

## ***Success Story – Serbia***

***Project title:*** Education Improvement Project

***Client:*** Serbia Ministry of Education and Sports

***Start date:*** January 2003

***Duration:*** 3 - 5 years

ETS Europe provides consulting services and technical assistance to Serbia as part of a project to improve Serbia's Educational system. The project is funded by the World Bank.

### **Background**

Issues of effectiveness and quality in the education system are at the centre of Serbia's current educational policy debate. The government's goal is to revitalize the education system by empowering local communities to take responsibility for performance in their schools, and by educating its citizens to take responsibility for their own learning.

To that end, Serbia's Ministry of Education and Sports has taken advantage of World Bank project funding to establish the Education Standards and Assessment Service (ESAS). The goal is to facilitate standards-based assessment learning and improve teachers' assessment skills.

### **Role of ETS Europe**

ETS Europe is heading a technical assistance team whose key objective is to help ESAS

- identify and develop up-to-date subject performance standards, in conjunction with the Serbian Ministry's new national curriculum framework
- design and implement assessments at key stages of education, such as the fourth and eighth grades. Results will be used as feedback to improve teaching and learning
- develop training programs for teachers to administer assessments, and for school psychologists and other appropriate school personnel to create and use reliable and valid assessments.
- develop training materials, such as syllabuses, teacher-supported materials, and administrative handbooks.

The technical assistance team consists of assessment specialists from ETS, ETS Europe, England, Lithuania, and Slovenia; along with local experts from Serbia, including experts from Serbia's Institute of Psychology.

Additionally, ETS Europe is organising a programme of study visits of ESAS staff to centres of expertise elsewhere in the world.

### **Results to date**

ESAS successfully organized the National Assessment for grade three in 2004 for math and Serbian. Early 2005, the Ministry of Education and Sports presented the report together with ESAS. Besides a set of recommendations, the report included a description of standards at various proficiency levels, results of student performance, background variables including gender, geography, and opportunity to learn. The project will continue developing standards for other levels of education, as well as information and materials to support teachers.