

Minority Tertiary Education at the Crossroad

1. The educational systems in Central and Eastern Europe follow the global trend of expansion. Secondary schooling (upper secondary level) is on the way to become general in many of those societies. The post-secondary (post-compulsory) level of schooling starts to expand. This is a new situation for both government and minority politicians. Minority education as a political demand for equal opportunities /provisions appears today at all levels of schooling including post-secondary /post-compulsory /higher education. *Minority education at tertiary level will be one of the burning political issues of the coming years.*

2. Former studies of the educational policies at the school levels show various answers to minority demands (education as a melting pot, bilingual /intercultural education etc). The answers can be grouped as policies for integration vs policies for separation.

3. *Model A: Policies for integration.* They can be described by the following characteristics

- structural development (building communities, organizations, initiating movements, stressing common heritages etc) as the leading value
- education as a right for equal opportunities and provisions
- members of the majority as role models
- educational policy making as a top-down effort (central supports, government responsibilities, creating sub-systems within the one system etc)
- various ways of cooperations (including bilingual and intercultural education as well as affirmative actions)

4. *Model B: Policies for separation.* As opposed to Model A, policies for separation can be characterized by the following

- minority protection as the leading value (individual differences, group variations, saving traditions, identity building etc)
- education as a means for socialization and acculturation etc
- members of the (given) minority as role models
- educational policy making as a bottom-up effort (local and regional administration, institution /community based policies, developing separate systems parallel to the majority ones)
- stressing the differences (developing parallel practices, policies and systems)

5. Different policies exist today for minority education at tertiary level in the ECE (East-Central European) countries. They represent variations of the models described above. The paper gives cases of these variations. A growing demand for self-protection through separation (model B) can be experienced everywhere in the region at tertiary level. *The separation is challenged not only by the majority society rather by the globalization process on economics.*