QUESTIONNAIRE ON NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR QUALITY OF EDUCATION BY THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

1. List of existing national laws, regulations and policies establishing norms and standards for quality of education in Republic of Serbia

The main laws in educational system:
- The Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System
- The Law of Text Books and other Pedagogical Materials
- The Law of Preschool Education
- The Law on Primary School (from 1992. The year 2003, as amended)
  The new Law on Primary Education and the new Law on Secondary Education are in the procedure and it is expected to be adopted in the first quarter of this year.

Regulations and by-laws:
- Regulation on Continuous Professional Training and Career Development;
- Regulation on Assessment;
- Regulation on Protection of Students from Violence;
- Group of regulations on textbooks (on keeping the register of books and catalogues, on the acquisition of licenses for publishers, on small circulation textbooks/ethnic minorities, children with disabilities, certain occupations and essays.

2. Please describe briefly applicable norms and standards and minimal requirements, especially with regard to the following:

School infrastructure

There are in total 1187 primary schools in the Republic of Serbia. There are about 580 secondary schools, of which about 100 are high schools. The number is not accurate since some high schools are consisted of grammar classes and various other high schools. This practice has been implemented in order to unable availability of different schools for students in all regions. Education takes place in the Serbian language, may be in the language of national minorities or bilingually. School Network is developed, but not rational enough.
Class size and pupil-teacher ratio

Class size is 25 pupils maximum. There are classes with fewer pupils, and those classes are in rural areas and areas with national minorities.
Norm for teachers is 18 – 20 hours per week for obligatory (main) subjects and 4 hours for another facultative activities with pupils.

Teacher qualifications, working conditions for teachers and their professional development

All teachers have obtained university qualification.
Teachers at the primary and secondary education must have a license for teaching in schools. The examination for a license is issued by MOES. The exam is consisted of practical (teaching) and theoretical knowledge of psychology, pedagogy, legislation and education in solving pedagogical situations.

Teachers are obliged to perform preparations for classes. For a preparations, teachers for every class have a half an hour. Professional development is regulated by a by-law. There are CPD programs accredited by MOES, where teachers have an obligation to participate in 100 hours of training, within 5 years. Accredited programs include all areas and subjects of education.

Content of school curricula and pedagogical materials

Primary education is compulsory for all children from age 6.5 to 17 years. Primary education starts with a preschool preparation programme. The programme is being implemented in pre-school institutions and lasts one year. Children are enrolled in a primary school after preparation program in pre-schools institution.

Primary education is compulsory and lasts for eight years. It is carried out in two education cycles: the 1st one - from 1st to 4th grade, organized through the class teaching and the second cycle - from 5th to 8th grade, through individual subjects teaching.

The implementers of primary education are primary schools. Primary schools are caring out school programs, and may also carry out:

- individual educational plans for students and adults who need additional educational support,
- individual Serbian - or minority-language programs, for students who speak other language then Serbian,
- school programs of music and ballet education,
- school programs of adult education,
- education programs for students abroad,
- another programs, in accordance with the law,
• preschool preparation programme

Forms of the secondary education are:
- General secondary schools, high schools, which last 4 years;
- High schools that can last for 4 years and 3 years.
Continuation of education at institutions of higher education requests attendance of four-year schools. However, after only three years of vocational schools further education is possible, under certain conditions on high schools of vocational studies.

There is a national curriculum for each grade, as well as final exams in primary and secondary schools. Schools have an opportunity to choose different facultative activities in accordance with the environment and resources. MOES provides, free of charge, textbooks for pupils from 1st to 3rd grade in primary schools, and some local authorities, such as Belgrade, provide them for higher grades, as well.

School management, involvement of students and parents’ participation

Schools are governed by a principal and a school board. A school board is composed of representatives of school staff, parents and local community (3+3+3).
Also, there are students’ parliaments, as advisory bodies, and parent’s council with similar role.

Teaching-learning processes

The realization of general education goals is ensured through the education process as a whole, at all education levels, through all work forms, types and contents.
The education standards include:
• general and special standards of knowledge, children and pupils skills and values; standards of knowledge, skills and values of the teaching profession and its further professional development;
• competence standards for principals, education inspectors and educational advisors;
• quality standards for textbooks and teaching tools;
• quality standards for operation of educational institutions.

Methods to evaluate student performance and assess learning outcomes

Achievement standards are a set of education results for each level, cycle and type of education, educational profile, grade, subject and module.

General achievement standards are determined based on the overall education results, according to different levels, cycles and types of education and educational profiles.

Special achievement standards are determined according to the grades, subjects or modules, based on the general education results and general achievement standards. Special achievement standards may be adapted to individual persons who require this due to social deprivation, developmental or other disabilities, or other reasons, while at the
same time continuously monitoring their development. Special achievement standards may be adapted to individual persons with exceptional abilities, while at the same time continuously monitoring their development.

3. Please identify the institutional mechanisms in your country used to collect and process information and to assess adherence to norms and standards established to ensure quality of education (Please indicate whether there are various mechanisms for monitoring public or private institutions)

Monitoring of the work of educational institutions, public and private, is conducted by the Ministry of Education and Science. Private educational institutions might be at all levels from preschool through high schools, universities. Private educational institutions may implement a national program or other programs, or in a foreign language.

Within the Ministry there are 17 regionally designed units - school administrations. Within them, exist educational consultants who provide professional and pedagogical supervision, monitor implementation and compliance with quality of the national curriculum.

There is also an inspection service that exists within the Ministry, as a Republican inspections and educational inspections of a province, cities and municipalities. They control whether the educational process is carried out in accordance with the laws.

4. Please provide information on other relevant initiatives and developments aiming to promote quality in education

Monitoring the development and improvement of the education system performs the National Education Council and the Council for Vocational Education. The National Education Council monitors issues related to the approval of plans, programs (content) courses and textbooks for elementary and high schools, and general subjects (mother tongue, foreign languages, mathematics, history, chemistry, biology, physics, geography and psychology) in vocational secondary schools. The Council for Vocational Training and Education is responsible for vocational subjects in secondary schools.

The MOES cooperates with the Institute for Education Improvement and the Institute for Evaluation of Quality Education. Cooperation is based on professional improvement of the educational system. The first performs professional tasks related to the evaluation of textbooks or proposes content of the program, and the other proposes standards and monitors the implementation and quality of education.

All publications, laws, by-laws and general information for teachers, parents and other professionals are transparent and published on the web sites of these institutions or in hard copies. Also, there are trainings for teachers and researches covering different topics, which are very important for a practice in schools and rights of the students, as well as the teachers.