

Muhamet Arifi statement panel 3:

Dear ladies and gentlemen.

Before arriving here, I was aware that EU and UN have policies related to minority language education. After listening different panels in this conference I am assured that EU and UN has great policies related to the education of minorities in their own language. I am sure there are many of them that are not presented at all.

I am from Kosovo, and Kosovo as well, and as well countries that are trying to join EU family, have designed policies related to the education in minority languages.

I will present situation of the education of minorities and as well in minority language in Kosovo, and I am sure that many minorities in Balkan are experiencing the same situation as well:

1. 90% of Kosovo inhabitants are Kosovo Albanians. Other 10% are from other minorities, and majority of these minorities speak more then one languages;
2. Kosovo and Balkan Countries have very good policies. Policies are usually created in the way to fulfill EU integration criteria.

Are those policies good if:

3. There are no human and professional resources in place
4. There is lack of political willingness
5. There are no sufficient financial means
6. There are no M&E and reporting mechanisms in place
7. Etc

Minority language education:

1. There are no enough qualified teachers to teach in minority language;
2. Teachers can not provide qualitative education because they d not have curriculums, books, didactic materials, sufficient and adequate learning space, etc);
3. Schools / classrooms are not inclusive and promoting segregation of the children for the whole life;
4. Minority children are discriminate daily and especially if they attend classes outside of the regular school program.
5. Minorities are not included sufficiently in creation of the policies related to education in minority language;
6. Due to political situation between Kosovo and Serbia, there is parallel educational system of Serbia running in Kosovo. Members of the Serbian community, but as well small percentage of few other minority groups living in those areas attend this educational system. Serbian Education parallel institutions run independently and parallel from Kosovo institutions, without having any obstacles from Kosovo institutions.
7. Educational system is offered from preschool to university. Usually, education in minority language is provided in primary school only, and in few occasions in some secondary schools as well, if

population of the minority is high.

8. Children / youth have lack of possibilities to attend university in their own language and therefore they will have a lot of problems in their life, by being excluded from working opportunities and other possibilities;
9. Diplomas of people who manage to finish schools in parallel institutions are not recognized and people can not apply for jobs or any other possibilities in Kosovo;
10. Other minority groups also enjoy education in their own language (Bosnian and Turkish communities).
11. Kosovo introduced Roma language as selective subject in the primary school. Only one municipality offers Roma language program in Kosovo, due to lack of human resources.

Some of the good practices implemented in Kosovo but as well in many other countries in Balkan and Europe are:

More than 50 Learning Centers are run by Civil Society Organizations in Kosovo within the school premises or in the community centers. Learning Centers offer different educational programs:

1. Kindergarten and preschool program to the children belonging to minorities in the language of the school they will attend.
2. Language courses and homework program to the children attending primary schools.
3. Roma school assistants (implemented within Serbian parallel educational system in Kosovo, and as well in Serbia)
4. School mediators are involved to prevent dropouts, prevent discrimination and segregation and increase cooperation between schools and parents.
5. Other socializing activities implemented with children from different ethnic background.
6. Ministry of Education in Kosovo have issued Administrative Instruction and annually provide approximately 500 reserved seats at public Universities for the students belonging to minorities. Unfortunately, there is mis use of the legal framework by majority communities.
7. Scholarships are provided to secondary school and university students.
8. Mentoring programs are provided to the children from minorities attending secondary school and universities.
9. Internship programs provided to university students belonging to minorities

Recommendations:

1. Each state should individually analyze jointly with all stakeholders if education in minority language is the best solution for minorities, if yes, can it be implemented, and then policies have to be revised involving minority representatives
2. Each state should institutionalize and financially support good practices developed by Civil Society Organization.
3. When conditions are created, Governmental educational mechanisms should take over implementation of the programs offered by CSO
4. Monitoring and evaluation, and reporting systems have to be structured and used better.
5. EU and other donors should ensure long term financial support programs related to the education in minority language.