



Humanitarian Law Center



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ЗА ТЕБЕ

## Policy Paper:

# The 1990s Wars in Former Yugoslavia in History Education





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September 2020



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"In the Serbian case, the teaching of history has served much more as a type of preparatory military training than as a scholarly discipline of critical thinking".<sup>1</sup>

Dubravka Stojanović

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1 Dubravka Stojanović, 'Revisions of Second World War History in Serbia', in *Serbia and the Serbs in World War Two*, ed. Sabrina P. Ramet and Ola Listhaug (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2011), 250.

# ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CDRSEE</b>	Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeastern Europe
<b>CoE</b>	Council of Europe
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUROCLIO</b>	European Association of History Educators
<b>HLC</b>	Humanitarian Law Centre
<b>ICTY</b>	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
<b>IRMCT</b>	International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals
<b>ITT</b>	Initial Teacher Training
<b>SAO Krajina</b>	Serbian Autonomous Oblast (Region) of Krajina



# ABSTRACT

The state authorities in Serbia have formally committed to raising awareness about the 1990s wars in former Yugoslavia, the war crimes committed during them, and the necessity for their prosecution. The National Strategy for the Prosecution of War Crimes, which the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted in 2016, sets raising awareness and outreach in society as one of its goals. Within the outreach section, the National Strategy addresses formal education, but very briefly, and without binding regulations for educational authorities. The ongoing problem is that, in practice, formal education does not dedicate a lot of attention to the wars that followed the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Although education is mentioned, the National Strategy has not initiated any changes in the way the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s are taught.

This policy paper focuses on the formal education processes, by identifying numerous issues concerning how the wars that followed the dissolution of Yugoslavia are situated in the context of formal education at the primary and secondary school levels in Serbia. The issues pertaining to the problematic or insufficient teaching of the 1990s wars arise in multiple spheres: formulation of the curricula, textbook content, training and education of teachers and teaching practice. The educational authorities do not take international recommendations into account, while most of the work done to improve the situation in these spheres comes from various international and local non-state initiatives. The paper offers recommendations aimed at the state institutions and educational authorities in Serbia.



# 1. INTRODUCTION

More than two decades have passed since the end of the armed conflicts in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo, that accompanied the disintegration of Yugoslavia and claimed more than 130,000 lives.<sup>2</sup> In today's Serbia, the official politics of memory is based on a historical revisionism that reduces the 1990s wars to a narrative of Serbian heroes and victims. The other sides of the conflicts are criminalised, and the public discourses in parallel relativise or deny the war crimes committed by the Serbian military, police and paramilitary forces. Convicted war criminals are completely rehabilitated as heroes and patriots in Serbian society; they enjoy state and public support, and many of them are politically active.<sup>3</sup> Even though facts about the war crimes committed during the 1990s wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo were determined during the trials at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and through numerous research and documentation projects, they are negated, relativised or delegitimised in the dominant political discourses.

While there is a lack of political support for 'dealing with the past', Serbia's state authorities have formally committed to prosecuting war crimes and raising awareness about them in society. Prosecution of war crimes constitutes a vital segment of Chapter 23 of Serbia's accession negotiations with the European Union. The Action Plan for Chapter 23 introduces strategic reforms aimed at improving war crimes prosecution.<sup>4</sup>

In 2016, the Government of Serbia adopted the National Strategy for the Prosecution of War Crimes (in further text: the National Strategy), implementing the strategic reforms introduced in the Action Plan. The implementation period of the National

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2 Map of War Victims in the Former SFRJ 1991 – 2001, accessed 3 July 2020, <http://zrtveratovasrfj.info/site/home/en-US>.

3 Milica Stojanović, 'War Criminals Prepare to Run in Serbian Elections', *Balkan Insight*, 26 May 2020, <https://balkaninsight.com/2020/05/26/war-criminals-prepare-to-run-in-serbian-elections/>.

4 Republic of Serbia, Negotiation Group for Chapter 23, 'Action Plan for Chapter 23', 2016, <https://www.mpravde.gov.rs/files/Action%20plan%20Ch%2023.pdf>.

Strategy is from 2016 to 2020. In addition to the matters directly relating to war crimes prosecution, the National Strategy involves the goal of increasing awareness about the importance of punishment of war crimes perpetrators.<sup>5</sup>

Within the aim of outreach and raising awareness about war crimes prosecution, the National Strategy addresses the topic of education, although it does not go into detail. Education is briefly addressed within the last of the eight priorities whose fulfilment is expected through the implementation of the National Strategy, and encompasses the activities leading to a raised level of awareness and improved public attitude towards the need for war crimes trials, as listed under the title "Outreach".<sup>6</sup> In addition to outreach activities, access to information and training of media professionals, this objective encompasses "improvement of the curricula in a manner that allows the students/pupils to obtain a sufficient quantity of relevant information on the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, the war crimes committed during that time, and the norms of international humanitarian law".<sup>7</sup>

This process includes the continuous monitoring and upgrading of "the quality and content of the curriculum that tackles issues related to the history of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia and the crimes that were committed during those conflicts", in accordance with the mechanisms of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.<sup>8</sup> The process of improvement of education includes taking into account when approving the textbooks of "the principles of tolerance, non-discrimination, reconciliation and the need to build good neighbourly relations".<sup>9</sup>

The National Strategy underlines that these activities are in accordance with activities 3.8.1.9. and 3.8.1.10. of the Action Plan for Chapter 23, as the first step taken in the direction of the educational objective. Close examination of the definition of these activities, however, as outlined in these sections of the Action Plan, reveals that they

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5 Republic of Serbia, 'National Strategy for the Prosecution of War Crimes', 2016, [https://www.tuzilastvorz.org.rs/upload/HomeDocument/Document\\_\\_en/2016-05/p\\_nac\\_stragetija\\_eng.PDF](https://www.tuzilastvorz.org.rs/upload/HomeDocument/Document__en/2016-05/p_nac_stragetija_eng.PDF).

6 Ibid., 30.

7 Ibid., 40.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

do not deal with the wars of the 1990s and war crimes at all. Rather, the two points of the Action Plan are strictly concerned with national minorities and anti-discrimination in the context of education.<sup>10</sup>

Both the formal and non-formal education processes reflect the official memory politics. On the one hand, the public sphere is dominated by stereotypes, particularly by one-sided interpretations of the 1990s wars and crimes, and genocide denial. The state actors promote such narratives as well. Critical discourses are marginalised, as freedom of media and expression has continued to deteriorate in Serbia. Young people who do not have a direct experience of the 1990s are subjected to these dominant historical narratives on a daily basis in non-formal settings: through the media, political speeches, family and peer groups.

On the other hand, formal education represents an opportunity to provide, discuss and negotiate different interpretations of recent history. However, it does not dedicate much attention to the wars of the 1990s. The judicially determined facts about war crimes, if referred to in education programmes and materials, are presented in a selective and biased manner. The narratives of patriotic heroism, self-victimisation, blaming others and nationalist myths dominate the textbooks. This paper will focus on the formal educational processes.

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10 Republic of Serbia, Negotiation Group for Chapter 23, 'Action Plan', 298–324.

## 2. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS OF HISTORY EDUCATION IN SERBIA

### 2.1. International Policy Documents on History Teaching

As a European Union (EU) candidate country, Serbia is committed to aligning its legislation to the EU legislation in all sectors, including education. The Council of Europe (CoE) has issued numerous recommendations about both formal and non-formal education, with a particular focus on history education. A large portion of these recommendations focuses on building peaceful and just multicultural societies in the context of the constantly diversifying population of EU countries. However, many of these documents also provide guidelines for history teaching in post-conflict or, more precisely, post-violence societies.

These documents are open to some criticism. Although many international recommendations discuss history teaching, they are predominantly aimed at those multicultural societies in which two or more groups need to establish cooperation after a violent conflict between them. In addition, many of the existing international recommendations address the growing need of the EU countries to face a new reality of numerous incoming refugees. They often promote critical thinking, but without a careful analysis of the complex interplay between critical thinking and development of national identity, which is a goal included in the Serbian, as well as almost every other history curriculum. Many of them overlook the discursive struggles between groups in post-conflict societies over interpretations of the recent violent history, and disregard the fact that, for many teachers, including topics and interpretations that go against the dominant narratives could be dangerous.<sup>11</sup> With these limitations in mind, the said recommendations can still serve as a starting point for this analysis.

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11 Rodoljub Jovanović, 'Intercultural Education in Post-Conflict Societies: Historical Narratives of the Break-up of Yugoslavia in Serbian High School History Textbooks', in *Intercultural Education: Critical Perspectives, Pedagogical Challenges and Promising Practices*, ed. Cinzia Pica-Smith, Carmen N. Veloria, and Rina Manuela Contini, Education in a Competitive and Globalizing World (Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers, Inc, 2020), 183–215.

One of the earlier CoE recommendations of 1996 on history and the learning of history in Europe recognises that history can be learned from many sources outside school, including “political circles”, and that “virtually all political systems have used history for their own ends”.<sup>12</sup> The recommendation points out that citizens have a right to history that is not manipulated. A 2001 recommendation goes further into detail and specifies misuses of history that are not in line with CoE values, such as “falsification or creation of false evidence”, “fixation on one event to justify or conceal another”, “denial of historical fact” and “omission of historical fact”.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, most of these documents recommend a revision of textbooks and pre-service and in-service teachers’ education to follow through on the general direction outlined above.

Recognising the problems that could arise from discussing sensitive, traumatic and painful episodes from the past, CoE recommendations published in 2018 argue that “there is a danger that omitting events that may be perceived as being controversial or sensitive results in students receiving a distorted and misleading account of the past”.<sup>14</sup>

## 2.2. History Education in Serbia

The Serbian educational system consists of two stages. Primary education is mandatory. Students attend eight grades, divided into lower and higher, four years each. Secondary education varies depending on the type of school, and lasts four years, or three in the case of some vocational schools. There are general grammar schools, and grammar schools with science and mathematics or humanities and languages orientations. Finally, there are also more specialised mathematical or

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12 Council of Europe, ‘Recommendation 1283 (1996) History and the Learning of History in Europe’, 1996, <https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-DocDetails-en.asp?FileID=15317&lang=en>.

13 Council of Europe, ‘Recommendation Rec(2001)15 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on History Teaching in Twenty-First-Century Europe’, 2001, [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016805e2c31](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016805e2c31).

14 ‘Quality History Education in the 21st Century - Principles and Guidelines’, Council of Europe Publishing, accessed 5 April 2019, <http://edoc.coe.int/en/teaching-history/7754-quality-history-education-in-the-21st-century-principles-and-guidelines.html>.

philological grammar schools. Vocational high schools can last for three to four grades depending on the vocation.

All students attend history classes during the higher grades of primary school education. Since the curriculum is chronologically organised, the most recent history, including the break-up of Yugoslavia, is taught at the end, in the eighth grade.

In high schools, the amount of history classes varies, depending on the type of school, from one class per week during one year up to two classes per week for four years. The lessons about the Yugoslav dissolution are a part of all curricula regardless of the type of school and number of history classes. In this analysis, we are focusing on the curricula and other materials for teachers for primary and grammar schools, as the content of the curricula for other types of schools differs mostly in quantity but not in content.<sup>15</sup>

As previously mentioned, history curricula for both primary and high schools are chronological and place the lessons about the break-up of Yugoslavia as the last or second to last lesson of the given educational cycle. Coupled with the fact that this is the time when students focus a lot of energy and time on their preparation for the next cycle of entrance exams, this means that lessons about the Yugoslav break-up are often not covered at all.

### **2.2.1. Primary School History Curricula**

The primary school history curriculum is largely based on a document published in 2008 that introduces a list of key concepts for primary education, with a view to helping teachers create more effective lessons.<sup>16</sup> The document is structured in chronological sections, and the dissolution of Yugoslavia is situated in the section on modern history. The key concepts are structured as:

- 1) necessary knowledge, meaning that 80-100% of students should adopt it,

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<sup>15</sup> Curricula for different types of vocational high schools in Serbia available at <https://zuov.gov.rs/nastavni-planovi-i-programi/#1557128435959-aaba5be0-1eed>

<sup>16</sup> Snežana Ferjančić et al., eds., *Istorija: Priručnik za nastavnike. Ključni pojmovi za kraj obaveznog obrazovanja*, 1st ed. (Beograd: Zavod za vrednovanje kvaliteta obrazovanja i vaspitanja, 2008).



- 2) important knowledge – which 50% of students should adopt,
- 3) valuable knowledge, that 25% of students should adopt.

The concepts are also organised into subsections.<sup>17</sup> For example, “the Break-up of Yugoslavia” is found under the section “Socialist Yugoslavia (1945-1991)” and is marked as 1 (necessary knowledge). On the other hand, “Demonstrations in Kosovo (1968, 1981 . . .)”, marked with 2 (important knowledge), is placed in the section on “Demonstrations”, which is positioned under “Terrorism”.

The war crimes and human rights violations committed during the armed conflicts that followed the dissolution of Yugoslavia are mentioned in a few vague references under the broader section on “War”. In this section, all specific conflicts, in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, are listed under “War in Yugoslavia (1991-1995)” and marked as 1 (necessary knowledge). The term “Genocide” is marked by 1 (necessary knowledge) but, besides the definition of the term, all other concepts belonging to the section on genocide refer to Second World War concentration camps.<sup>18</sup> The reference “International Crime Tribunal for Yugoslavia” is placed under the “Peace” section, but marked as a lowest priority concept (3 - valuable knowledge).<sup>19</sup>

The history curriculum for the eighth grade of primary schools builds up and expands on the aforementioned teachers’ handbook<sup>20</sup> listing the concepts teachers should cover during the school year. The curriculum includes several topics linked to the dissolution of Yugoslavia: “The Civil War and Creation of New States”, “War Crimes”, “Civilian Suffering”, “NATO Aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia” and “Consequences of Wars”.<sup>21</sup> While providing some space for the discussion of war crimes, it misses the opportunity to provide further guidelines for teachers.

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17 Ibid.

18 Ibid., 60.

19 Ibid., 61.

20 ‘Pravilnik o programu nastave i učenja za osmi razred osnovnog obrazovanja i vaspitanja’, *Prosvetni glasnik*, 15 August 2019, <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SIGlasnikPortal/viewdoc?uuid=7f60db16-8760-4e25-bc8a-f69fe1fb2e2c>.

21 Ibid., 118.

The more detailed thematic lesson plans that build upon this curriculum provide a longer list of concepts.<sup>22</sup> The lesson entitled “Break-up of Yugoslavia” includes the expected concepts such as “The Civil War and the Great Powers”, “Dayton Peace Accords” and “Consequences of the Break-up”. However, when discussing human rights violations it refers only to the events where ethnic Serbs were victims: “Operations Flash and Storm” and “Ethnic Cleansing of Serbs”.<sup>23</sup> A similar pattern is noticeable in the following lesson, under the title “Serbia and the Renewal of Statehood”.<sup>24</sup> Covering the events from the 1980s, the end of the 1990s and after 2000, this lesson revolves around the crisis in Kosovo. The events listed do not include any crimes committed by the Serbian army and police forces, and the list does not mention the war in Kosovo.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, the list includes “Emigration of Ethnic Serbs” and the 1999 NATO bombing of SR Yugoslavia, however, under the commonly used but incorrect title: “NATO Aggression – Merciful Angel”.<sup>26</sup>

### 2.2.2. Secondary School History Curriculum

The history curriculum for secondary school follows a very similar pattern and provides a list of concepts and events that are supposed to be covered by the teacher within each lesson.<sup>27</sup> The list itself does not include clear indications that the lesson should contain information about war crimes and human rights violations committed

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22 ‘Metodički podaci o času br. 67 - Raspad Jugoslavije’ (Klett), accessed 28 June 2020, <https://www.klett.rs/baza-znanja/5544>.

23 Ibid., 2.

24 ‘Metodički podaci o času br. 68 - Srbija i obnova državnosti’ (Klett), accessed 28 June 2020, <https://www.klett.rs/baza-znanja/5544>.

25 Ibid.

26 The NATO operation was officially called “Allied Force”, but “Merciful Angel” is a widely used term in Serbia. It is assumed that this name was invented by the Yugoslav state authorities to mobilise the people against the NATO intervention and emphasise the cynicism of the NATO intervention. ‘Izmišljeni „Milosrdni anđeo”’, *Danas*, 19 April 2010, <https://www.danas.rs/drustvo/izmišljeni-milosrdni-andjeo/>.

27 ‘Pravilnik o programu nastave i učenja za gimnaziju’, *Prosvetni glasnik*, 2 June 2020, <https://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/viewdoc?regactid=430473&doctype=reg&fi ndpdfurl=true>.

during the wars of the Yugoslav dissolution. As in the case of primary school, the more detailed lesson plans provide additional insights into the envisioned content of the lessons.<sup>28</sup>

When the lesson deals with human losses, human rights violations and war crimes, it either does not specify who the victims were ("Ethnic Cleansing") or only discusses crimes against ethnic Serbs ("Ethnic Cleansing", "Operation Flash", "Operation Storm").<sup>29</sup> Crimes where members of other ethnic groups were victims are not mentioned. The focus on Serbian victims reaches its peak in one of the recommended activities for teachers, which states that a teacher should "condemn the still ongoing murders and executions of Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija, who are allegedly protected by agreements which are not applied in practice".<sup>30</sup>

Another theme, hinted at in the primary school curriculum and more prominent here, stands out and seems very relevant for understanding the way war crimes are represented in the curriculum. This is the constant questioning of the role of international actors such as the United Nations, the European Community, the ICTY, the United States of America and the European Union during the break-up of Yugoslavia.<sup>31</sup>

All the lesson plans include educational goals opposed to violence and conflict: condemnation of aggression and territorial claims, a multiperspective view of history and suppression of societal divisions, to name a few.<sup>32</sup> While these educational goals are of great importance and could be more prominent throughout the curricula, there

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28 'Podaci o času br. 60 - Nestanak Jugoslovenske države' (Klett), accessed 29 June 2020, <https://www.klett.rs/baza-znanja/5996>; 'Podaci o času br. 61 - Srpska država u savremenom dobu' (Klett), accessed 29 June 2020, <https://www.klett.rs/baza-znanja/5996>; 'Podaci o času br. 62 - Nestanak Jugoslovenske države (Sugestija i propaganda u istoriji)' (Klett), accessed 29 June 2020, <https://www.klett.rs/baza-znanja/5996>; 'Podaci o času br. 63 - Srpska država u savremenom dobu' (Klett), accessed 29 June 2020, <https://www.klett.rs/baza-znanja/5996>.

29 'Podaci o času br. 60', 1.

30 'Podaci o času br. 61', 5.

31 'Podaci o času br. 60'; 'Podaci o času br. 61'; 'Podaci o času br. 62'.

32 'Podaci o času br. 61'; 'Podaci o času br. 62'; 'Podaci o času br. 63'.

is a clear discrepancy between them and the previously analysed and thematically more specific content. When such topics as the educational goal of “condemning aggression and territorial claims” and that of “forming a consciousness about the Serbian territories throughout history” are coupled together, they seem to tell a specific story – one of accusing others for the aggression against the Serbian people, while not considering the role and participation of Serbia in these events.

### 2.3. Legal Framework for Textbook Production

The history textbook published in 1993, while the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia were ongoing, was in use in Serbia until 2002, after which a few new textbook editions followed. Until the opening of the textbook market to private publishers in 2010, there was one history textbook for each grade, published by the state-funded publisher, *Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva*. The publishers of textbooks now include public publishing houses and entrepreneurs and other legal persons registered as private publishers.<sup>33</sup> The Ministry of Education still has to approve the textbooks before they can be used. The Law on Textbooks (*Zakon o udžbenicima*) regulates this approval process, and its latest version was passed in 2018.<sup>34</sup>

The Law on Textbooks regulates “the preparation, approval, selection, publishing, withdrawal and observation of textbooks and textbook collections, handbooks and additional teaching materials for primary and secondary school”.<sup>35</sup> The Ministry of Education and its institutions provide a textbook plan which determines the textbooks for each subject, grade, education level and type of school. The plan is passed by the Minister of Education upon the recommendation of the Institute for Improvement of Education (*Zavod za unapređivanje obrazovanja i vaspitanja*) and the opinion of the National Education Council. The textbook plan lists names of textbooks for all levels

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<sup>33</sup> ‘Zakon o udžbenicima 27/2018’ (Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije, 2018), Art. 14.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., Art. 1.

of education, all types of schools and subjects, as well as the language and alphabet that textbooks are to be published in.<sup>36</sup>

The Law on Textbooks defines the entire process of textbook approval from manuscript submission to the decision by the Ministry of Education.<sup>37</sup> The publisher submits a textbook manuscript to the Ministry of Education, accompanied by three expert evaluations of the textbook's quality by a review commission composed of experts on the respective subject the textbook is about. One of the commission members must be a teacher. The Ministry forwards the manuscript to the Institute for Improvement of Education, which conducts its own expert review of it. The review can result in the manuscript being returned to the publisher for revisions, with instructions about changes that should be made and a deadline for the resubmission of the manuscript for another review.<sup>38</sup>

The Ministry of Education provides catalogues of approved textbooks. Individual schools select the textbooks they are going to use from these catalogues. As the Law on Textbook regulates, the final decision is made by a teachers' council, upon the recommendation of the expert councils established for each school subject.<sup>39</sup>

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36 Ibid., Art. 16.

37 Ibid., Art. 22.

38 Ibid., Art. 23.

39 Ibid., Art. 34.

### 3. HISTORY TEXTBOOKS AND TEACHING PRACTICE IN SERBIA

#### 3.1. History Textbooks

The effects of history textbooks are difficult to measure, both because of the methodological challenges to such an endeavour and other factors like teachers, knowledge from family and other sources of socialisation including media.<sup>40</sup> However, here we are taking history textbooks as our main source because they mirror the official memory politics and are “a reflection of what the nations want their youth to learn”.<sup>41</sup> They represent not only reflections of contemporary debates and memory politics, but have also been “*concertedly and consciously revised* to fit the state-preferred national narrative.”<sup>42</sup>

The history textbooks for primary and secondary schools in Serbia and the post-Yugoslav space have been analysed by numerous researchers.<sup>43</sup> The authors of these analyses agree on the main issues in history textbooks across the post-Yugoslav space: “an obsession with victimhood, inclusion of narratives in which the nation was the

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40 Tamara Pavašević Trošt, ‘Ruptures and Continuities in Nationhood Narratives: Reconstructing the Nation through History Textbooks in Serbia and Croatia’, *Nations and Nationalism* 24, no. 3 (2018): 720.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid., 736.

43 Gorana Ognjenović and Jasna Jozelić, *Nationhood and Politicization of History in School Textbooks: Identity, the Curriculum and Educational Media* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020); Joke van der Leeuw-roord, *A Key to Unlock the Past. History Education in Macedonia: An Analysis of Today Suggestions for the Future* (Skopje, The Hague: EUROCLIO., 2012); Dea Marić, ‘Homeland War in Croatian History Education. Between “One Truth” and Innovative History Teaching’, in *History Can Bite. History Education in Divided and Postwar Societies*, ed. Denise Bontrovato, Karina Korostelina, and Martina Schulze (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2016), 85–110; Augusta Dimou, ed., *‘Transition’ and the Politics of History Education in Southeastern Europe* (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2009).

victim and never the aggressor, and the portrayal of a perpetual state of conflict with neighbours, ignoring periods of peaceful coexistence".<sup>44</sup> Serbian history textbooks do not offer a critical view of the past and do not encourage critical discussion and multiperspective understanding of the breakup of Yugoslavia and the armed conflicts in the 1990s.

In her analysis of history textbooks used between 1974 and 2017, Tamara Pavasović Trošt identifies several ruptures in the national narratives in Serbia and Croatia:

- 1) The handling of ethno-nationalism within the Yugoslav communist narrative;
- 2) The gradual introduction of ethno-nationalism into the communist/socialist narrative and its transformation into an ethnocentric narrative;
- 3) The dominance of ethno-nationalism in war-time textbooks, with entirely new national narratives based on marked ethnic exclusivism and victimhood;
- 4) The replacement of overt ethno-nationalism with new, supposedly 'democratic' textbooks, which have included ethno-nationalism in less explicit ways; and
- 5) The establishment and consolidation of the new nationhood narratives, which demonstrate a degree of backsliding into renewed historical revisionism in accordance with the current political climate in the two countries.<sup>45</sup>

Two major political changes in Serbia have influenced the ways in which history has been taught over the last few decades: Slobodan Milošević coming to power in 1987, and his overthrow in 2000 when the opposition took power. In both cases, "the newly established authorities sought, through shifts in the education system, to gain historical legitimisation for themselves, as well as to construct a particular type of tradition".<sup>46</sup>

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44 Pavasović Trošt, 'Ruptures', 719.

45 Ibid., 720.

46 Dubravka Stojanović, 'Slow Burning: History Textbooks in Serbia, 1993-2008', in *Transition and the Politics of History Education in Southeast Europe*, ed. Augusta Dimou (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2009), 141.

Both in Milošević and post-Milošević times, the creation of new textbooks was intended to shift the ideological framework as well as to force a new identity matrix that included changes in national and historical consciousness.<sup>47</sup>

During the Milošević period, the aim was to place Serbian history within a nationalist mythic framework necessary to justify the ongoing wars of the early 1990s, constructing the historical consciousness as a blend of delusions of grandeur and self-pity, national arrogance and self-victimisation.<sup>48</sup> In opposition to the 1993 textbook,<sup>49</sup> however, the history textbooks of the early 2000s, still published by the state-owned publisher, avoided discussing the breakup of Yugoslavia and the wars that ensued. While the Milošević era textbook discussed the state dissolution and armed conflicts in detail, “the 2001–2005 textbooks cover the entire era between the death of Tito and the year of publication, a time-span of two decades, in less than three pages”.<sup>50</sup>

In the period from 2005 to the opening up of the textbook market in 2010, the 1990s wars in former Yugoslavia reappeared in history textbooks, establishing the “contemporary nationhood narrative, which then further solidifies in the textbooks in use today”.<sup>51</sup>

### **3.1.1. Representation of the 1990s Wars in Serbia’s Textbooks**

History textbooks do not address war crimes in an objective manner, nor the judicially determined facts from the trials held at the ICTY and before domestic courts in Serbia. This includes the witnesses’ and victims’ testimonies before the courts. Finally, textbook authors do not use the vast and publicly accessible archives of the ICTY when writing about the 1990s wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. The textbooks present war crimes committed during the 1990s in a superficial and biased manner, with a selective choice of information used to portray the Serbian

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47 Ibid., 143.

48 Ibid.

49 Nikola Gačeša, Ljiljana Mladenović-Maksimović, and Dušan Živković, *Istorija za 8. razred osnovne škole* (Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 1993).

50 Pavasović Trošt, ‘Ruptures’, 729.

51 Ibid.



nation as the main victim of the armed conflicts. At the same time, the textbooks usually ignore the suffering of other ethnic groups or the responsibility of members of the Serbian forces for it.<sup>52</sup>

The Humanitarian Law Centre (HLC) conducted an analysis of the history textbooks published in Serbia from 2000 until 2014, looking at the interpretations of the war crimes committed in the wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo and comparing these interpretations with the facts determined at the ICTY. The analysis concluded that these facts, as already mentioned, did not find their place in the textbooks.<sup>53</sup> The HLC analysis shows that the history textbooks dedicate very little space to the armed conflicts, while focusing much more on the political crisis that preceded the wars. Some textbooks dedicate as little as a few sentences to the wars, and even fewer to war crimes.

Serbian history textbooks dedicate a lot of attention and space to the crisis that followed the death of Josip Broz Tito in 1980 that gradually led to the breakup of Yugoslavia. The textbook authors represent Tito as the key factor in keeping Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav idea together.<sup>54</sup> Most textbook authors agree that the formal dissolution of Yugoslavia began on 25 June 1991, when the Slovenian parliament declared independence.<sup>55</sup> However, the short war in Slovenia is only briefly mentioned.

The war in Croatia features most prominently in the textbooks. The textbook authors explain the causes of the war, including the 1990 constitutional reforms that changed the status of the Serbian population in Croatia from a constituent people to a national minority, and the fear among Serbs in Croatia. The textbook sections dealing with this period fail to mention that the Serbs in Croatia had already taken action towards separation from Croatia in 1990, when the Serbian Assembly was established in Srb near Knin, and with the referendum in September of the same year when almost

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52 Marijana Toma, 'Pristrani i Površni', *Balkan Perspectives*, 2018, 14.

53 'Analiza sadržaja udžbenika istorije u Srbiji o ratovima u bivšoj Jugoslaviji u svetlu utvrđenih činjenica pred MKSJ', in *Udžbenici istorije u post-konfliktnim društvima: Obrazovanje za pomirenje?*, by Marijana Toma (Beograd: Fond za humanitarno pravo, 2015), 14.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid., 17.

100% voted for independence.<sup>56</sup> The creation of the Serbian Autonomous Oblast of Krajina (SAO Krajina) in 1990 and the subsequent Republic of Srpska Krajina are not explained. In a similar manner, when talking about the destruction of Vukovar and in its vicinities at the beginning of the war, the textbook authors do not address the crimes committed by Serb forces against Croat civilians in that territory. One of these was the killing of more than 200 prisoners of war and civilians at Ovčara farm near Vukovar, not mentioned in any of the textbooks. The Croatian military and police operations "Flash" and "Storm" in 1995 are other important points of reference. The only victims in the war in Croatia that are referred to in the textbooks are ethnic Serbs.

As opposed to the war in Croatia, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina is least visible in textbooks. The textbooks dedicate little attention to war crimes committed during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and discuss them only in very general terms. Some textbooks list several places where war crimes were committed, but do not offer details about the victims and their ethnic affiliations, or the perpetrators and the legal definitions of their crimes. The high school textbook by Đurić and Pavlović discusses what happened in Srebrenica in July 1995, calling it a war crime and crime against humanity committed by the army of Republika Srpska and paramilitaries against civilians and soldiers. The textbook specifically mentions that the ICTY "qualified this crime as genocide but did not link Serbia to this event".<sup>57</sup>

The war in Kosovo is portrayed through the prism of the 1999 NATO bombing of SR Yugoslavia and the damage it caused, with the emphasis on the suffering of Serb civilians in Kosovo during the armed conflict and the NATO intervention. Albanian separatism and the terrorism of the Kosovo Liberation Army are presented as the main causes of the war in Kosovo.<sup>58</sup> The textbooks avoid mentioning non-Serb victims and Serb perpetrators.

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56 Ibid., 18.

57 Đorđe Đurić and Momčilo Pavlović, *Istorija za treći razred gimnazije prirodno-matematičkog smera i četvrti razred gimnazije opšteg i društveno-jezičkog smera* (Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2010), 186.

58 'Analiza sadržaja udžbenika istorije u Srbiji o ratovima u bivšoj Jugoslaviji u svetlu utvrđenih činjenica pred MKSJ', 23.

The photographs in the lessons that deal with the 1990s add to the portrayal of the Serbian nation as a victim. The images featured in textbooks show the destruction caused by the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, and convoys of Serb refugees from Croatia or Kosovo. The suffering of the other ethnic groups is not depicted.<sup>59</sup>

The textbooks are biased in their approaches to the dissolution of Yugoslavia and armed conflict that ensued in the 1990s, blaming the others for the violent breakup of the country. History textbooks do not address the complicity and responsibility of the Serbian side in the conflicts, and if they do, as in the case of the Srebrenica genocide, it is in general terms and without going into details, unlike when they discuss the crimes against the Serbian population.<sup>60</sup> The other sides in the conflicts are blamed for ethnic cleansing against Serbs, whilst the Serb forces are never mentioned in this context as perpetrators. If war crimes are addressed, their representation is not balanced, and the numbers of non-Serb victims are either invisible or merged into the total number of war victims.

### **3.2. The Current State of History Teaching Practice in Serbia**

It is often stated that the relative importance of teaching resources (textbooks, resource books for teachers, source materials, etc.) and their potential to drive change within history education is limited by the ways and the extent to which history educators actually use them in their day-to-day practice. Hence, it is important to take a look at the available data on history educators and their daily teaching practices.

Some challenges history teachers face stem from the general problems of the educational system, irrespective of the area of knowledge. The educational system in Serbia started introducing changes related to teaching approaches only after 2000. However, the problems of relatively low achievements on international tests and of

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

relatively poor inclusion of children and young adults from disadvantaged groups still persist.<sup>61</sup>

There are not many research projects providing insights into the perceptions of history educators and their everyday teaching practices. One of the rare exceptions is a research project conducted with history teachers in 2017.<sup>62</sup> The collaborative regional effort under the title “ePact – Education Partnership for Advocacy, Capacity-Building and Transformation”, led by EUROCLIO and CDRSEE, included a large-scale survey of history educators from all Western Balkans countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia).<sup>63</sup>

The survey results showed that the proportion of didactics in the Initial Teacher Training (ITT) is low in comparison to other European countries, and the teachers surveyed felt that more of this content is needed. When it comes to various aspects of everyday practice, such as teaching, employment and schools, history teachers from Serbia perceive transparency, qualifications and merit-base in employment and professional development as being fairly low.<sup>64</sup>

The importance of non-state actors is underlined by several findings. On average, history teachers in the sample attend one state-sponsored training per year, in comparison to an average of two and a half trainings organised by non-governmental organisations. They rate the quality of the trainings provided by NGOs as slightly

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61 Ana Pešikan, 'Serbia: An Overview', in *Education in Non-EU Countries in Western and Southern Europe: Education around the World*, by Terra Sprague (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 247–268.

62 Rodoljub Jovanović and Dea Marić, 'Teachers on Teaching: How Practitioners See the Current State and Future Developments in History Education across the Western Balkans' (The Hague: EUROCLIO, CDRSEE, 2017), <https://www.euroclio.eu/resource/31993/>.

63 '[PARTNER] EPACT: Education Partnership for Advocacy, Capacity-Building and Transformation', Euroclio, accessed 29 June 2020, <https://www.euroclio.eu/project/partner-epact-education-partnership-for-advocacy-capacity-building-and-transformation/>.

64 Jovanović and Marić, 'Teachers on Teaching'.

higher. Along with the other teachers surveyed, the Serbian sample reported that NGO trainings more often cover sensitive and controversial topics.<sup>65</sup>

When it comes to teaching sensitive and controversial topics, the research showed that most of the Serbian teachers teach historical events up until the year 2000, but most of them reported that the most difficult topic to teach is “the wars of the 1990s”. According to the report, the “curricular expectations are contradictory”. These expectations involve “a clear ethnic bias and often offer only one interpretation”, while simultaneously aiming at “fostering critical thinking and preparing future citizens for understanding and valorising bias and interpretations”.<sup>66</sup> A recent study argues that teachers often skip these topics, probably owing to the overcrowded chronological curriculum, where most recent history is taught at the end of the educational cycle.<sup>67</sup>

For all teachers in Serbia it is mandatory to take part continuously in in-service teacher training activities aimed at various aspects of professional development.<sup>68</sup> Trainings take the many forms mentioned in the document, such as professional gatherings, study trips, summer and winter schools.<sup>69</sup> They are organised by various educational organisations and provided to teachers and school administrators through the web page of the Institute for Improvement of Education.<sup>70</sup> In order to keep the license to teach, every teacher needs to attend 100 hours of training within every five-year period (with a minimum 80 hours of state-approved trainings).<sup>71</sup> In practice, trainings are organised and teachers attend them, but the licence system is

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65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

67 Marko Šuica, Ana Radaković, and Slobodan Rudić, ‘Where and How Do Pupils in Serbia Learn about the 1990s Yugoslav Wars?’, in *Nationhood and Politicization of History in School Textbooks: Identity, the Curriculum and Educational Media*, ed. Gorana Ognjenović and Jasna Jozelić (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 127–54.

68 ‘Pravilnik o stalnom stručnom usavršavanju i napredovanju u zvanja nastavnika, vaspitača i stručnih saradnika’ (Službeni glasnik Republike Srbije, 2017), <https://zuov-katalog.rs/manual/pravilnik.pdf>.

69 Ibid.

70 ‘Zavod za unapređivanje obrazovanja i vaspitanja’, accessed 13 July 2020, <https://zuov-katalog.rs/>.

71 ‘Pravilnik o stalnim stručnim usavršavanju’.

not yet being applied. Out of 12 trainings provided in the social sciences section, five relate to history teaching but only one helps teachers to teach the wars related to the Yugoslav breakup. This one training is provided by the Association for Social History – EUROCLIO.<sup>72</sup> The law allows for a specific category of trainings of public interest approved directly by the Minister of Education, organised by the state institutions, financed by the organiser and free for the participants.<sup>73</sup> The list of these trainings does not include any trainings dealing with recent history, only one training from the area of history overall, and this one dealing with the fight against antisemitism.<sup>74</sup>

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72 'Nastava moderne istorije jugoistočne Evrope - osposobljavanje nastavnika za multiperspektivni pristup nastavi istorije', accessed 13 July 2020, <https://zuov-katalog.rs/index.php?action=page/catalog/view&id=175>.

73 'Pravilnik o stalnim stručnim usavršavanju'.

74 Zavod za unapređivanje obrazovanja i vaspitanja, 'Lista programa od javnog interesa koje rešenjem odobrava ministar', accessed 13 July 2020, <https://zuov.gov.rs/lista-programa-od-javnog-interesa-koje-resenjem-odobrava-ministar/>.

## 4. NON-STATE HISTORY EDUCATION INITIATIVES IN SERBIA

When it comes to dealing with difficult topics such as mass political violence, war crimes and human rights violations, non-state initiatives constitute the biggest part of the efforts within history education landscape in Serbia.

The main areas of intervention of these projects are two crucial components of history education: history teaching resources and history teachers. In the sphere of history teaching resources, the projects mostly focus on producing alternative teaching materials for teachers (and to a lesser extent for students) and on conducting history textbook analysis.<sup>75</sup> The latter effort includes facilitating regional cooperation between teachers from different states, and preparing teachers during training to use alternative materials and acquire skills to deal with difficult topics.

The most notable international organisations working in this field in the post-Yugoslav space are the European Association of History Educators (EUROCLIO) and the Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeastern Europe (CDRSEE). Joint History Project, the most prominent programme of the CDRSEE, focused on bringing together historians from Southeast Europe with the task of creating alternative workbooks for history teachers containing primary sources about specific historical periods and events. Among their numerous publications, the latest, entitled “Wars, Divisions, Integration (1990-2008)”, deals particularly with the mass violence during the Yugoslav break-up.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> More details on these under the previous section of this paper dealing with textbooks in Serbia.

<sup>76</sup> Christina Koulouri and Božo Repe, eds., *Wars, Divisions, Integration (1990-2008)* (Thessaloniki: Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe (CDRSEE), 2016), [http://cdrsee.org/pdf/jhp/WARS-DIVISIONS-INTEGRATION\\_LR.pdf](http://cdrsee.org/pdf/jhp/WARS-DIVISIONS-INTEGRATION_LR.pdf). (accessed 9 June 2020).

In addition to developing and producing alternative and additional materials for teaching history, the CDRSEE provides training for teachers in how to use them. The projects developed and implemented by EUROCLIO cover a thematically wider scope, including: regional cooperation, teacher training, creating alternative materials, and conducting research and analysis.<sup>77</sup>

The further goal of EUROCLIO is capacity-building through the provision of support to local history teachers' associations which it is envisioned will assume ownership of the current projects as well as develop and implement new ones. In Serbia, the Association for Social History – Euroclio was founded in 2001 and works on teacher training, cooperation with associations from the region and creating recommendations, among other things. In addition, the association offers two trainings within the official state-sponsored teacher trainings: one dealing with multiperspectivity, and the other dealing specifically with teaching the wars of the 1990s. One of the recent regional projects this association took part in focuses on the "question on how to study the topics of wars in the territory of the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s".<sup>78</sup> This association has also produced "Recommendations for Responsible Teaching about the Wars of The 1990s".<sup>79</sup>

The project currently implemented by the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Courts (IRMCT) in cooperation with local history teachers associations introduces judicially established facts into history education in Serbia and the region. The project is being carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro,

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77 'Regional Summer Schools', Euroclio, accessed 29 June 2020, <https://www.euroclio.eu/what-we-do/professional-development/regional-summer-school/>; 'Learning to Disagree: Teachers' Guide' (Euroclio), accessed 29 June 2020, [https://www.euroclio.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/EC\\_TeachersGuide\\_A4-1.pdf](https://www.euroclio.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/EC_TeachersGuide_A4-1.pdf); Bojana Dujković – Blagojević, ed., *Once Upon a Time...We Lived Together* (Skopje: EUROCLIO, 2008), <https://www.euroclio.eu/resource/29666/>; *Ordinary People in an Extraordinary Country: Everyday Life in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia 1945-1990* (Skopje: EUROCLIO, 2008), <https://www.euroclio.eu/resource/ordinary-people-in-an-extraordinary-country-2/>; Jovanović and Marić, 'Teachers on Teaching'.

78 More information available at <http://devedesete.net> (accessed 9 June 2020).

79 UDI - Euroclio, 'Preporuke za odgovorno podučavanje ratova 90-ih', 2018, [www.udieuroclio.edu.rs/публикације/препоруке-за-одговорно-подучавање-ра/](http://www.udieuroclio.edu.rs/публикације/препоруке-за-одговорно-подучавање-ра/).



North Macedonia and Serbia. Within this project, teachers receive training on using the ICTY and IRMCT archives in order to create and/or complement lessons, and are also provided with novel teaching methodologies to approach the classroom topic of mass violence during the Yugoslav break-up.<sup>80</sup>

The existence of a large number of non-state initiatives does not necessarily secure improvements in history education. Data on history teachers' perceptions of the educational systems show that many teachers still avoid teaching about the wars that followed the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, and that they find the curricular expectations regarding these topics contradictory.<sup>81</sup> Outright official support to history teachers to engage with the wars of the Yugoslav dissolution seems to be the missing link hindering the success of non-state initiatives. This support should come from the formal education authorities, such as the National Education Council, the Institute for Improvement of Education and the Institute for Evaluation of Education and Training.

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80 'Trainings for History Educators', International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, accessed 29 June 2020, <https://www.irmct.org/en/mip/youth-engagement>.

81 Jovanović and Marić, 'Teachers on Teaching'.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1. Existing Recommendations

Various non-state actors have produced recommendations for history teaching as part of their projects. Some of the existing recommendations refer to history education in general.<sup>82</sup> There are also those that focus specifically on teaching about the violent breakup of Yugoslavia in the post-Yugoslav space.<sup>83</sup> These recommendations are aimed typically at educational authorities, teachers and other actors in society relevant to the sphere of education.

The recommendations for teachers provide guidelines on novel teaching approaches and methods, such as debate or student inquiry, with a focus on helping students to develop certain skills, including critical thinking and historical consciousness. They dedicate additional space to guidelines on how to approach sensitive topics. While numerous recommendations deal with the forementioned topics, those produced by the Association for Social History - Euroclio provide the most elaborate set of recommendations for teachers.<sup>84</sup> They advise teachers to provide relevant facts to their students, develop students' critical thinking skills, and allow for debate and self-reflection. These recommendations by teachers put the emphasis on responsible teaching, which, among other things, includes paying attention that the content is adjusted to the age of the students, steering clear of emotional language, and avoiding sensationalist sources.<sup>85</sup>

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82 Council of Europe, 'Quality History Education in The 21st Century: Principles and Guidelines', 2018, <https://rm.coe.int/prems-108118-gbr-2507-quality-history-education-web-21x21/16808eace7>; Charis Psaltis et al., 'Recommendations for the History Teaching of Intergroup Conflicts' (COST IS 1205 Working Group, 2017).

83 Fond za humanitarno pravo, 'Predlog preporuka obrazovnim vlastima u Republici Srbiji za izmene sadržaja udžbenika istorije' (Fond za humanitarno pravo, 2016); Jovanović and Marić, 'Teachers on Teaching'; UDI - Euroclio, 'Preporuke za odgovorno podučavanje'.

84 UDI - Euroclio, 'Preporuke za odgovorno podučavanje'.

85 Ibid.

The existing recommendations directed at educational authorities usually focus on the approval and production of curricula and textbooks, the organisation and content of the initial and in-service teacher trainings, and classroom and school resources. All analysed recommendations include a section aimed at educational authorities, but those based on the needs assessments of teachers in the Western Balkans provide additional aspects, such as a call for merit-based employment procedures, quality assurance procedures in teacher trainings, and cooperation of all relevant state and non-state actors in future reforms.<sup>86</sup>

Other actors in society considered as a relevant target group for the recommendations include the media, museums and other non-formal educational actors, decision-makers at all levels of government, and non-governmental organisations dealing with history education and the legacy of the conflicts. The recommendations usually urge them to coordinate and work together with teachers and support them.

The recommendations developed by the Council of Europe (CoE) outline eight principles for quality history education for the 21st century, promoting a wider set of values such as cultural diversity, democracy, social history and multiple identities.<sup>87</sup> Although not specifically created for the post-conflict context, several principles seem very useful when we talk about teaching within the Serbian educational system the Yugoslav dissolution and the wars that ensued. Namely, the last three principles provide guidelines for dealing with the evaluation of historical sources, handling emotional and sensitive topics and developing historical empathy.<sup>88</sup> Another set of recommendations, developed by a group of academic historians, social psychologists, history teachers, anthropologists and curriculum experts from various European countries, draws on certain main concepts and research into intergroup conflicts from the perspective of social psychology.<sup>89</sup> In comparison to the previously mentioned document by the CoE, these recommendations emphasise awareness of social and national identity, ingroup/outgroup status, prejudice, stereotypes and other socio-psychological phenomena.

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86 Jovanović and Marić, 'Teachers on Teaching', 37.

87 Council of Europe, 'Quality History Education'.

88 Ibid., 20–26.

89 Psaltis et al., 'Recommendations'.

The existing studies<sup>90</sup> show the need for more clarity and determination on the part of educational authorities when it comes to difficult and controversial topics from the recent past. In order for any reforms, recommendations, guidelines or formally expressed educational goals to make their way to the classroom, the educational system needs to provide teachers with adequate tools, knowledge and unambiguous support for discussing these topic with their students. Above all, it needs to include teachers in the decision-making processes.

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90 Rodoljub Jovanović and Dea Marić, 'Controversy in the Classroom: How History Teachers in the Western Balkans Approach Difficult Topics?', *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 2020; Šuica, Radaković, and Rudić, 'Where and How Do Pupils in Serbia Learn'.

## 5.2. Recommendations

1. The implementation of the National Strategy in the sphere of education should focus on the main aims of enhancing knowledge about the armed conflicts of the 1990s among pupils, rather than replacing this aim with the topics of national minorities and non-discrimination. The implementation should be continuously monitored and evaluated.
2. The new strategic document for the prosecution of war crimes for the period 2020-2024, which should be adopted as a successor to the National Strategy for the Prosecution of War Crimes 2016-2020, should clearly outline the implementation and process of changes in curriculum and textbooks and other activities aimed at fostering knowledge about the wars.
3. When developing activities and materials pertaining to raising awareness about the 1990s wars within formal education, the educational authorities should take international policy documents into consideration, with the specificities of the Serbian context in mind.
4. The history curricula for both primary and secondary schools should be developed by educational authorities in a way that includes:
  - a. A detailed explanation of the events related to the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the armed conflicts that ensued, based on the judicially established facts and documents available in the ICTY and IRMCT archives;
  - b. A balanced representation of war crimes committed during the 1990s wars, that deals critically with the crimes committed by Serbian armed and police forces;
  - c. A multiperspective approach to history teaching.
5. The educational authorities should structure the history curricula in a way that would prevent teachers from omitting the lessons dealing with the recent past, by:
  - a. Providing sufficient space for these themes in the curriculum;

- b. Introducing additional special thematic classes during the year that would cover the events of the 1990s;
  - c. Providing space within other subjects, such as philosophy, psychology, sociology, constitution and rights of citizens, and geography, to discuss these themes from additional perspectives.
6. During the curriculum development process, the educational authorities should take into consideration the existing recommendations, and research and analysis of various aspects of history education in Serbia;
7. The textbook approval process should encourage textbook authors and publishers to create textbooks that include improved and more detailed lessons on the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the armed conflicts in the 1990s, in line with the curricular changes recommended above;
8. Educational authorities should conduct continuous evaluations of the materials, programmes and teaching methodologies related to these themes;
9. History teachers should be involved, through teacher associations or other bodies, in all the aforementioned decision-making processes related to history education.
10. The educational authorities should take into consideration the existing non-state initiatives related to education about the 1990s wars in former Yugoslavia. The educational authorities and non-state actors should cooperate and coordinate in:
  - a. Including the teaching resources already created for various projects into the official list of teaching resources;
  - b. Creating new teaching resources dealing with the 1990s wars;
  - c. Including more of the in-service teacher trainings already created within various projects into the official list;
  - d. Creating new in-service teacher trainings dealing with the recent past related to the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the armed conflicts that ensued.

11. The list of trainings of public interest should include in-service teacher trainings dealing with the 1990s wars;
12. Training providers should develop more in-service teacher trainings dealing with the events of the 1990s, and the educational authorities should encourage this;
13. The universities should develop the initial training for history teachers to include more didactics, with more practice as well as specific preparation for teaching the topics related to the 1990s wars.







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