

[TRANSLATION]

#weCan

Policies of Youth Forum of Naša stranka

Sarajevo, July 2020

OUR STORY

Policies of the Youth Forum of Naša stranka are called #weCan with the intention to show that the young people can work for a better educational system, better opportunities, better healthcare system, better security system, healthier environment, sustainable society, and better Bosnia and Herzegovina. Our goal remains the same; we want to adapt the policies of Naša stranka to the needs, ambitions, and wishes of the young people who will make our society better and more just.

In the past years, young people were marginalized. Young people were not involved in the decision-making process. Because of that system, in the past 30 years, the youth's unemployment rate is 50%, every second young person is functionally illiterate, we are a business-unfriendly society, and multiple other difficulties make youth want to move out of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Nowadays, the leading life goal of the young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina is to emigrate. And because of that #weCan show how to fight for the better opportunities for all of us, #weCan change our country.

We will try to make our people believe that it can be better. That hope can start all following changes.

Our path will not be easy. We will have to start with smaller things in which we can make a change until we as youth become the power that will make the new Bosnia and Herzegovina. We will work on the problems of the students, freelancers, businessmen, athletes, artists, scientists, and all the others who dream of our country as progressive and prosperous. I am sure that we will succeed.

Join us, so we can together show that #weCan.

Sarajevo, July 2020

Director of politics,

Jašarević Amel

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OUR VISION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA EDUCATION

The educational system in Bosnia and Herzegovina is often demotivating. The natural talents of our students are not supported. 30,5% of the young people think that education is not helping them in part or at all. 27% of the youth consider the small number of practical activities as the main problem of Bosnia and Herzegovina's educational system. However, 23% of the youth consider too detailed and excessive curriculum as the main problem. Around 50% of the young people attended informal education, but most of them are foreign language schools. The other types of informal education are rare.

The two most significant problems are, as previously stated, the small number of practical activities and too detailed and excessive curriculums. Both of those issues can easily be solved with curricular reform. According to the PISA test results in 2019, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 50% of the students are functionally illiterate. This shows that our curriculums are too detailed. The current system is only producing workers for primary and secondary sectors of the economy, especially heavy industry.

PRE – UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

Our system is trying to educate all the students at the same level, and by that, the expertise is meaningless. The competency and abilities of students in Bosnia and Herzegovina are low. Our youth is not capable of competing with their colleagues from the more developed countries. Expertism and excellence are not valued as they should be, and we want to change that by creating the supporting system which is present from the start of education until the end of it.

Our actions for the improvement of pre-university education are as follows:

- Reducing the number of lessons with the focus on the quality instead of the quantity,
- More practical activities,
- Same system of the final grade or an exam for the entire country,
- Defined goals of the education,
- Reform of the textbooks,
- Using the textbook only when it is necessary,
- Educating teachers,
- Monitoring and quality control of teachers and school work.

School lessons and practical activities

Too detailed and excessive curriculums are, until 2017, determined as one of the biggest problems in the educational system of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Too many lessons are hard to process both for students and teachers. They cannot process and analyze well all the lessons, so they are often superficially learning them. Students are memorizing the information, but in most cases, they do not understand what they are learning. All that information memorizing process is pointless because all of that “data” is unnecessary. The vast majority of all the information that students need is readily available on the internet, so our students do not need to memorize all that information. Instead, they need to learn how to work with that information and make something meaningful and valuable out of it.

A small amount of the practical activities is closely linked with the too detailed and excessive curriculums because of the limited number of classes in a year. Priority in the system is to complete the planned number of theoretical classes and the practical activities are, in that case, skipped. More time for the practical activities with the fewer lessons which can be processed well is included in the curricular reform. Reform of the existing curriculums is the most crucial step toward better education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The curriculums’ reform should not be a one-term thing; we need to update our curriculums regularly.

Final grade or exam system for the entire country and goals of the education

Issues of the different methodologies of the final grade can be solved with the centralization of that process. By the new system, all students will take the same test. The system will rank them based on the same methodology and on a just and fair method to face further education and admissions in new educational institutions. It is essential to define the educational goals in order to show what we want our students to know when they graduate and what skills they need to have. Based on that, we can plan further development of the education and update curriculums.

Textbooks

Textbooks often produce a lot of controversy in Bosnia and Herzegovina because they ignite political debates. Firstly, we need to get politics out of education and then create textbooks to help students and teachers. Nowadays, a vast majority of the information is easily accessible for most of the classes, so we need to reconsider do we need so many books in classes when we can use the internet and save money, save students from carrying heavy book from home to school and back and also be eco-friendly. Also, students can access their material from any place that has an internet connection.

Teachers and schools

Teachers and schools implement all the education activities, so they must take responsibility for their work. If they do something against the rules of pedagogy, they must face the consequences. Nowadays, unfortunately, there is no way to control their work with the intention to achieve their feel of responsibility at work.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, we started admiring the diploma or some other “paper”, but we do not admire someone’s skills and knowledge. Unfortunately, a diploma shows how much time we spent in some educational institution, not what it should show, real knowledge and skills. Students in Bosnia and Herzegovina often refer to the time after they finish their studies as time “after I get a diploma” and not “after I learn something”. This shows that anything that you need for the future is just a paper and not knowledge. A diploma must represent what it states it represents.

Our activities for the improvement of the university education are as follows:

- Creating the ability for surveillance, control, and sanctioning professors if they do not work well,
- Good process of accreditation,
- Cutting high and unnecessary expenses for students,
- Better planning of the admission quotas,
- Better system of student organizations,
- Higher number of practical activities.

Surveillance and control of the work

Universities cannot control, and sanction if needed, the unjustified work of the professors. We need to change the law and the other legislature to give the institutions the ability to sanction all those whose work is not justified.

Accreditation

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are many universities and faculties whose work is not professional and justified because of the insufficient accreditation of universities and faculties, especially private ones. Accreditation processes need reform in order to solve the issue of too many similar or identical study programs without any quality. The accreditation process must be aggressive to leave only the best and capable people in the educational system.

Unnecessary expenses for students and the admission quotas

Students in Bosnia and Herzegovina pay a lot of unnecessary and high fees. Those expenses help the university’s budget, but there is no other use for them. We should abolish all the fees for which there is no justification, and those that have a justification need to be cut to make them reasonable.

The creation of the admission quotas needs to be customized by the market needs, but it must be based on the actual needs, strategies, and ambitions. These measures of quotas planning have been attempted in some places, but that showed as inefficient. Due to the organization of the educational system in Bosnia and Herzegovina, this measure must be implemented by the

cantons and entities. Still, it must be coordinated at the state level because Bosnia and Herzegovina is one single labor market. Only 40% of the young people work in their education area which shows us a large production of unneeded workers.

Practical activities

The small amount of practical activities is an issue in the whole education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina, even at the universities. Practical activities are vital because they get students ready for the difficulties they will face in the real world when they get their jobs. The knowledge is too theoretical, so students struggle to deal with real problems because they need more practical knowledge.

Scholarships and support

Scholarships and support must be present from primary school until the university to develop natural talents. Support must be based on expertise, and the main criteria must be the achievement and the affirmation of the student. Also, support must exist in informal education too. That education is important because it helps develop students' competitions for the modern world. Talent support based on fairness and efficiency is one of the best tools for education based on expertise.

EMPLOYMENT

The main measures for employment and self-employment of the youth are as follows:

- Tax cuts for the youth (that includes freelancers),
- Start-up support,
- Reducing the time need for the company registration,
- Abolishing or cutting taxes and other expenses for the youth,
- Starting the programs and business systems for people under the age of 18,
- Supporting and regulating after school jobs,
- Better conditions of education at work.

Company registration and fees

According to the Doing business list for 2019, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to start your own business, 80 days, 13 procedures, and a minimum of 1399 BAM (equivalent to 715 EUR) is needed. This issue can easily be solved with few legislative changes.

Start-ups

Support for start-up companies is crucial because it can be measured by self-employment too. Invested money will probably be returned to the government budget in a few years. Although start-ups have a high success probability, in the beginning, they need full support so they can become independent and then profitable for local and regional communities.

After school jobs

After school jobs are a growing trend of employment of students in their free time. Because they are often employed in the service sector, they are frequently working hard for low payments. We should make the legislature that will save them from that unfair employment and keep them competitive.

Education at work

The issue of education at work needs to reform, mainly because the students are working on jobs that will not give them the needed knowledge, but that work is still considered as education at work. We need to change our legislature to balance the knowledge and work, keep both the employer and the employee safe, and abolish the possibility of students paying for the education at work.