



Monthly Newsletter

December 2009- January 2010

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The government of Kosovo, in coordination with the International Civilian Office, has drafted a strategy for the Northern part of Kosovo. The strategy is closely linked to the process of decentralisation and local ownership, and aims at promoting social and economic reforms, strengthening the rule of law and contributing to a stable and multi-ethnic environment in Northern Kosovo. It has received strong backing from the “Quint” embassies of the US, the UK, France, Germany and Italy, and the reported silent approval of the EU and NATO. Implementation will be contingent on Kosovo Serb participation.

On 31st of January, local elections were repeated in Prizren/Prizren and Lipjan/Lipljan. Debate is ongoing as to whether elections will be repeated in Gjilan/Gnjilane.

ECMI KOSOVO PROJECT ACTIVITIES

ECMI Kosovo Conference “Minority Governance Best Practice”

On 14-16 December 2009, ECMI Kosovo, with the support of the CCC Secretariat, organised a conference on ‘Minority Governance Best Practice’ in Mavrovo,

Macedonia, aimed at elaborating the workings of minority governance in wider Europe to members of the Consultative Council for Communities (CCC).



ECMI Conference Mavrovo

Support to the Decentralisation Process

During the reporting period, ECMI Kosovo finalised an action plan for support to the decentralisation process in 2010. This envisions support to civil society in the new municipalities; support to the new Municipal Administrations; and voter education activities in the municipalities of Parteš/Partesh and Mitrovica/Mitrovicë.

In January, ECMI Kosovo also worked to establish official agreements with the municipalities of Gračanica/Gračanicë, Klokot-Vrbovac/Kllokot-Vërboc and Ranilug/Ranillug, and will work with



them in 2010 to provide information outreach support and create stronger links between citizens and Municipal Administrations.

Municipal Education

During December, ECMI Kosovo produced a questionnaire on the delivery of minority education in the municipalities. This was distributed to Municipal Directorates of Education (MDEs) and Municipal Community Offices (MCOs) in Ferizaj/Uroševac, Peja/Peć and Prizren/Prizren, and was followed up with a series of field visits in January. The information obtained also contributed to development of the manual *'Minority Education in Kosovo: A Manual for Municipal Officials'*, due to be finalised in February. Workshops were also planned for February on 'Working Together to Improve Minority Education in Kosovo'.

Independent Commission

In December, ECMI Kosovo initiated its support to the Independent Commission for the Review of Serbian Teaching Materials, a body established to facilitate the review of Serbian-language curriculum and teaching materials in Kosovo. ECMI Kosovo provided technical and administrative support to the Independent Commission during its first meetings.

Enhance and Integrate Community Concerns within the Work of the

Government

During the reporting period, ECMI Kosovo launched the Swiss-funded 'Enhance and Integrate Community Concerns within the Work of the Government' project, which aims to enhance and integrate community concerns within the work of the government by building up capacity within the Office for Community Affairs (OCA/OPM) and facilitating the participation of community-based civil society organisations in the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of relevant legislation and policies.

Two events were organised. A workshop on 'Parliamentary Best Practices' was held on 14 January, aimed at sharing Swiss parliamentary experiences with members of the Assembly Committee for the Rights and Interests of Communities (CRIC) and the CCC. On 15 January 2010, ECMI Kosovo supported the OCA/OPM in organising a ceremonial conference to launch the project, which presented the work of the OCA/OPM in 2009 and its objectives for 2010, and acknowledged Swiss engagement with Kosovo communities.

Other Activities

In December, Eva Linde concluded her internship. ECMI Kosovo thanks Ms. Linde for her contributions and wishes her future success. In January, ECMI Kosovo welcomed Ilaria Ciarla for a three-month internship.