



## **POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS**

The first detailed report on the Rule of Law situation in Kosovo was carried out and published by EULEX in the past month. It was based on the extensive assessments of EULEX monitors and advisors, and focussed in particular on the Police Force, Judiciary and Customs Service.

The Kosovo Police were singled out as an 'exemplary organisation', although numerous recommendations were made to further improve their structure and performance. The Judiciary and the criminal justice system were criticised for their inability to reduce the vulnerability of judges and prosecutors to pressure and corruption, jeopardising their independence. More than 70 proposals for future development were made in total, with EULEX stressing the importance that these changes are carried out by the institutions themselves, under the guidance of EULEX.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY), the United Nations war crimes tribunal formed in the aftermath of the conflicts of the 1990s, overturned the conviction of Astrit Haraqija, the former minister of Culture, Youth and Sports in Kosovo. He was originally found guilty of trying to intimidate a witness in the trial of former military leader Ramush Haradinaj, however the decision was reversed after the ICTY ruled that the conviction had been largely based on untested and unreliable evidence.

The European Commission ruled that citizens of Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro should be allowed visa-free travel within the Schengen Zone, which will come into effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2010 subject to approval from EU members and the European Parliament. Kosovo, along with Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina, was excluded from the announcement.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of July the parallel municipal government in Leposavic, Northern Kosovo, was suspended en-masse.

## **ECMI KOSOVO PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

### Consultative Council for Communities

In the last month, several important meetings were held to discuss recommendations in the field of education, further to the plenary meeting that took place last month reviewing the preparations of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology for the beginning of the school year 2009/10. On the 29<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of July, recommendations were drawn up concerning the importance of education being delivered in the different languages of the communities of Kosovo, which will be prepared in time for a further meeting to be held next month.

In a meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July, the status of the Montenegrin community in Kosovo was also discussed, with particular relevance to its status as an officially recognised minority. Any further developments in this field will be monitored by the CCC.

### Support to the Office of the Prime Minister

The month of July 2009 has seen the conclusion of the project of Support to the Office of the Prime Minister. Several activities have been conducted as finalisation of the project.

The study on employment of minority communities' members in Kosovo civil service and publicly owned enterprises has been finalised and handed over to the Office for Community Affairs with a set of recommendations for their consideration. Two publications have been finalised: a booklet for member of communities explaining the legal framework for the protection and promotion of their rights, divided by areas and including



information on mechanisms of complaint, and a guidebook for professional working on community issues. The Guidebook is a compilation of all research undertaken during the project. The Guidebook includes information on each community, including geographical spread, culture and religion, language, main issues faced and list of community organisations, an analysis of the legislative framework for the protection and promotion of community rights, divided by area, information on decentralisation, an overview of the institutional system for communities and an explanation of remedies available to community members for violation of their rights. The Booklet and the Guidebook are now available online, and hard copies can be requested at [info@ecmikosovo.org](mailto:info@ecmikosovo.org).

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 2009, a workshop on Community Engagement and Institutional coordination was held in Pristina. Representatives of central level institutions for communities and ECMI Kosovo participated in the workshop. The central aim of this workshop was to provide a forum for constructive discussions between governmental institutions for communities with overlapping responsibilities in order to move beyond the status-quo and improve the delivery of governmental policies for communities. Constructive exchanges of ideas took place both during and outside of the formal sessions. In the conclusion of the meeting, it was suggested that a number of indicators to measure the progress made by institutions in terms of coordination and cooperation should be introduced.



*Workshop on Community Engagement and Institutional Coordination, held in Pristina*

#### Support to the Decentralisation Process

During the reporting period, ECMI Kosovo continued its activities with women's NGOs, by organising round tables in the future municipalities of Klokot-Vrbovac/Klllokot-Vërbovc, Parteš/Partesh and Ranilug/Ranillug. These activities were aimed both at informing women on decentralisation and giving them the opportunity to voice their opinions on decentralisation. In addition, ECMI Kosovo organised, in cooperation with local NGO 'CIM', one round table in Mitrovica North/Mitrovicë North on local self government and, in cooperation with the local NGO 'CSD', two focus group discussions with youth and civil society in Gračanica/Gračanice. At the same time ECMI Kosovo conducted a computer proficiency assessment with the recently established municipal preparation team of Klokot-Vrbovac/Klllokot-Vërbovc, in order for ECMI Kosovo to provide information technology training next month.

#### UNICEF

Ms. Virginia Stephens has continued to conduct the second phase of the project. During July, both a manual for municipal officials on how to actively promote minority educational rights through service delivery and a guidebook for civil society on lobbying the local government to protect minority educational rights were drafted. These will be further improved before publishing with inputs and feedback from relevant actors.

#### Other Developments

During July, ECMI Kosovo welcomed Elizabeta Haziri as a new intern. She will be with the organisation for 3 months.