



Monthly Newsletter

March 2010

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

After tense debate, the Assembly of Kosovo has decided to support the Government in the implementation of the Strategy for the North. The Assembly has adopted a support statement to the Government extending its authority in the whole Kosovo territory on 4 March.

On 14 March a new round of elections took place in Gjilan/Gjilane. PDK candidate Qemajl Mustafa won mayoral elections with 58%. The Central Election Commission (CEC) stated that there were no significant irregularities or incidents during the election process. Thereafter, the Government decided to allocate to the CEC €230,000 as extra budget for the election process in Gjilan/Gjilane, Istog/Istok and Parteš/Partesh.

The deputy mayor of Viti/Vitina, Xhevat Bislimi, accused in a letter to Minister of Local Government Administration Sadri Ferati of establishing of the new municipality of Klllokot/Klokot by force and against the will of Albanian citizens and of Serb minority.

ECMI KOSOVO PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Research on Municipal Officials

Language Competencies

ECMI Kosovo has launched a research project with the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities. The three-month project will assess the language competencies of municipal officials in five multi-ethnic municipalities, focussing on their knowledge and skills in the official languages of Kosovo. The aim is 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. Based on the research and analysis, specific recommendations on how to improve inter-ethnic communication at the municipal level will be made, considering how to best promote language learning at the municipal level. In March, meetings were conducted with the Directors of Administration in the municipalities, with all pledging their support. Questionnaires for the research were designed and will be distributed shortly.

Support to the Decentralisation Process

ECMI Kosovo has reached an agreement with the Mayor of *Novo Brdo/Novobërdë* to provide assistance in the organisation of 5 public debates on the new statute of the municipality.

On 31 March ECMI Kosovo signed a Cooperation Agreement with the Central Election Commission of Kosovo to provide assistance for a voter



education campaign for the 20 June local elections in Parteš/Partesh. Furthermore, ECMI Kosovo continued its work with civil society in the new municipalities and held several meetings to discuss further assistance. Finally, ECMI Kosovo organised a training for its Information Consultants working in the new municipalities.

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 March, ECMI supported the Office for Community Affairs (OCA) with regards to policy, in particular providing expert advice to the Office in commenting on developing legislation. Furthermore, ECMI supported the development of the OCA procedures for selection, monitoring and evaluation of projects, as well as of the OCA website, which includes a section providing information about and for communities.

In an event organised by the OCA with support from ECMI, the study on the Employment of Members of Non-

majority Communities in Kosovo Civil Service and Publicly Owned Enterprises was publicly presented, this study was conducted last year with ECMI's expert and technical assistance. ECMI presented the scope and findings of the study, which indicated that non-majority communities are not equitably represented in a great number of institutions and that the legal framework guaranteeing equal opportunities was generally not implemented.

Following the creation of a number of new municipalities, the information contained in the EthnoPolitical Map is in some cases inaccurate. In order to gather new information, ECMI has begun the update of the EthnoPolitical Map, in close cooperation with the OCA Public Information Officer, Ms. Njomza Krasniqi. Following the update, the Map will then be hosted on the OCA website currently under development.

Other Activities

During the reporting period, ECMI Kosovo welcomed Mr. William Boyd for a six-month period to support activities with the Office for Community Affairs.