



Monthly Newsletter

April 2010

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The early mayoral elections in Istog/Istok were held on 11th of April. According to the Central Election Commission none of the candidates has received sufficient votes to municipal mayor. As a result, Haki Rugova, the candidate from the Democratic League of Kosovo and Shasivar Haxhiaj, the candidate from Alliance for the Future of Kosovo, will face each other in the run-off elections. Additionally, an incident in the village Banja was reported during the vote. Eight persons were arrested by the Kosovo police after the fighting at the polling station. Situation in the municipality remained calm afterwards.

Approximately 20 Serbian telecommunication stations were disabled on 24th and 25th of April by workers of Kosovo's Regulatory Body for Telecommunications and special units of the Kosovo police. As a response, several antennas of IPKO and Vala (Kosovo licensed operators) were destroyed. Several thousand Serbs protested in Gračanica and Štrpce. According to Kosovo Government Serbian operators did not have legal licenses to provide phone services in Kosovo.

The Kosovo Government approved the recommendation to recognize Kosovo Montenegrins by Law. Currently Serb,

Bosniak, Gorani, Turk, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities are recognized as minorities in Kosovo. Montenegrins would be the eighth minority. The recognition of Kosovo Montenegrins is one of the conditions set by the Montenegro in order to establish further diplomatic relations with the country.

ECMI KOSOVO PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Research on Municipal Officials Language Competencies

During the reporting period, ECMI Kosovo distributed the 'Questionnaire on Language Competencies of Municipal Civil Servants' in the five multi-ethnic municipalities, as part of the research project with the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities. The questionnaires were completed by municipal officials from all levels and departments and collected by ECMI Kosovo. The results are now being input into a database for analysis to identify potential limitations in communication within the Municipal Government and between municipal officials and the general public, which risk the marginalisation of minority communities. During the next month, interviews will be conducted to evaluate the accuracy of the language self-assessments.



Support to the Decentralisation Process

During the reporting period ECMI Kosovo organised 5 public debates in the municipality of *Novo Brdo/Novobërdë*. These public debates were organised at the request of the Mayor of the Municipality and were aimed at discussing the new statute of the Municipality. Moreover, ECMI Kosovo started with its work on the Municipal Elections in *Parteš/Partesh*, through the development and distribution of printed materials, and the broadcasting of radio spots on local radio station 'Laser FM'. Furthermore, ECMI Kosovo organised two trainings for civil society members in *Ranilug/Ranillug* and *Klokot/Kllokot* on how to establish an NGO in Kosovo and on fundraising. Finally, ECMI Kosovo has started producing distributing monthly information bulletins for the municipalities of *Ranilug/Ranillug* and *Klokot/Kllokot*.

Independent Commission

ECMI Kosovo continued its support to the Independent Commission for the Review of Serbian Teaching Materials. During the reporting period, ECMI Kosovo provided technical and administrative support to the

Independent Commission as it continued its meetings.

Enhance and Integrate Community Concerns within the Work of the

Government

During the month of April, ECMI has continued its support to the Office for Community Affairs (OCA) with regards to policy, but also grants and public information. ECMI provided expert advice to the OCA in commenting on the first draft of the Regulation, which will provide legal basis for the existence of the Municipal Office for Communities and Returns, as well as on the draft Law on Readmission and Travel Documents.

The data collection for the update of the EthnoPolitical Map, jointly conducted by OCA and ECMI staff, is ongoing with questionnaires received from several municipalities. The lay-out of the Map is being reviewed as well, with new municipalities integrated into the general map and individual municipal maps designed. The scope of the new OCA Policy Study on the use of languages was defined and approved by the OCA, while currently questionnaires are being developed.

Other developments

In April, ECMI Kosovo welcomed Ms. Aleksandra Arcichowska and Mr. Yann-Maël Bideau for three-month internships.