is stated that youth organisations,
“...may not be in contravention with the Constitutional order or aimed at its subversion, incitement of national, racial and religious discrimination.”

This is to be welcomed. Clarification is sought, however, on the following passage in the same article:

“The youth organisation may not involve or involve itself in a pre-election campaign of political parties and candidates or provide support to them.”

We note that the MP Nada Tesanovic commented on this issue, arguing that it,

“...represents the restriction of the right to express the political position of a group of young people.”
(RS Government, 2004: 29)

The response of the proponent of the Bill responded in the following terms:

“Non-governmental organisations mentioned in the Draft Law may not involve themselves in pre-election campaigns of political parties and candidates, collection of funds for political parties and candidates and financing of candidates, that is, political parties, as laid down in the Law on Associations. The involvement of young people into politics is positive, but non-governmental associations must not be misused for this purpose. The establishment and organising of youth in political parties needs to be regulated by a separate regulation in which the youth would be given special importance and in which their tasks would be precisely defined, that is, their rights and obligations.”
(RS Government, 2004: 29)

This may well be a reasonable position to take on this question, but information is required about when such a regulation governing such political engagement by young people is to be drafted and enacted. The desire to protect youth NGO's from being 'hijacked' by a political party is perfectly legitimate. However, young people do not occupy a de-politicised zone. Many areas of youth activity are intrinsically political in

nature. A youth NGO concerned with environmental issues, for example, may seek to establish and publicise the views of political candidates during an election campaign (standard practice by such groups as Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace). Such activities may be construed as ‘favouring’ particular candidates. Moreover, are the youth wings of political parties permitted to be members of local youth councils (provided, of course, that the objectives of the parties are not hostile to democratic values)? All of these are delicate matters in BiH.

Nevertheless, some clarification is required on these questions. Freedom of political expression, provided that such expressions are not inimical to democratic values, are rights which young people must be free to exercise without – of course – subverting non-political NGO’s. The areas in which young people are permitted to exercise political rights need to be clearly delineated.

- Ø The participation of young people’s representatives in the design of youth policy is enshrined, *inter alia*, in Articles 14 and 15. At entity level representatives from the RS Youth Council will be joining the Steering Committee for Young People (see Article 77); whilst at municipality level, local youth councils will seemingly have an input into local policy via Young People’s Commissions (as set out in Article 22) or local Steering Committees (as described in Article 78). This is to be applauded, though we would recommend strongly that the representatives who join these committees are *elected* by the Youth Councils rather than *selected* by the politicians. Apart from being good democratic practice, this will reduce the likelihood of such consultations being represented as tokenistic.
- Ø Article 19 addresses many of the key policy domains (e.g., education; social and health care; expert work and training; and sport and culture). Future consideration might be given to other domains (e.g., criminal justice).
- Ø In Article 25 reference is made to the ‘official language’ of RS and ‘foreign languages’. The term ‘foreign language’ needs to be defined for the Team. Clarification is also required on the linguistic rights of all citizens in RS and the state of BiH.
- Ø Article 45 requires the towns and municipalities to undertake a series of related actions in respect of young people (e.g., participation, information, co-ordination of youth programmes, etc.). Such action plans are to be welcomed as is the requirement of local government to,

“...plan and ensure funds for the basic functioning of the town or municipal council.”

- Ø Article 61 is an important declaration of commitment:

“The town and municipality shall be obliged to provide facilities and conditions, on the basis of set criteria, in which young people can express and show their creative capabilities, as well as to carry out youth activities.”

Likewise, Article 62 declares:

“The Republika Srpska Government shall provide space and other conditions for the Youth Council operation.”

These are important commitments. However, given the state’s policy of privatisation, we are concerned that buildings essential to the functioning of youth work activities are being sold. We came across one such example in Banja Luka and understand that this was not an isolated case. The impact of privatisation policies on youth should be assessed very carefully before proceeding with such sales. In the Explanation that accompanies the statute (VI), the problematic issue of facilities is addressed.

“It is well known that, before the armed conflicts, the youth organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina were given the separate facilities where they were carrying out various activities. Today, in most cases, the status of the facilities previously used by young people has been resolved. Therefore, the Law prescribes that, on the basis of the set criteria and the available resources, the town and municipality should provide new facilities to be used by the youth organisations. According to Article 62 of the Law, the Government of Republika Srpska shall ensure the conditions and the space for the work of the Youth Council. According to this provision, the Government of Republika Srpska should provide facilities to be used as an office space and the venue for meetings of the Republika Srpska Youth Council.”
(RS Government, 2005: 24)

The commitment of the RS government is laudable, but our concern remains that a privatisation programme which fails to undertake a proper ‘youth impact assessment’ on the sale of state assets is effectively failing in its responsibilities to young people. Given the limited sources of funding available to local government, the reality is that many municipalities will be incapable of financing new facilities for young people. This is not, of course, a problem exclusive to RS; it is, indeed, an issue throughout BiH.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Like any law, the statute is not perfect. It does, though, represent a serious attempt to provide a rational statutory framework for youth policy in RS. Moreover, the text of the statute has drawn upon progressive examples of European practice in order to facilitate the introduction of European standards in youth policy. In the circumstances it deserves to be considered outside of RS. We do not suggest that the statute should be accepted uncritically in the whole of BiH. Nevertheless, as so much hard work has already been

undertaken, it would be churlish and wasteful not to learn from what has already been accomplished. As an example of good practice it should therefore form the basis of a framework law that has coverage across BiH. Having said that, improving amendments and additions should naturally also be considered.

- ✓ The definition of youth (in terms of age) should be harmonised across BiH.
- ✓ Youth impact assessments should be undertaken in respect of the privatisation programme.
- ✓ It would be helpful if clarification of certain issues raised in the above commentary could be received by the Team.

3.2: Policy Domains:

The Team's understanding of the way in which the policy domains are managed across BiH is, of course, partial and incomplete. What follows, therefore, are a series of brief critiques and questions.

3.2.1: Learning and Access to the Labour Market

Preamble:

It should not be assumed that by linking the concept of learning with access to the labour market an instrumental approach to education is being taken. However, in most conventional accounts of youth transition, the route from full-time education to the labour market is often perceived as the most critical. A successful economic transition, it is argued, forms the basis for the ultimate attainment of domestic independence, household and/or family formation. Moreover, remaining in employment also increasingly depends on personal flexibility and a commitment to lifelong learning as one re-skills to adapt to ever changing economic and technological trends. In senior policy circles, therefore, it is understandable that a critical aim of the education system should be preparation for the labour market and, in many cases, straightforward vocational training. Education, however, embraces a broader mission than merely aligning the education system with the needs of the economy. In fact such an alignment is no easy task, because healthy economies are dynamic and in a state of flux and change. The objective in a less healthy economy, such as that of BiH, is to persuade people that the dearth of immediate employment prospects is no reason not to prepare for a future economic 'take-off'. Young people, therefore, need to be equipped with something more than sets of occupationally defined competences. They need skills, competences and attitudes required to adapt to rapidly changing economic and social conditions. The acquisition of such navigation skills should now be regarded as an essential element of a good education. Employability, according to Williamson (2002: 50), should be one of the three main aims of education; the other two being personal development and preparation for

active citizenship. These educational aims are, of course, all linked. The soft skills of problem-solving, rational decision-making and effective communication are relevant to personal life and employment, or, as Williamson expresses it, “*life management, participation and the workplace*” (Williamson, 2002: 50).

Before proceeding to a consideration of some of the specific issues related to learning and the labour market in Bosnia-Herzegovina, it is worth re-stating our understanding of the terms formal education, non-formal education, informal education and vocational education. It will be argued here that the distinctions are not actually as sharply defined as was once assumed. Formal education can be summarised succinctly as, “...*the structured education system that runs from primary school to university, and includes specialised programmes for technical and professional training*” (Brander *et al*, 2002: 21). Non-formal education, meanwhile, “...*refers to any planned programme of personal and social education designed to improve a range of skills and competencies, outside the formal educational curriculum*” (Brander *et al*, 2002: 21). Informal education involves relatively unplanned activities and experiences that can nevertheless convey important life-lessons. Formal, non-formal and informal education should not be regarded as mutually exclusive areas of pedagogical activity. Whilst youth work is traditionally, and quite correctly, identified as the principal site for non-formal education, schools are also places where personal and social development can be facilitated. The power of the ‘hidden curriculum’ that underpins all school regimes - for good or ill – is well appreciated. Schools, for example, can organise and structure the social experience of their pupils in ways that can successfully transmit core soft skills and democratic values. Vocational education, whilst commonly considered to fall within the sphere of technically specialised formal education, should also include an important dimension of non-formal education. This is not only true in human resource and person-centred vocations like youth work, tourism and personnel management, but also in mainstream areas of the economy like information technology, electronics and manufacturing. The importance of team-working and inter-disciplinary project management in industry requires the development of well-honed groupwork skills. The days when employees were confined to their occupational ghettos have passed. The overarching aim of education must therefore be to produce self-starting individuals who are competent, confident, communicative and well prepared for a world of ever changing challenges.

The Team does not feel qualified to comment authoritatively on the BiH education system, although some very powerful messages were conveyed by individuals we met. Further research by the rapporteur would suggest that the experiences conveyed by such individuals may well be representative. Summarised below are some observations, comments and questions.

Schools:

Ø The Council of Europe has commented that:

“The educational system is key to the development of a sense of common and shared citizenship and to the building of a coherent state concept.”
(Council of Europe, 2005: VI.93, p.18)

Schools are obviously central to fostering that sense of shared citizenship. Whilst cultural diversity must be respected and affirmed within schools, the importance of a harmonised curriculum cannot be over-stated in the case of BiH. The effective segregation of pupils along ethnic lines in 54 schools (the so-called practice of ‘two schools under one roof’) has been criticised in the strongest possible terms by the Council of Europe and the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe). In a joint statement, they reminded the BiH authorities of their 2002 commitment to, *“eliminate all aspects of segregation and discrimination based upon ethnic origins”* (cited in Council of Europe, 2005: Appendix 3, p.29). The continuing practice of ‘two schools under one roof’ was thus described as, *“... a blatant violation of this commitment”* (Council of Europe, 2005: Appendix 3, p.29). This ‘violation’ may well be a symptom of cultural insecurity or defensiveness. The statement does, though, set out to allay such anxieties.

“Unification of ethnically divided schools does not mean, however, assimilation. Indeed, respect for cultural diversity is one of the fundamental principles of the CoE and the OSCE. When addressing this issue in a recent report, the CoE emphasised that the unification process should take place in a manner which fully respects the rights of the three constituent peoples to have equal right to use their languages without discrimination. At the same time, the report stresses the central importance of facilitating contacts among students and teachers of different communities.”
(Council of Europe, 2005: Appendix 3: p.29)

Whilst recognising the underlying anxieties and fears that will be harboured by some citizens, the message from the OSCE and the CoE to BiH could not be clearer. The practice of ‘two schools under one roof’ is regarded as unacceptable and must change accordingly.

- Ø One of the comments made to the Team was that the teaching of history in schools is a major challenge. We understand that progress has been made in the development of History and Geography textbooks (UNDP, 2003: 10; and Council of Europe, 2005:18-19) under the auspices of the Textbook Review Commission, Curriculum Agency and Standards & Assessment Agency. It is noted that the CoE and OSCE have also offered advice and guidance in respect of curriculum development, particularly in relation to foreign language curricula. This progress is to be welcomed. History and Geography are, of course, particularly sensitive subjects. The imposition of authorised versions of history always runs the risk of being counter-productive. All histories are contested. It is important, therefore, that children and young people are

equipped with the requisite critical skills of inquiry in order that evidence can be sifted, weighed and evaluated. The acknowledgement of complexity and the rejection of easy interpretations of the past are essential to the development of a healthy relationship to one's history and place of residence. The process of de-mythologising the past begins in the classroom. As mentioned previously, this should include recognition of the periods of peaceful co-existence in the social history of the country. It is sometimes too easy to fall into the trap of focusing on such 'events' as wars and revolutions.

- Ø The Team would have liked to have had more information on the truancy, exclusion and drop-out rates in schools. An analysis, in terms of location, gender and ethnicity would be helpful. One Report (UNDP, 2003: 12) suggests, for example, that gender inequalities – in terms of attendance - may be operating in some areas (most notably in Modrica, Vukosavlje and Kotor Varos). In these areas girls are under-represented on the school rolls. The same Report also cites cases in certain rural areas (in Zenica-Doboj Canton) where there is a tendency for some parents to prevent their daughters from attending school – ostensibly for economic and/or cultural reasons. These patterns of disadvantage and discrimination clearly require investigation. This may well fall within the terms of reference of the recently established Gender Agency (UNDP Press Release 5/5/05). Nevertheless, the responsibility for tackling social and institutional mechanisms of discrimination must be mainstreamed. Schools and other educational institutions must develop Equal Opportunities and Anti-Bullying policies with key stakeholders (pupils and parents). The way in which these policies are explained, supported and implemented at ground level is crucial. This clearly has implications for teacher training. It is vitally important that this issue is addressed because some children and young people - possibly with the support of their families - may be excluding themselves from full-time education for fear of discrimination and harassment on ethnic or other grounds. Indeed, the bussing of children to distant schools has been noted in some cases (UNDP, 2003: 10). This has been done because parents fear that the ethnic composition of local schools might make discrimination in the classroom and the playground more likely. An inconvenient, but 'safer', option is to send their children to schools that are mono-ethnic or where they would – at least – be part of the majority ethnic group.
- Ø The education system is in the process of transforming itself from a rather traditional communist model in which children and young people were regarded as passive recipients of knowledge rather than active agents in their own learning (UNDP, 2003: 8). Curriculum reform, modernisation of teacher training (including the promotion of interactive teaching methods) and the increased participation of pupils and parents in school life are central to this project. In fairness, much good work has already been undertaken in this area (see, for example, details of work undertaken by the Council of Europe's Directorate of Education in Appendix 5). Such initiatives should continue and be expanded. It is essential that children, young people and parents are duly recognised as partners in education.

- Ø It is noted that Student Councils have been established in a number of secondary schools (UNDP, 2003: 11). This development is to be applauded and further encouragement and support should be given to rolling out this progressive reform across the whole of BiH. A specially designated and trained teacher in every school should be given a developmental role. The example of dedicated Participation Officers in Maltese schools is one model that might be explored (Evans *et al*, 2005: 42-3 and 75; and Malta Ministry of Education, 2000). It is important, however, that Student Councils should not be perceived as mere talking shops. Once established they should be included in all consultations that relate to wider educational reforms. Ideally, a national network of Councils needs to be established in order to strengthen the educational reform lobby. It is recognised, however that this may take some time.
- Ø Some young people have called for extending the use of non-formal education within schools (UNDP Press Release: 13/1/05). This is something that we would certainly support. Teachers, of course, need to be trained in the use of such methods of working. However, it also makes sense to utilise the skills of youth workers within school settings – particularly in relation to specific projects and campaigns (sexual health, substance use, anti-racism, bullying, gender relations, etc.). We were therefore concerned to receive reports that, even when the relevant headteacher was supportive of such initiatives, some youth workers faced bureaucratic obstacles. Such impediments to imaginative, flexible and joined-up approaches to working with young people must be removed. Youth workers and health promotion workers must be allowed appropriate and flexible access to schools.

Higher Education:

- Ø Higher education in BiH was the subject of scathing criticism from some of the people we met. Whilst there were obviously some examples cited of academic excellence (in terms of research and teaching methods), this was not the dominant view. For the most part, the experience of being a university student was negative. Teaching methods were traditional and didactic: very little use was made of interactive teaching methods. One person described professors as giving *ex cathedra* lectures that were expected to be received uncritically by the student audience. Students appeared to have little confidence in the examination and assessment systems currently in place. One person with whom we spoke suspected corruption and discrimination in some cases. The Team is well aware of the possibility that the people with whom we spoke might be unrepresentative. However, the problem is that there are no independent quality assurance systems in place that can either verify or reject these individual testimonies. This is a matter that needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency; not only for the sake of students and the research community, but also for the international standing of universities in BiH. Plans to establish quality assurance systems for teaching and research need to be put in place.

- Ø The nature of the present funding arrangements for the higher education sector would appear to be a major obstacle to universities in BiH attaining the international status of comparable institutions in Europe. If our understanding is correct, limited staff and student mobility between universities is an issue.
- Ø The Council of Europe describes the present situation in the following terms:

*“The adoption of a state level-law on higher education is in a total **impasse** leaving the country in a legal vacuum and with the co-existence of different and contradictory higher education systems.”*
(Council of Europe, 2005: 19)

The Council urges the need to find,

“...some common ground enabling at least the adoption of some kind of framework legislation at the state level which would provide norms on higher education at a country-wide level, unify universities into one single legal entity, comply with the Bologna criteria and Lisbon Convention and introduce the European Credit Transfer system. Short of a fully-fledged state higher education legislation (with state-level funding), such a framework law would be a first step to guarantee minimum standards compatible with European ones.”
(Council of Europe, 2005: 19)

Unless the above recommendation is pursued vigorously, universities in BiH are consigned to the parochial status of local colleges. This is clearly at odds with the aim of connecting meaningfully with the rest of Europe.

- Ø It is in the interests of university staff, students and the public at large that the required reforms are made at the earliest possible opportunity. For staff and students it will enable full participation in European exchanges.
- Ø It would appear that good quality small-scale pieces of research are being undertaken in some places within BiH. These need to be supported. The possibility of establishing state-wide research networks that could, in turn, be linked to European research networks should be explored.

Access to the Labour Market:

- Ø The first point to acknowledge, of course, is that the economy has not even reached levels of pre-war performance. Although the economic trends show modest improvement, this is not the perception of many people in BiH (UNDP, 2005). A 40 % unemployment rate, higher in some parts of BiH, affects young people disproportionately:

“Unemployment rate between the ages of 19 and 24 is two and a half times higher than in the age group between 25 and 30, and three and a half times higher than in the age group between 50 and 60. The

unemployment rates combined with other problems are the main cause of emigration for young people in search of a better future.”
(Press Review, 2005)

- A high level of unemployment amongst young people is a worrying. If the problem persists, then it may even be socially de-stabilising. Some of these young people, of course, may be involved in informal and twilight economies. In the long-term, however, such activities will not sustain these individuals, their dependants or the state of the BiH (because of lost taxation, etc.). It is essential, therefore, that the economic progress that has been made since the war continues. In the intervening period it is in the interests of young people and the state of BiH that everyone is as prepared for employment as possible.
- Ø Despite the high level of unemployment, the business community has, “...expressed concern about the lack of a sufficiently skilled and educated workforce” (UNDP, 2003: 14). Leaving aside possible deficiencies in the education system of the country, part of the problem seems to be that many young people appear to be genuinely ignorant and confused about the areas of the economy where growth is most likely to occur. In the circumstances it is quite clear that appropriate careers information and guidance should be available to children and young people. This service needs to be accessible to young people of all ages and should certainly commence no later than the early teenage years. The establishment of a service that advises young people about education, vocational training and employment matters needs to recognise that some disengaged groups will have to be targeted. Outreach services that provide more individualised forms of advice and support need to be developed in the longer term. Some lessons could, perhaps, be learned from the ConneXions Service in England. This model places personal advisors at the heart of the service.
 - Ø The state of vocational training in BiH is not known. Clearly, though, it is important that high quality training in those areas of the economy in which there is most likely to be growth need to be prioritised. Training programmes for young entrepreneurs also need to be promoted and rolled out more widely. We understand that such programmes already exist. The Youth Entrepreneurship Project is just one example (UNDP, 2003: 16; and Mujic & Vasic, 2004 and 2005). Internship programmes that provide young people with the opportunity to experience work and training abroad are also being pioneered. To reiterate the point, though, such programmes need to be made more widely available.

Recommendations regarding Schools:

- ✓ It is important that the practice of ‘two schools under one roof’ is ended at the earliest possible time.
- ✓ The History curriculum should (a) acknowledge and represent the complexity of the region’s past; and (b) instil and develop skills of critical inquiry in students. Textbooks that support the above aims should be produced and reviewed on a regular basis.

- ✓ If not already in place, comprehensive monitoring systems need to be established in order to analyse attendance and educational outcomes in terms of ethnicity (not merely in relation to the constituent nationalities of BiH), gender and locality. It is important to identify those groups of children and young people most likely to be vulnerable to truancy, exclusion, early exits from formal education and under-achievement. This is, indeed, consistent with the strategy and action points outlined in the *European Youth Pact* (Commission of the European Union, 2005: 6-7 and 14) and other European policy documents (Council of the European Union, 2005: 17). In BiH the position of Roma children requires close attention. It would appear that many Roma children, for a variety of reasons (including issues of language, stereotyping and harassment), are excluded from educational opportunities enjoyed by other children. One estimate indicates that between 15-20% of Roma children do not attend school (United Nations Development Programme in BiH (2003: 12).
- ✓ Equal Opportunities and Anti-Harassment/Bullying policies need to be in place in every school. Such policies need to be communicated clearly to teachers, students and parents; and should include the use of 'home-school' contracts in which students, parents and teachers would all be signatories. This would have implications for the training of teachers/head-teachers in terms of policy awareness-raising, implementation and evaluation. Once again we would urge that particular attention is given to the vulnerability of Roma children to both overt and covert forms of discrimination. Instances of verbal harassment have already been cited (United Nations Development Programme in BiH, 2003: 12).
- ✓ Teacher training should give due prominence to interactive teaching methods. Moreover, students and parents should be recognised as partners in education. This could be formalised in greater use of 'home-school' learning contracts.
- ✓ Pupil/Student Councils should be established in schools. Specially designated teachers should be responsible for the development of such participatory structures within their schools. Both teachers and pupils/students should have appropriate training available to them.
- ✓ Where Schools Councils exist, they should be consulted by all levels of government.
- ✓ Greater power and autonomy should be devolved to Headteachers who, in consultation with students and parents (perhaps through locally constituted governing bodies in which they are represented), should be able to have the freedom and flexibility to make policy and operational decisions in respect of their schools. It should not, for example, be necessary to secure the consent of an elected politician or senior bureaucrat in local government before inviting youth workers and Health Promotion practitioners to contribute to the school curriculum.
- ✓ Non-formal and informal education should be promoted within schools. Youth workers, Health Promotion professionals, careers advisors and other appropriate practitioners should be brought into the school environment in order to broaden the curriculum and enhance the democratic ethos of schools. It will also facilitate the widest possible coverage of important age-appropriate consciousness-raising campaigns (e.g., substance use, safe sex, diversity, anti-racism, etc.).

- ✓ The value of non-formal education should be recognised through appropriate certification.

Higher Education Recommendations:

- ✓ Independent quality assurance systems for higher education need to be put in place in respect of teaching, assessment and research.
- ✓ A Charter of Entitlement for all students in higher education should be drafted.
- ✓ All institutions of higher education should have clear and transparent complaints procedures in place.
- ✓ Every institution of higher education should have in place departmental and/or faculty Staff-Student Consultative Committees.
- ✓ Every higher education institution should appoint a senior member of staff to take responsibility for student welfare.
- ✓ Those working in higher education should have access to staff development courses in such areas as teaching skills.
- ✓ The funding arrangements for higher education in BiH should be reviewed and reformed. Ideally, funding should be at the level of the state.
- ✓ A state-level law on higher education needs to be adopted as a matter of some urgency. The higher education system of BiH needs to be harmonised across the state's territory.
- ✓ There should be compliance with the Bologna criteria and the Lisbon Convention.
- ✓ When some of the above-mentioned measures have been taken, the European Credit Transfer System should be introduced.
- ✓ Participation of staff and students in European exchange programmes should be maximised.
- ✓ It is important to consolidate and support the development of research in higher education. State-wide networks of researchers in the main disciplines should be established. These can then be linked to European research networks. It is most important that such developments take place in the field of youth policy.

Access to the Labour Market: Recommendations

- ✓ Whilst it is recognised that the aims of education are wider than merely servicing the demands of the economy, the courses provided in schools, colleges and universities must bear some direct relationship to the labour market.
- ✓ It is a cause for concern that many young people appear to be ignorant of those areas of the economy in which growth is likely to occur. This results in many young people making ill-informed choices about their education and vocational training paths. The Team is not clear about what form career guidance takes in BiH. It would appear, though, to be rather ineffective. In the circumstances the present arrangements should be reviewed critically. We would recommend the establishment of a Vocational Training and Careers Advice Service that provides guidance to young people from at least 12 years of age until early adulthood. Such a service obviously needs to be provided within different settings: school,

- community, higher education and outreach. This will ensure maximum coverage of children and young people. As far as is possible in an under-resourced society, the service provided should be individualised. This is consistent with the European ideal of providing “*personalised action plans*” (Commission of the European Communities, 2005: 16).
- ✓ Those groups of young people that are most vulnerable to unemployment should be identified, targeted and engaged via appropriate outreach strategies.
 - ✓ The development of “*entrepreneurial mindsets*” amongst young people (Commission of the European Communities, 2005: 6) is a European priority. In the case of BiH this would seem to be a particularly important aim of youth policy. In the circumstances appropriate training, advice, seedcorn funds and other incentives should be made accessible to those young people with the potential to realise their business plans.
 - ✓ An expansion of participation in European educational, internship, work experience and training programmes should be given a high priority. We would recommend, in particular, the Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci Programmes (www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/programmes_en.html). Socrates is, as the Website entry explains,

“ the European programme for education. Its aim is to promote the European dimension and to improve the quality of education by encouraging cooperation between the participating countries. The programme sets out to develop a Europe of knowledge and thus better cater for the major challenges of this new century: to promote lifelong learning, to encourage access by everybody to education, to acquire qualifications and recognised skills.”

The Leonardo da Vinci Programme, meanwhile,

“...is the action programme for implementing the European Community’s Vocational training policy, supporting and supplementing action taken by the Member States. Its aim is to use transnational cooperation to enhance quality, promote innovation and support the European dimension of vocational training systems and practices. In specific terms Leonardo da Vinci pursues three central aims: to facilitate occupational integration, improve the quality of training and access to this training, and to boost the contribution of training to innovation.”

3.2.2: Youth Work

Preamble:

Youth work has an important role to play in the development of a healthy and dynamic civil society. Given the diminishing role of the state in the provision of

youth services, the role of NGO's is particularly important. It has been noted, though, that:

“Civil society development seems to be somewhat linked to the complex set-up of the country and to the still very strong international presence. Many NGO's - owing also to the war situation – have been created and developed in donor-driven fashion, with very weak links to the real societal demands. Furthermore, the prevailing nationalist agenda of many parties have atomised civil society and provoked an ‘ethnisation’ of NGO's.”
(Council of Europe, 2005a: 7)

The position of young people and youth NGO's within this setting have been analysed in the following terms:

“BiH youth lack places to gather and spend their leisure time creatively. The former youth centres (Dom omladine) have usually been privatized and used for other purposes. Premises of youth organizations are often in very bad condition, with old infrastructure and with practically no equipment. Municipality budgets often lack finances for youth-related activities. A recent report showed that 23 percent of youth organizations have no premises whatsoever while 50 percent lack or have insufficient amount of material and technical equipment. The lack of finances and space make it difficult for young people to use their leisure time in a creative way. As long as youth organizations do not have access to municipal funding or space, they will remain dependent on outside sources and will be donor-driven. This will further affect their sustainability and the real impact of their work in the communities. Dependency on ever-decreasing foreign aid will also deepen competition among youth groups and reduce networking with other youth groups and reduce networking with other partners in community development.”
(UNDP, 2003: 28-29)

The Council of Europe has indicated that the framework within which NGO's operate need to be reviewed and reformed accordingly. Attention is duly drawn to the following passage:

*“**Legislation on NGO's would need to be revised, in particular with respect to fiscal treatment.***

*A Working Group consisting of NGO's and representatives of the Council of Ministers should in the near future sign an **Agreement on Co-operation between the Council of Ministers and the Non-Governmental sector in BiH.***

*By-laws regarding the functioning of NGO's must be simplified and streamlined to allow for an enhanced presence of **civil society** and a more active participation of NGO's in the legislative and in general reform process.”*
(Council of Europe, 2005b: 9-10)

The International Team, unsurprisingly perhaps, endorses this view.

Comments:

Summarised below are comments for consideration.

- Ø During the course of our brief visit we encountered good examples of youth work practice in which highly committed individuals were struggling to meet huge demands with usually very limited resources. The value of this work with socially deprived young people is, of course, beyond doubt. In Banja-Luka for example, we were told that the parents of many of the 3,000 members at the Centre found it difficult to devote as much time to their children as they would have wished. Their priority was, quite understandably, to find money in order to meet the most basic material needs of their families. As a result of this, young people occupied the streets for much of the day and the evening. The risks associated with street-life for the more vulnerable young people will be well understood. In such circumstances it is important to provide a range of activities, opportunities and preventive interventions. In some cases the provision of good quality youth provision is actually a form of child protection. Increased resources are, of course, required. Secure and appropriate premises for young people to meet are important. In order for resources to be well deployed it is essential that they are directed to where they are needed most. It is perfectly possible to build well-resourced youth centres which are then under-used. One of the keys to the problem is to involve young people in the decision-making process and delivery of services. A co-management model is the ideal to which those who work with young people should aspire.
- Ø As previously mentioned the privatisation of youth premises should be resisted unless it can be shown that the money raised can be redeployed to more effective and appropriate use. A youth impact assessment should be undertaken in relation to any programme of privatisation.
- Ø The information we received about youth work was centre-based. We wondered whether there was any detached youth work undertaken with those young people who are more difficult to reach via more traditional provision.
- Ø We learned that most youth work training was provided by the large international NGO's. Whilst the quality of this training is good, there is obviously a need to develop a training, qualification and career structure for youth work within BiH. In the intervening period we would suggest that a number of programmes for training could be accessed via the Council of Europe and other international organisations.

Recommendations: Youth Work

- ✓ As far as existing resources permit, there should be an expansion in youth centres. Such centres play a vital role in engaging young people in constructive, creative

- and rewarding activities. In some cases youth centres are extremely important places for vulnerable young people to meet. As such, youth workers can be effective in reducing the risk of potentially harmful behaviours, as well diverting some from crime. Indeed, it is acknowledged that for many hard-pressed parents, youth centres fulfil an important child protection function.
- ✓ Ideally, a co-management model should be introduced into all youth centres. Training programmes (for young people and youth workers) should be made available to facilitate the expansion of this form of management.
 - ✓ The privatisation of facilities used by youth should be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the money raised can be reinvested in youth centres and/or activities that are more effective and appropriate. A youth impact assessment should be undertaken in relation to any programme of privatisation.
 - ✓ The use of detached youth work projects should obviously be targeted in those areas where particular groups of young people are disengaged from mainstream youth centre provision. If required, training should be made available. Exchanges with successful schemes and projects in other parts of Europe could, perhaps, be organised.
 - ✓ There is a long-term need to develop training, qualification and career structures for youth work in BiH. In the meantime, some education and training programmes could be accessed via distance learning and mentoring.
 - ✓ Existing programmes for training should be accessed. The YOUTH Programme of the EU is particularly appropriate. This Programme is

“...the EU’s mobility and non-formal education programme targeting young people aged between 15 and 25 years.... The YOUTH Programme offers possibilities to young people in the form of both group exchanges and individual voluntary work, as well as support activities.”

http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/program/index_en.html

Summarised below are some of the relevant programmes that may be of interest in this general field.

The Directorate of Youth and Sports of the Council of Europe provides a wide range of training courses for both young people and those working with them, covering subjects such as international youth co-operation, conflict management, human rights and European citizenship (www.coe.int/youth).

The European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe is supporting international youth meetings, campaigns, exhibitions and a wide range of projects for young people.

As already mentioned (see above), certain parts of the Youth Programme of the European Union are also open for young people such as: participation of non-

programme countries, the training activities of the European Voluntary Service and the Youth Exchange Programme.

Within the European Union's YOUTH programme there exists SALTO-YOUTH (Support and Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities). SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre promotes co-operation between YOUTH programme countries and the countries of South East Europe (www.salto-youth.net/see/).

3.2.3: Health, Welfare and Social Protection

Preamble:

Due to the brevity of our visit it is difficult to comment authoritatively on this subject. Nevertheless, summarised below are some points for consideration. Beforehand, though, it might be helpful to make some general points about the domain of health, welfare and social protection.

The Health policy portfolio is not, of course, simply about responding to illness. There is a social dimension to health that needs to be considered. The impact of environmental factors on health cannot be under-estimated. The distribution of wealth and resources, along with housing conditions, family well-being, the quality of neighbourhood and standard of the workplace environment, are all immensely influential factors. When health is considered in a holistic way it implies that responsibility is necessarily distributed across a range of government departments and social institutions.

As far as youth is concerned, it has been argued that health inequalities that exist in childhood tend to disappear during adolescence, but reappear in later years (West, 1997; 1999). Whilst young people are, therefore, generally quite healthy when compared with other members of the population, youth is a crucial time in the life course because lifestyle choices made at this stage are likely to have a critical impact in health in subsequent years. In light of this, lifestyle choices that young people make in such areas as exercise, nutrition, alcohol consumption, drug use and sexual behaviour assume greater importance. The role of health promotion practitioners (whether they are based in schools, youth centres or community clinics/surgeries) in influencing such choices is particularly crucial. When engaging with young people on these sensitive matters, it is obviously important to avoid the impression of preaching. There is also the risk of falling into the trap of being problem-focused rather than opportunity-focused. Sexual health, for example, is not simply about issuing cautionary messages regarding AIDS, Chlamydia and gonorrhoea; it should also be concerned with pleasure and fulfilment. Moreover, young people need to be equipped with skills to negotiate the power imbalances that are inherent in so many early sexual relationships. It is important, for example, that young people have the

confidence to be assertive with prospective sexual partners who are misusing power and exerting undue pressure. The scope for youth work to play a significant role in health promotion in this area is, of course, enormous.

Health:

- Ø The first point to make is that there appears to be something of a data gap in relation to the health of young people (UNDP, 2003: 18). This is a gap that, over time, needs to be closed.
- Ø In 2003 it was reported that the suicide rate amongst young people was rising, particularly amongst males (UNDP, 2003: 20). The need to access age-appropriate counselling services is, therefore, a matter of great importance. The rather traditional approach to psychological difficulties was perceived as being a complicit factor in this trend. The healthcare system has, indeed, been described as “*old-fashioned and insensitive*” (UNDP, 2003: 20). There are clear training implications for all those working in the field of healthcare and health promotion.
- Ø Although we were told that alcohol and drug misuse was a growing problem, this does not appear to be borne out by the evidence presented to us. This may be an area for further research, though.
- Ø Young people appear to experience difficulty in accessing reliable information on matters related to sexual and reproductive health (UNDP, 2003: 2003: 20-21). On the whole, most young people appear to obtain their information from friends. It is important, therefore, that the place of sex education in the school curriculum is reviewed. This is also an area in which youth workers and health promotion practitioners need to be active. The role of peer education within a wider sexual health promotion strategy also needs to be considered. It is important to acknowledge the fact that the Team saw examples of health promotion literature aimed at young people (sponsored by UNDP), but we are not clear about how widely such leaflets are distributed. The question of effective *coverage* is an important one.
- Ø The position of gay and lesbian youth is a concern. There appears to be a high level of discrimination against this community (UNDP, 2003: 21-22). Given the low level of knowledge about sexual matters amongst young people generally, it is important that the special needs of this constituency are not neglected within a wider sexual health promotion strategy.

Welfare and Social Protection:

- Ø The relationship between youth policy and that of children (and their families) was one that was unclear to the Team. It would be helpful to have this clarified. Clearly, these two domains of policy are intimately connected and therefore need to be aligned carefully,
- Ø The Team also lacked a clear idea of the social work services (and the training received by those who undertake social work) available to young people. Once again, it would be useful to receive some additional information.

Health: Recommendations:

- ✓ More data need to be collected in relation to the health of young people.
- ✓ The development of age-appropriate, de-medicalised counselling services for young people is a high priority. This should include confidential telephone helplines and websites (with email contacts). Such resources are important for all young people, but particularly for rural youth.
- ✓ There would appear to be the need for a major information campaign in respect of sexual and reproductive health. This should commence in schools, but also be promoted via youth work activities and the mass media. A strategy needs to be developed in relation to providing accessible, reliable, confidential and age-appropriate advice and guidance. Teachers, youth workers, health promotion practitioners and young people (as peer educators) all have important parts to play in this strategy.
- ✓ Within the general information and advice strategy, particular groups of young people will need to be identified and targeted. An obvious example would be gay and lesbian youth. It is important to 'normalise' issues of sexual preference and choice.
- ✓ The importance of sporting and recreational activities in promoting good health is well understood. It is noted that sports facilities are, for perfectly understandable reasons, currently underdeveloped in BiH. It is, however, extremely important that a sporting and recreational programme aimed at youth is promoted vigorously.
- ✓ It is widely recognised that sport has the potential to impart key lessons in social learning and citizenship. The Council of Europe's Sport Department has already promoted multi-ethnic football teams and tournaments in BiH as a means of promoting these aims. The practice of using team sports in this way should be continued.

Welfare and Social Protection: Recommendations

- ✓ Policy and service delivery in relation to children and families need to be aligned carefully with the main domains of youth policy.
- ✓ The Team is unclear about the organisation and delivery of the personal social services in BiH. A review of the training needs of those working in the personal social services should nevertheless be undertaken. It is important that social work in BiH draws upon best practice from the rest of Europe and beyond.
- ✓ The role of family group conferencing in the area of child welfare and protection should be considered. This working method may be particularly appropriate in a society where the 'state' may still be viewed with a high degree of suspicion.

3.2.4: Housing:

This is an area in which very little information was received. Access to affordable accommodation is obviously an important element in the youth transitions process. Our impression was that many young people remained in parental/family homes until their late twenties (in common with trends in much of the rest of Europe). However, more information on this matter is required, along with some indication of how young people perceive this state of affairs.

It is recognised that access to good quality, affordable accommodation is a problem for the general population. Although progress has been made since the war, there is still a great deal more work to be done. As a recent *Early Warning Report* puts it,

“A comprehensive solution to the housing problem will take decades, however, in a country which has lost so large a proportion of its housing stock in war.”
(United Nations Development Programme (2005: 26)

Nevertheless, a healthy economy requires a degree of mobility amongst its citizens. Young people are usually highly represented amongst those willing to move for reasons of education, work and career development. Access to affordable and appropriate accommodation (e.g., apartments) for this group is, therefore, a pre-requisite for a dynamic economy. Young people in BiH certainly appear to be willing to move from their home areas. However, at the present time too many appear to be contemplating permanent moves abroad.

“The most serious indicator of conditions in BiH remains the constantly high level of willingness amongst young people to leave the country”
(United Nations, 2005: 33)

Housing: Recommendation

- ✓ A review of youth housing issues needs to be undertaken and a strategy developed. Whilst acknowledging the considerable difficulties of the present situation, it is important that young people have access to good quality and affordable accommodation. Quite apart from the fact that this will benefit young people, it should also facilitate greater mobility of labour.

3.2.5: Criminal Justice

This is an area in which the Team received little information. We are aware that in the fairly recent past research work has been undertaken and proposals made -

particularly in the field of juvenile justice (Open Society Fund and UNICEF, 2002; and Save the Children, 2003). Unfortunately, at the time of writing, the rapporteur has not had sight of the former document. Nevertheless, on return to the UK he was able to access the latter. However, the Team is well aware of the fact that there may well have been important developments in the criminal justice system since the publication of the Save the Children Report. This Report is an excellent piece of work in which a raft of sensible recommendations is proposed. The problem facing the Team is that we do not know what progress has been made on the salient issues in the intervening period. The rapporteur has been in email contact with some colleagues (in BiH and the UK) in order to obtain a more up-to-date account of the situation. Unfortunately, these efforts have been met with only limited success. The Team is therefore left with only a vague impression of the current state of affairs. We would, however, like to thank Andrew Aitchison of Edinburgh University. Although not a specialist in youth justice, he has been particularly helpful in updating the rapporteur on some aspects of the criminal justice system in BiH. Summarised below are some general comments about the criminal justice system and the lives of young offenders.

- Ø As in so many other policy areas, the paucity of hard statistical data makes it difficult to develop evidence-based policy. Many of the comments that follow are, therefore, of a rather tentative nature.
- Ø The pattern and categories of crime committed by young people would appear to be at the less serious end of the scale. Moreover, property and survival offences (theft and sale of wood, for example) highlight the close relationship between poverty and youth crime in the country (Save the Children, 2003: 18). In the long-term, ‘draining the swamp’ of social problems will probably prove to be the most effective means of preventing youth crime. In a state with such limited resources it is acknowledged that this is a major challenge, though. The Save the Children Report also notes,

“...the demise of critical institutions that during the time of communism played a role in establishing moral norms and discipline (such as pioneers’ and youth associations).”
(Save the Children, 2003: 17)

- Ø The age of criminal responsibility is 14 years. It could be argued that, ideally, the age of age of criminal responsibility should correspond with that of the age of majority (voting age). This is the case in such countries as Luxembourg. Such a policy ensures that, in recognition of their developing maturity, children’s offending is dealt with outside of the formal criminal justice system. The age of criminal responsibility in BiH may be lower than some countries, but it is considerably higher than others (e.g., Scotland at 8 years, and England and Wales at 10 years).
- Ø Social Welfare Centres (staffed by social welfare workers and other professionals) appear to be responsible for addressing the welfare, educational and rehabilitative needs of those children and young people who commit offences. The problem is, however, that the Centres are under-resourced and over-stretched because they

- also have to meet the needs of other sections of the community. Suffice to say, the welfare infrastructure is certainly not commensurate with the high level of need within society at large.
- Ø On the evidence of the Save the Children Report (2003) it would appear that there could be closer co-operation between the key social actors in the criminal justice and social welfare systems: Social Welfare Centres, schools, police, health and relevant NGO's. The need to 'join-up' these services is absolutely essential. This could also lead to reducing delays in the provision of court reports by Social Welfare Centres.
 - Ø On the evidence of the Save the Children Report (2003) there would appear to be a need for more staff training in the Social Welfare Centres.
 - Ø The Criminal Procedural Codes (www.ohr.int) do contain some special provisions for juvenile offenders. However, as is the case with many adult sanctions, these exist only on paper as there is very little in the way of infrastructure to support them. The availability of community-based and other sentencing options is heavily dependent on the resources available locally. Consequently, there appear to be wide divergences in practice across BiH. Such 'justice by geography' is a matter for concern.
 - Ø Although BiH is committed to separate custodial provision for juveniles, lack of resources within the prison system means that there are cases where children are forced to mix with adults. This is in clear contravention of Article 37 of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* which states: "Every child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults unless it is considered in the child's best interest not to do so...".
 - Ø The impression has been formed of a prison system that is severely under-resourced. It would appear that directors of some prisons struggle to maintain acceptable standards of care for their inmates. It can only be assumed that children and young people in custody are also affected adversely by these conditions.
 - Ø One passage in the *Save the Children Report* caused particular concern. It was reported:

"In the Federation of BiH, the engagement of an attorney is obligatory for less severe criminal offences from the onset of the criminal proceedings. However, in the Republika Srpska, the engagement of an attorney is only obligatory immediately following the public prosecutor's request for the preparation of proceedings in cases when a prescribed penalty is over five years.

*Observations made by the Republika Srpska attorneys in the recent OSF/UNICEF study (**Young People in Conflict with the Law in the Light of Topical Problems of Juvenile Criminal Justice in BiH**) on the treatment of juveniles referred to 'excessive repressive measures' and the 'presumptuous and harsh' behaviour of police officers. This could indicate a need in the Republika Srpska for greater participation by*

attorneys earlier on in the juvenile justice process, where this should be legally verified.”

(Save the Children, 2003: 35)

Since this Report was written, of course such practices may have ceased. It is important, therefore, that the current situation is clarified.

- Ø The provision of diversion from the formal administration of criminal justice in respect of juveniles is a requirement of Articles 11.2 and 12.1 of the *Beijing Rules*, Article 58 of the *Riyadh Guidelines* and Article 81087 of the *Havana Rules*. There clearly is some provision in BiH, but practice is understandably uneven.
- Ø It is not clear whether there are plans to introduce discrete juvenile courts to deal with young offenders. Clarification is required on this point.
- Ø It would appear there have been some initiatives to introduce restorative justice principles in BiH. Practice, though, would appear to be patchy and uneven. It is worth noting that restorative justice approaches have shown signs of some success in societies with recent histories of conflict and/or countries where the state's legitimacy has been questioned. In both Northern Ireland (McEvoy and Mika, 2002) and South Africa (Skelton, 2002), the restorative justice movement has been linked to wider peace, reconciliation and community rebuilding processes. Whilst it is sometimes difficult to win the argument for the case of restorative justice in the case of adults, it is often possible to enlist public sympathy in relation to children and young people. The benefits of this approach include (a) an alternative to the formal justice system; and (b) the commitment to reintegrating the young person back into the community.

Criminal Justice: Recommendations

- ✓ The need to collect reliable data and conduct research (e.g., patterns of crime, effectiveness of sentences, etc.) is an essential pre-requisite for developing evidence-based policy.
- ✓ There should be closer co-operation between Social Welfare Centres and other agencies (education, health, NGO's, etc.). This will help reduce delays in the sentencing process and lead to the more effective delivery of criminal justice sanctions (including community-based measures).
- ✓ The practice of exposing juveniles to adult prisoners in custodial institutions should be ended as soon as humanly possible.
- ✓ In line with international conventions (*Beijing Rules*, the *Sixth United Nations Congress* and Article 37 of the *UN Convention of the Rights of the Child*) the deprivation of liberty and the use of custodial sentences should be used only as a last resort for children and young people. International research also shows quite clearly that custodial institutions (a) expose young people to physical and moral danger; (b) weaken ties between young people and their families and communities (thus making community reintegration more problematic); (c) increase the likelihood of recidivism; and (d) are cost-ineffective. Douglas Hurd, a British

- Home Office Minister, once remarked that “Prison was an expensive way of making bad people worse”. In the circumstances it makes more sense to strengthen community-based sentencing options aimed at addressing the underlying reasons for offending (family problems, low income, poor education, under-developed social skills, substance misuse, etc.).
- ✓ Improved training for social welfare and criminal justice practitioners (including police officers) is a high priority.
 - ✓ Good practice in such areas as restorative justice and diversion from the formal criminal justice system needs to be shared across BiH. Examples from other countries should also be explored.

3.3: Policy Themes and Issues:

The following sections present brief comments on salient youth policy themes as well as issues specific to BiH. Some of these subjects have already been covered and therefore receive less coverage.

3.3.1: Information

It will already be apparent that young people need to access high quality information across a range of policy domains. A competent Youth Information Agency, working closely with UNDP, already exists in Sarajevo. It would, however, be helpful to know the overarching information strategy of BiH. Who are the target groups? Which public information campaigns should be prioritised? Which communication strategies are best suited to reach specific constituencies? Given the apparently low percentage of young people who have access to the internet and the current challenges facing public broadcasting (Council of Europe, 2005: 14), this is no easy task. It is, nevertheless, an essential one. It is also important to ensure that the youth information strategy is linked as effectively as possible to European-wide information networks.

Information: Recommendation

- ✓ A Youth Information Strategy needs to be devised. Particular attention should be given to prioritising public information campaigns and identifying high risk target groups. It is also vitally important that information systems in BiH are integrated within wider European information networks.

3.3.2: Mobility

Mobility for young people within BiH, let alone beyond the state borders, appears to be a huge challenge. Limited personal resources and the nature of the public

transport system are factors. Some young people from BiH have, of course, benefited from various international programmes. These opportunities do need to be expanded, though (e.g., through the ‘cards’ programme of the EU; town twinnings; bilateral youth and cultural exchanges; Council of Europe activities; and UN mobility schemes). The International Commission on the Balkans has, indeed, noted that:

“Among the most discouraging findings of the Commission is that the European generation of the Balkans, young men and women under 30 who share the values of Europe most keenly and who vote for pro-European parties most regularly, are those who experience the most difficulties in visiting the EU.”
(ICB, 2005: 33)

The Commission comments that:

“Bulgaria and Romania have demonstrated that freedom of movement within the EU is the strongest signal that the EU can send both to the public and to governments in the Balkans. A smart visa policy of the EU that opens its borders to Balkan youth and Balkan businesses while closing them for criminals should be at the very centre of policies that will mobilise popular support for building EU member states in the Balkans.”
(ICB 2005: 33-34)

It is suggested that European member-states should prioritise a Balkan Student Visa Programme for 150,000 full-time students in Serbia & Montenegro, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Macedonia and Albania.

Whether this recommendation will be adopted remains to be seen. In the meantime, BiH must do all it can to improve internal administrative processes. It should be mentioned that some young people we met described the protracted process of applying for a visa. For those normally resident outside Sarajevo the expense and inconvenience of travel and accommodation proved prohibitive. This is a matter that needs to be addressed. Could some of these administrative matters be devolved to a more local level?

Attention should be drawn to the Solidarity Fund for Youth Mobility. This is aimed at supporting projects for disadvantaged young people and enables participants to travel across Europe for international meetings and events (look for ‘financial support’ at www.coe.int/youth).

Mobility: recommendations

- ✓ Participation in European mobility programmes needs to be increased.
- ✓ It is important to establish a good national agency to manage the European Youth Programme (www.europa.eu.int/comm/youth/program/index_en.html).
- ✓ The internal administrative processes for issuing visas should be reviewed. Particular attention should be given to exploring the possibility of

streamlining the system and, possibly, devolving some functions to a more local level.

3.3.3: Equal Opportunities and Diversity

The discourse of equal opportunities in BiH is, understandably perhaps, dominated by discussions around the three national communities or ethnicities. Whilst it is important to continue monitoring social processes for signs of discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, it is also necessary to widen the debate. There are, indeed, signs that this is already happening. The establishment of a Gender Agency is evidence of this trend. It is important, though, to also address the issue of sexual orientation and the position of minorities like the Roma - whose estimated population rose from 9,000 in 1991 to between 50,000 and 80,000 in 2001 (Save the Children, 2001). There is an argument in favour of an integrated Equal Opportunities Commission (with divisions tasked to address maximisation of opportunities in relation to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, etc.). This is perhaps a debate for another day, though. Nevertheless, the time to broaden the debate about equal opportunities has arrived.

Equal Opportunities and Diversity: Recommendation

- ✓ The issue of equal opportunities needs to go beyond the understandable preoccupation with the three constituent national communities of BiH. The discourse must be expanded to include such areas as gender, sexual orientation and people from minority ethnic communities such as the Roma. The three afore-mentioned areas need to be prioritised in terms of youth policy development.

3.3.4: Research

As has already been mentioned, there would appear to be some interesting individual research projects being undertaken. It is important, though, that a youth research network is established in BiH in order that expertise, knowledge and findings can be shared and peer-reviewed. Such a network could also link with existing European Research Networks. Specifically, BiH could join the European Knowledge Centre (established under the auspices of the Partnership agreement between the Council of Europe and the European Commission on Youth Research). BiH could also then nominate a researcher to the European Partnership's Youth Research Network. This would deepen and widen the pool of expertise available to the youth researchers in BiH. Indeed, European academics may well be in a position to organise and facilitate research and training events in BiH. The expansion of research capacity in BiH is essential if rigorous evaluation studies are to be conducted. It is a pre-requisite, indeed, for the development of evidence-based policy.

Research: Recommendations

- ✓ The establishment of a research and evaluation culture is an essential pre-requisite for the development of evidence-based youth policy. Accordingly, we would recommend that a Youth Research Network is established in BiH. This could, in turn, be linked to the existing European Youth Research Network. The linkage of these two Networks should lead to good practice being shared.
- ✓ The possibility of expanding research capacity in BiH should be explored in terms of holding training events in respect of research methods. Academic staff from universities across Europe could contribute to such events.
- ✓ A needs analysis of children and young people in BiH should be undertaken as soon as is practicable.
- ✓ Attention is drawn to the European Knowledge Centre. The website (www.youth-knowledge.net) provides users with a single entry point to retrieve accurate, up-to-date research-based information concerning the condition of youth across Europe. It is a particularly user-friendly resource.
- ✓ The SALTO SSE website (www.salto-youth.net/linksBA/) provides some very useful information concerning Bosnia and Herzegovina and the rest of South-East Europe.

3.3.5: Training

Training needs have already been identified in a number of areas. Summarised here are the various European training programmes that relate to young people and youth policy. They include training opportunities for young people, youth workers, policy makers and policy administrators.

Training: Recommendation

- ✓ It is recommended that training opportunities are maximised in respect of young people, youth workers, policy makers and administrators. Summarised below are some European and other training programmes that may be of interest
 - ü Human Rights Education Programme (COMPASS process).
 - ü Citizenship Programmes (Council of Europe).
 - ü Youth Leader Training (Partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission)
 - ü Programmes of the European Youth Foundation.
 - ü Training courses provided by the European Youth Centres.
 - ü Programmes on 'Cards' (European Union).
 - ü UNDP and UNICEF training programmes.

3.3.6: Youth Participation

The pattern of youth participation across BiH is patchy and uneven. There are areas where practice is good, but overall there is considerable scope for improvement. Hopefully, some of the above-mentioned training programmes will help to spread best practice.

The fledgling RS Youth Council shows great promise. It has already accomplished a great deal. However, it is vitally important that the Youth Council structures are developed in the Federation of BiH. This will facilitate the establishment of a state-wide Youth Council. Such a Council would obviously entitle BiH to membership of European Youth Forum and access to other European networks. The European Youth Forum is an autonomous international youth umbrella organisation and is an independent partner of the Council of Europe and the European Commission (www.youthforum.org/en/). Both the European Youth Forum and the Council of Europe's Directorate of Youth and Sport can be approached for consultancy in respect of establishing a democratic and functioning Youth Council in BiH. The establishment of a state-wide National Youth Council is absolutely imperative. The importance of such a structure can be inferred from the following passage about EU member states' obligations in respect of the European Youth Pact.

*“The European Council underlined that, to be successful, the Pact requires the involvement of local actors, first and foremost, of youth organisations, as well as regional and local authorities and the social partners. Young people and their organisations should be consulted on the development of measures for this initiative within the national Lisbon reform programmes, and on following up implementation. While it is up to each Member State to define how to involve young people, **national youth councils should be among those consulted.** (Emphasis added)”*

(Commission of the European Communities, 2005: 11)

Youth Participation: Recommendations

- ✓ The formation of local youth councils across BiH should be given every encouragement and support.
- ✓ The establishment of a state-wide National Youth Council is an absolute priority. This democratic forum should be an influential social actor in the development of youth policy in BiH. Moreover, the existence of a National Youth Council would entitle BiH to membership of the European Youth Forum and access to other European networks. It is important to state that the Council of Europe can be approached for consultancy in respect of establishing a democratic and functioning National Youth Council in BiH.
- ✓ The National Youth Council of BiH should be entitled to automatic representation on the Youth Commission.

3.3.7: Youth Commission

The Team welcomes the proposed establishment of the Youth Commission. Youth policy needs a ‘driver’ at state level and the new Commission seems well suited to take on this role. The Commission will be well placed to assist the process of developing an integrated youth policy. As a new body it will, of course, have to reassure a number of constituencies. Summarised below are some comments for consideration.

- Ø The main issues are concerned with ‘representativeness’ and the accountability of the Youth Commission. Complete ‘representativeness’ is arguably an unattainable ideal, but that does not mean it is not worth pursuing. Many of the people with whom we discussed the Commission were concerned about the transparency of the process regarding the ‘selection’ (as opposed to ‘election’) of representatives from youth NGO’s. The architects of the Commission need to give some thought to this matter. We would recommend that the elected Youth Council sector should certainly be represented on the Commission. Such a signal would give direct encouragement to the development of Youth Councils across the whole of BiH.
- Ø Article 9 states that the Commission will take its decisions by a two thirds majority. Are we to understand that this relates to all decisions, or only significant constitutional matters? What will happen if a two thirds majority cannot be achieved? These are not intended to be hostile questions. Rather, they are straightforward points requiring clarification.
- Ø We have had sight of GTZ’s recommendation regarding the criteria for selecting representatives from youth NGO’s. On the whole, the recommendations are helpful. We would, however, draw attention to point 3 which suggests that applicants “*should possess good academic scores*”. As far as possible the Commission should be inclusive. It should not exclude a candidate on the basis of academic ability if there are proven capabilities in other areas.
- Ø In conclusion we welcome the establishment of a Youth Commission as a positive development.

Youth Commission: Recommendations

- ✓ The proposed Youth Commission could play a key role in the development of an integrated youth policy. It should assess and evaluate all aspects of government policy in relation to the impact it may have upon young people. This, however, is a daunting challenge. The adoption of the ‘youth paragraph’ principle by the various levels of government in BiH would, perhaps, enable the Youth Commission to audit the work of the different domains of social policy more effectively. In Antwerp the principle of the ‘youth paragraph’ became institutionalised practice in the municipality. A legal provision made it compulsory for local government to, “...*analyse the impact on young people of all political decisions taken by the municipality*” (European Commission, 2001:

- 27). If the different tiers of government were to embrace this principle, then this aspect of the Youth Commission's work could be made a little more manageable. It would also aid the process of building a coherent youth policy.
- ✓ The process of selection to the Youth Commission should be as transparent as possible.
 - ✓ The elected Youth Council sector should be represented on the Youth Commission. Ideally, once formed, the state-wide Youth Council should elect its members to the Youth Commission.
 - ✓ The ideal of 'representativeness' should not be confined to issues of ethnicity. An inclusive approach to membership of the Youth Commission should be encouraged to include representatives from diverse social and educational backgrounds. Needless to say, the matter of gender should not be forgotten.
 - ✓ The agenda of the Youth Commission should be open. It should be set by the widest possible cross-section of Youth Policy actors.
 - ✓ The budget of the Youth Commission should be commensurate with its wide terms of reference.

3.3.8: Volunteering

The issue of 'alternative civil service' (Council of Europe, 2005: 15) is a matter currently under discussion. Such a development would not only provide young people with opportunities for personal and professional development, it would also provide much-needed additional support for public services. It is against this background that the Team welcomes the announcement of the pilot project involving the UNV, EVS and the UNDP RIVER SEE Programme. European-wide information about opportunities for volunteering can be found at:

www.europa.eu.int/comm/youth/program/sos/vh_evs_en.html

Volunteering: Recommendation

- ✓ Volunteering programmes should be expanded.

3.3.9: Delivery

The Team has insufficient information to make authoritative evaluative comments in respect of Williamson's (2002) five components of youth policy: coverage, capacity, competence, co-ordination and cost. This would need to be the subject of a longer process involving, perhaps, an international review. Nevertheless, it could be argued that the proposed Youth Commission could potentially drive forward the *coverage* of youth policy across BiH; address issues of *capacity*; answer questions of *competence* through ensuring high quality training for the workforce; and help play a *co-ordinating* role in terms of 'joined-up' policy development and service delivery.

The issue of *co-ordination* is a particularly important one as the complicated governmental structures require designated elected representatives and officers at all levels if policy is actually going to reach young people. The issue of *cost*, of course, is extremely difficult in a country with scarce resources. The reality is that the international community will continue to play a significant role for the foreseeable future. It is important, however, that the international community works in close and respectful partnership with the people of BiH.

Delivery: Recommendations

- ✓ Given the complex system of governance within BiH it is absolutely essential that Youth Policy officers are identified at every level of government (state, entity, municipality, canton, etc.). Policies need to be formulated in terms of strategies, action plans and measurable objectives. This will ensure that there is a measure of accountability inscribed within the system. Youth Policy ministers and local government officers must be clear about their role in both engaging with young people in decision-making processes and delivering policy on the ground. Management training should be made available to policy makers and administrators at every level of government. It is, however, especially important at local level. Seminars, co-funded and co-managed by NGO's and the Council of Europe on a 50%-50% basis, could be delivered to civil servants and local government officials.
- ✓ Although comprehensive data on the socio-economic condition of youth is unavailable, it is safe to say that many young people are living in circumstances of deprivation. Consequently, it is important that all localities form partnership fora in which the key economic players (businesses, Chambers of Commerce, local government, donor organisations, etc.) meet in order to develop local action plans to address the salient issues affecting young people.

3.4: Conclusion

Most of the recommendations of this Report have been made in relation to specific subject areas or policy domains. In conclusion, though, we would like to make three recommendations that have not yet been made. The first is that BiH should invite an International Review of its Youth Policy. The rationale behind this recommendation is that it would require BiH to develop a National Youth Policy and National Report. This is an extremely useful process in itself because it requires the state to engage in a stock-taking exercise and consider future plans in a purposeful way. The international dimension of the Review process opens up discussions and can highlight future possibilities that had perhaps not been previously considered. The whole process helps to cultivate a critical culture on the ground

The second recommendation also relates to building a critical culture through a process of honest self-appraisal. Every democratic state needs to find ways to self-evaluate and challenge practises that are inimical to the interests of its citizens. The creation of inspectorates in various fields (Education, Health, etc.) is one model to be commended. In the field of children and youth, however, the establishment of Children's Commissioners has proved very successful in some countries. An independent Commissioner (backed by Assistant Commissioners and a support staff) should ideally be appointed by the young people themselves and be accountable to that constituency alone. If the model of Children's Commissioner could be translated into the youth field (a Commissioner for Children and Youth) then s/he could be a powerful and popular counterbalance to government bodies. The focus should be on broad issues of policy rather than championing individual cases unless, of course, particular cases are representative of a wider issue. It is a model that we commend to you as being worthy of consideration.

The third recommendation has been an implicit assumption in some passages of this Report. It concerns the need for BiH to co-operate more closely on youth policy with its neighbours in the region. The International Team would wish to endorse the main recommendations arising out of the Consultative Meeting on Youth Policy in Sofia in June of this year. The Report of that meeting (*Reconstruction of Youth in South East Europe – Recognition, Access and Inclusion*) has now been published by the participants (Council of Europe *et al*, 2005) and is recommended reading. Many of the conclusions of that Report anticipate those contained in this one. The importance of consolidating and extending patterns of co-operation between nation-states in the South-East European region is an essential pre-requisite for the security and prosperity of BiH and its neighbours. The need to assert the community of interest that undoubtedly exists between young people in the region should be the shared ideal of all national youth policies. This is, indeed, recognised in the Report arising out of the Sofia Conference. We would draw particular attention to the following recommendations made to the Council of Europe. The Council should.

“...give South East Europe, within the work priorities 2006-2008, a cross-cutting significance both within international activities and in national and regional measures as suggested in the youth policy advisory missions so far undertaken to Slovenia, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- *to consider the region as a prominent area of tolerance education within the forthcoming campaign of ‘Participation, Human Rights and Diversity’, and to foresee a meeting on this item in the region by late September 2005.”*

(Council of Europe, 2005c: 3)

Furthermore, the recommendation to the Council of Europe and the European Commission (see below) represents a determined will to support the process of co-operation by enhancing the institutional integrity of the region.

“ – to look into the possibility with the intention to arrive at a possible result in 2006 to include South East Europe as a region in the Partnership Agreement on training, research and EUOMED cooperation, exactly in analogy to the EUROMED region and with similar objectives. First steps could be the inclusion in the European Knowledge Centre and increased citizenship training.”
(Council of Europe, 2005c).

Conclusion: Recommendations

Summarised below are the key recommendations of this concluding section of the Report.

- ✓ BiH should develop a National Youth Policy
- ✓ BiH should invite the Council of Europe to conduct an International Review of its National Youth Policy.
- ✓ If not already in existence, BiH should establish Inspectorates in the key domains of youth policy. In line with the previously mentioned practice of ‘youth paragraphs’, these Inspectorates should be tasked with addressing the impact of specific social policies on young people.
- ✓ BiH should establish the independent office of Commissioner of Children and Youth. Children and young people should play a role in appointing the Principal Commissioner. As it is to this constituency that s/he should be accountable, young people therefore need to be represented on a management board. The focus of the work of the Commissioner would be on broad issues of policy rather than the championing of individual cases (unless such cases are representative of wider concerns).
- ✓ Greater co-operation between BiH and its neighbours on youth policy issues. As far as possible, this should be supported through the establishment of institutional mechanisms at the regional level of South-East Europe.

In conclusion we would emphasise the hope that this Report marks the beginning of a dialogue between the CoE and the BiH. This dialogue should be open and inclusive. We trust that this conversation will prove to be of value to all of those concerned with the future of youth policy in BiH and Europe. Youth policies are often expected to bear the unfair burden of our societies’ hopes and ambitions for the future. This unfair burden can, however, be lightened just a little through international co-operation.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Youth Policy Indicators

In 2002 the Council of Europe's Youth Directorate constructed a range of youth policy indicators. These are detailed below.

1. The number of young people active in lifelong learning, both in formal and non-formal and non-formal education, and indiscriminate of gender, origin and social and cultural background shall increase. Qualifications acquired in structured and curriculum based non-formal education offers shall be recognised as part of lifelong learning.
2. The number of young people having access to new technologies and being trained in using them to the best of their advantage shall increase.
3. The proportion of young people in member countries who receive specialist personal advice and support and vocational guidance shall increase.
4. The number of youth information centres, youth information services in the media and youth information contact points in member countries and the proportion of young people making good use of this offer shall increase.
5. The number of young people deciding to live healthy lifestyles shall increase and so shall the health and social protection services providing guidance and assistance.
6. The proportion of local authorities, which in co-operation with central government care for creating access to suitable housing schemes for young people shall increase.
7. The number of young people finding access to paid work must increase.
8. The number of opportunities of mobility for young people in order to enlarge their intercultural and personal experiences and their professional qualifications shall increase.
9. The number of countries introducing specific youth legislation and practising a youth justice system shall increase.
10. The number of central and local government measures aimed at giving young people real opportunities to practice active citizenship, to participate in public life and to use freedom of speech and association shall increase.
11. The opportunities for young people to take part in recreational and cultural opportunities and/or to become active in social and voluntary services shall increase.
12. Occasions to practise sport and outdoor activities shall increase, and where they do not exist yet, to be created.
13. Young people shall be given opportunities for stays away from home from a very young age and their proportion to take part in international exchanges in the forms of both studies and practical experiences shall increase.
14. The proportion of young people who are victims of crime and violent acts and the proportion of young people who are perpetrators of violence shall decrease.

15. Evidence-based policy making is only possible if the evidence is available and accessible. European youth research, as the evidential reference for European youth policy-making, must currently work with a highly uneven and disparate information and knowledge base. Comprehensive, coherent and co-ordinated policies and action in favour of young people throughout Europe require comprehensive, coherent and co-ordinated evidence and expertise. In this respect, and to improve the quantity, quality and balance of information and knowledge about young people it is recommended to establish a comprehensive European database and a regular reporting system and to support European youth research by structured co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. The partnership agreement on youth research between the Commission and the Council of Europe represents a significant step forward.
16. The cultural convention of the Council of Europe comprises 48 signatory parties. These vary substantially in their collections of statistics on young people. It is still a long way to arrive at the comprehensive European database on young people recommended above. When using data one should not insist on absolute comparability, because this would be unrealistic. Instead, data should be used which have proven comparable in a reasonably high number of member countries. Also, the UN Human Development Index (HDI) should be used for young people as a subgroup to general population studies (cf. International Review of Lithuania, 2002).
17. The Council of Europe invites all European and international organisations working with youth policy indicators (EU, OECD, World Bank, UNESCO) to enter into dialogue and exchange on the feasibility of the approach suggested here, its potential for further development, its political wisdom and its appropriateness in terms of practical use and efficiency in knowledge production on young people in Europe and the world at large. This dialogue must include youth organisations and the civil society at large as well as the business community. A European conference of experts on indicators and their use in European youth studies is proposed for 2004 within the participatory agreement between the European Commission and the Council of Europe on youth research.
18. Indicators are meant to show what countries are doing for young people and how are they doing this. They need to be appropriate to describe both governmental measures and activities of civil society and the market, and moreover, the interaction between them.
19. Indicators have to serve political postulates of good governance such as accountability, effectiveness, coherence and transparency.
20. Indicators, youth policy interpretation and youth policy components are different dimensions of understanding and conceptualising youth policy. These dimensions inform each other and are a prerequisite for the construction of youth policy packages of opportunity and experience. Scope and content of these packages need to bridge the gap between intended youth policy objectives and concrete achievements.

21. All youth policy indicators should be broken down by gender, minority/majority status and urban/rural divide.
22. Indicators need to show within the mechanism of implementation and delivery of youth policy, how the arrangements within member countries promote access and inclusion or, how they fail in achieving this objective.
23. Any use of indicators needs to be made subject of an intercultural examination, considering the development of youth policy in a country by using knowledge related to historic understanding, religious and cultural norms and habits, effects of long lasting styles of governance of a very recent past, economic facts and figures before being used in reviewing youth policy in a country. In other words, indicators need to be attuned to situations and processes, without ever leaving the core understanding of youth policy to be democratic, value based and promoting gender equality and minority rights.
24. It is desirable that ongoing work on indicators in the Council of Europe should become part of the guidelines on the production of national youth policy reports and international reviews as well as of the youth policy advisory missions. Indicators should also be used within the new policy of the European Union following the publication of the white paper *A New Impetus for Youth*.

Appendix 2: Council of Europe: Youth Policy Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina - Programme of Meetings

Tuesday, 29th March 2005

Arrival and accommodation of delegation in Sarajevo.

Wednesday, 30th March 2005

Working day in Sarajevo

09.30 - 11.00: Meeting in Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina

11.00 – 12.00: Meeting with UNDP Deputy President Representative and integrated Youth Programmes representative.

12.00 – 13.00: Meeting with GTZ representatives

13.30 – 15.30: Working lunch with representatives of Centre for Youth of FBiH

16.00 – 17.00: Meeting with Advisor for Youth to the Prime Minister of FBiH

20.00: Dinner hosted by Deputy Minister of Civil Affairs.

Thursday, 31st March 2005

Field visit to Brcko District and Banja Luka

Travel to Brcko

Working Day in Brcko

13.00: Visit to Youth Centre

14.30: Lunch hosted by Mayor.

Travel to Banja Luka after working day in Brcko.

Accommodation in Banja Luka

Friday, 1st April 2005

Working day in Banja Luka

12.00 – 13.00: Meeting with representatives of the Secretariat for Youth and Sport

13.30 – 14.30: Meeting with representatives of the Youth Council of RS

14.30 – 16.00: Lunch

16.00 – 17.00: Meeting with representatives of the Youth Board of the RS Parliament

Travel to Sarajevo after working day in Banja Luka

Accommodation in Sarajevo

Saturday, 2nd April 2005

Team Meeting of Advisory Mission delegation

Departure of the delegation

Appendix 3: Members of the Advisory Mission to Bosnia & Herzegovina

Mr. Jan Vanhee

Jan Vanhee is a representative of Belgium Flanders in the Intergovernmental Steering Committee for Youth in the Council of Europe. He was born in 1959, holds a Diploma in Social Work (Community Development). His current position is Assistant to the Director in the Division of Youth and Sports within the Ministry of the Flemish Community (Belgium). One of his responsibilities includes International Youth (Work) Policy. Since 1999 he has followed all relevant Youth issues in the Youth Working Group in the Benelux, the Youth Working Group in the European Union, the EU-Youth Programme Programming Committee, the European Steering Committee on Youth of the Council of Europe and, most recently, the bureau meetings. He is active in the following working groups: ERYICA; the Portfolio for Youth Workers and Youth Leaders; and the Campaign 'All Different, All Equal'.

Since 1983 Jan Vanhee has been an active volunteer in an NGO that is committed to fighting poverty. He participated in the development of the *General Report on Poverty* (1995) and in the follow-up to this Report (1995-2000). In association with the University of Ghent he has developed a postgraduate course entitled *Poverty and Participation*, which commenced in 2001. As author or co-author he has written several books including: *Poverty and Education, Exclusion in Youth Work, Courage* (a book of photographs) and a handbook for the course, *Poverty and Participation*.

Ms. Sunduss Al-Hassani

Sunduss Al-Hassani is a British citizen. She recently completed her PhD at the University of Manchester in England. Ms. Al-Hassani has experience of working with a wide range of youth issues and currently represents the Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisations (FEMYSO).

Ms. Zsuzanna Szelenyi

Zsuzanna Szelenyi is a Hungarian national who has been working at the Directorate of Youth and Sport in the Council of Europe since 1996. She holds the position of Deputy Executive Director of the European Youth Centre in Budapest. Ms. Szelenyi holds diplomas in Psychology and International Relations. She also has extensive practical experience in the youth field and the politics of change. A founder of a political youth organisation in 1988, a key time in the period of democratic transition in Hungary, she went on to become a Member of Parliament in 1990. As an active politician and student of political psychology, Ms. Szelenyi acquired valuable experiences concerning the nature of political and social transition. Between 1994 and 1996 she worked as a Ministerial Commissioner at the Hungarian Ministry of Education and was responsible for the establishment of the Council of Europe's European Youth Centre in Budapest. Subsequently she managed the high profile 'All different – All Equal' campaign against racism, xenophobia and intolerance.

Mr. Peter Lauritzen

Peter Lauritzen is the Head of the Youth Department in the Council of Europe. He is a German national who has been working in the youth field of the Council of Europe since it first became operational in 1972. In the intervening period he has been in charge of education and training, research and – more recently – youth policy reports. He has directed the Council of Europe's youth campaign against racism and was the first Director of the European Youth Centre in Budapest. He is currently runs the co-operation programme in the European Union and co-ordinates education, training, research and youth policy.

Mr. Jonathan Evans

Jonathan Evans is from the United Kingdom and works as a member of the academic staff in the Cardiff University School of Social Sciences in Wales. His research interests lie principally in the field of youth justice and public care. Before moving into higher education he worked as a community development worker, social worker and probation officer. For a period of three years he also served on the National Executive of the National Association of Probation Officers. As a Welsh-speaker living in a multicultural city, he is also interested in the rights of linguistic and cultural minorities. He has worked with the Council of Europe on previous occasions; most notably as the rapporteur for the International Review Team in Malta (*Youth Policy in Malta* was published by the Council of Europe in February 2005).

Appendix 4: Documents Presented to the Advisory Mission

Detailed below are those additional documents presented to the delegation that do not appear in the main References section.

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Savic, J., Milosavljevic, B., Brankovic, D., Dimitrijev, P., Dimitrijevic, S. & Durasinovic, P. (2003) *Mladi Republike Srpske (BiH) Na Pocetku XXI Vijeka*, Banja Luka: ART Print

Appendix 5: Example of Work Undertaken by the Council of Europe in the Field of Education

The Council of Europe's Directorate of Education has been providing teacher training for individual teachers and various education authorities in BiH since 1996. To date, approximately 3,500 teachers have received in-service training from the Council. A brief Report (29th June 2005) presented by Christopher Reynolds (Education Directorate of CoE in Strasbourg) and Emir Adzovic (Education Department of the CoE Office in Sarajevo) is quoted below. It highlights some examples of good practice and points the way for future developments.

“Education for Democratic Citizenship/Human Rights Education

Teaching Manuals developed for Bosnia and Herzegovina by Council of Europe experts (Education Directorate) as part of the Joint Programme for BiH between the Council of Europe and the European Commission

The Council of Europe (Education Directorate) has been involved in teacher-training activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) since 1996. Its cooperation was in 2002, first thanks to a voluntary contribution by the UK (2002-2003) and then through the Joint Programme for BiH between the CoE and the EC.

The first of these two programmes was launched following the introduction of the subject of Democracy and Human Rights at 8th and 11th grade in schools throughout BiH, in application of the Agreement of 10 May 2000 by the Ministers of Education, replacing the previous subject of Civil Defence. The purpose of the seminars was to introduce the teachers who would be teaching the new subject, and who would not necessarily have any knowledge of it, to the main principles of EDC and an interactive classroom approach that had been developed by CoE experts during the course of their experience in BiH (referred to as the Brcko Model). These teachers were also given a copy of a compendium of documents made by and with contributions from the CoE experts (The Blue Folder).

The RS (one of the two entities in BiH) had decided that instead of teaching Human Rights at 8th grade only, Children's Rights would be taught throughout primary education in a series of modules – 1 module per year comprising 4 lessons to be taught at regular intervals during 'teacher's hour'. When the Joint Programme was approved by the EC and the CoE was in a position to cooperate even more intensely with the BiH authorities, a request was therefore made by the Pedagogical Institute of Republika Srpska (RS) to provide training and materials on Children's Rights.

It was decided that RS teachers should be involved in writing this manual as they were the ones who would be using it in the classroom. An authoring team was therefore set up with 2 CoE experts as advisers, co-authors and overall editors. A pilot version was published in 2003 and tested by the author-teachers.

Given the success of cooperating with BiH teachers, the end target of giving ownership of EDC to them, and the approval of the Ministers of Education of the Federation of BiH

and Republika Srpska, and the Minister of Civil Affairs, it was decided to produce similar manuals for use at the new 9th grade in FBiH and the new 12th grade for use throughout the country. These manuals, along with a revised Children's Rights manual, were published this year and formally presented at the Final Review of the Joint Programme, which was held in Sarajevo on 24 and 25 June 2005. All manuals were developed in cooperation with local teachers.

These manuals are designed to give teachers a specific tool with which to meet the specific requirements of the respective curricula. They each comprise 9 modules of 4 lessons and deal with EDC/HRE concepts through contemporary situations and contexts that the students are familiar with and have to cope with. At the same time, they contain pedagogical elements to help train teachers who have little or no experience of interactive teaching, explaining to them why the lessons were developed in the way they were, how they can be exploited and expanded, and making suggestions for follow-up and further discussion, etc.

Each of the manuals is supplemented by a 'Workbook' that contains all materials referred to in the Teacher's Book and ready for use in the classroom or for copying. The 'Workbook' also includes all relevant conventions, charters, declarations as well as the Constitution of BiH in this case.

Although they were designed to meet the specific requirements of the BiH curricula in terms of form, the content is of a universal nature and the Education Directorate hopes to produce English language, non-country-specific versions of them in the framework of the European Year of the Citizenship through Education.

Council of Europe has been providing teacher training for different teachers and education authorities in BiH since 1996. Through different in service trainings, CoE trained some 3500 teachers so far.

When speaking about the results of this Joint Project we can confirm that we trained all secondary school teachers who deal with EDC/HRE in BiH (330), we also provide training for smaller groups of primary school teachers, school directors, pedagogical institute advisors and education authorities in general.

We provided an extensive training (3, 5 years, more than 10 trainings, each one 3 days) for groups of 20 teachers of children's rights in Republika Srpska that are training now their colleagues as teacher trainers in the RS.

We also trained the group of 20 teachers from the Federation of BiH who work on the peer to peer level with their colleagues in their respective regions.

The CoE works with a group of 12 people within the framework of the Practicum Development Working Group in charge of development of practicum certification of teachers in BiH."

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