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Calls for Applications

Advocacy Skills & Minority Rights Programme for Kosovo Civil Society:

[Application Guidelines](#) and [Application Form](#)

REF Scholarship

Programme: [Application Guidelines](#)

Publications

Lars Burema (2013)

'Decentralization in

Kosovo: Defusing Ethnic Tensions or Furthering

Ethnic Isolation?', in [Barlett W. et al: Decentralization and Local Development in](#)

In Focus

Cooperation with Roma Education Fund (REF) for the coordination of REF Scholarship Program

ECMI Kosovo has partnered with the Roma Education Fund to implement the REF Scholarship Program for Kosovo. The program provides support to Romani students in the form of academic merit-based scholarships to facilitate their access to higher education and advancement through all stages of higher education. The goal is to contribute to the creation of a critical mass of intellectual Roma with higher education degrees who will become agents for change in their respective communities and countries. As of April, Gazmen Salijević will act as Country Coordinator for Kosovo and be responsible for coordinating and implementing the program. Applications Kosovo-wide for the scholarship for the 2013/2014 school year must apply by 20 May 2013. For more information, please visit the website of the [Roma Education Fund](#), or contact [Gazmen Salijević](#).

In this newsletter, you will find information on:

- [ECMI Kosovo's Work](#)
- [Institutional Developments](#)
- [Political Developments](#)

ECMI Kosovo's Work

Closure of the project 'Youth of Mitrovica/ë for a Democratic Society'

On 15 March 2013, ECMI Kosovo and its partner organisation, the

[South East Europe,](#)
[London: Palgrave](#)
[Macmillan](#)

Press Release

[International Day against](#)
[Discrimination](#)

Staff

Anna Calori has completed her internship at ECMI Kosovo; we thank her for hard work and dedication and wish her well in her future endeavours. ECMI Kosovo would like to welcome the arrival of Ragan Dueker to the team; we wish her a fruitful and productive internship.

Association for Peace Kosovo (AFPK), finished implementing the project 'Youth of Mitrovica/ë for a Democratic Society'. During a 6-month period, a group of 15 young people from Mitrovica/ë North benefitted from four training sessions on human rights, peace and reconciliation, democracy, and citizenship, delivered by Ms. Tanja Petrović. Participants were awarded a certificate of achievement during a closing ceremony, in the presence of representatives from local civil society organisations and international organisations. This award ceremony was followed by a concert of the renowned Montenegrin singer, Rambo Amadeus, for the first time in Mitrovica/ë. During an interview on Radio Kontakt Plus, he declared he was proud to sing for human rights and to promote values of peace and tolerance in the region. As a continuation of this initiative, the group of young people are now considering setting up their own NGO to promote peace and reconciliation in northern Kosovo, which would be a sustainable result achieved by the project. In addition, three video clips were developed on these subjects and broadcasted on key Serbian-language channels in northern Kosovo (also available on [ECMI YouTube channel](#)), as well as a Training Manual on Human Rights and Democracy. ECMI Kosovo would like to thank the Embassy of the Netherlands for their support to the project.



New project on support to the Consultative Council for Communities (CCC)

ECMI Kosovo has started implementing a new two-year project aiming to strengthen the framework for the participation of minority community civil society through the CCC. The CCC,

located within the Office of the President of Kosovo (OP), comprises communities' and government representatives and has the constitutional mandate to serve as a forum for government consultation with communities on relevant issues, and as a mechanism for facilitating inter-community dialogue and enhancing intra-community cohesion. As such, the CCC is the only institution in Kosovo that provides a formal avenue for minority civil society representatives to directly influence the Kosovo government's decision-making processes. The project has the objective to strengthen the CCC's voice vis-à-vis government institutions and improve the link between civil society members of the CCC and the local communities whose rights they represent. This project is funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is a continuation of ECMI Kosovo's long-term efforts to support the CCC as a key body for minority community participation in Kosovo's legislative and decision-making processes.

Training on business project writing for SME owners

On 11 and 12 March, ECMI Kosovo organised training on business project writing in Gjilan/Gnjilane. A group of 20 Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian SME (small & medium enterprise) owners from Klokot/Klllokot, Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, Parteš/Partesh, and Ranilug/Ranillug were trained on how to develop, structure, and write a convincing business project to request financial support from donors, banks, and investors. This successful training was delivered in partnership with MDA, and supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Law as an instrument to stimulate local economic development

On 13 March, ECMI Kosovo organised a workshop with all Legal Officers from the municipalities of Gračanica/Graçanicë, Klokot/Klllokot, Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, Parteš/Partesh, and Ranilug/Ranillug to raise issues linked to business registration, taxation, land use and publicly owned enterprises. ECMI Kosovo will address these issues in a handbook aimed at outlining the

advantages of using law as an instrument to stimulate local economic development. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland supported this workshop under the project 'Support to Minority Communities during and after the Decentralisation Process'.



Advocacy Skills & Minority Rights Programme for Kosovo Civil Society

ECMI Kosovo is opening a call for applications for a comprehensive support programme for civil society organisations (CSOs), particularly from minority communities, and inter-ethnic CSO coalitions to increase their skills and capacities to effectively advocate for their rights and interests, and participate in local and central level policy and decision-making. For more information on the programme and application procedures, please see [Call for Application Guidelines](#) and [Application Form](#). For further information, please contact [Arben Osmani](#).

ECMI Kosovo marks the European Action Week against Racism

In light of the European Action Week against Racism, ECMI Kosovo called for increased action against discrimination. Kosovo has an extensive legal framework against discrimination, though discrimination remains persistent in Kosovo society paired with a low level of awareness. Read our [Press Release](#) on this issue.

Institutional Developments

Consultative Council for Communities (CCC)

On 13 March 2013, the CCC held its February Plenary Session, where the different Working Groups (WGs) presented the main points from their meetings in order to coordinate their work. During its meeting in March, the CCC WG on Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians welcomed and discussed the findings of the OSCE report on 'Representation of Communities in the Civil Service in Kosovo.' The issue of segregation in school was also addressed, with a focus on the cases of the Mustafa Bakija school in Gjakovë/Đakovica and Selman Riza school in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje. CCC members deemed it necessary to initiate an awareness-raising campaign on segregation to avoid this problem in other schools. ECMI Kosovo monitors the work of the CCC as part of the Swiss FDFA-funded project 'Supporting Effective Governance for Minority Communities in Kosovo'.

Committee on Rights and Interests of Communities and Returns (CRICR)

The CRICR held two meetings in March 2013. It was decided to develop Action Plans for four Working Groups (WGs) mandated to oversee the implementation of three laws and one strategy: the Law on the Use of Languages, the Law on the Historic Centre of Prizren, the Law on the Village of Hoçë e Madhe/Velika Hoča, and the Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities. It should also be noted that the CRICR has now a new member representing the Gorani community, Mr. Mursel Halili.

Ministry for Communities and Returns (MCR)

The Minister of the MCR, Radojica Tomić announced his resignation in March. Prime Minister Thaçi announced the appointment of Dalibor Jevtić as Tomić's successor.

The Working Group for Drafting the Strategy of the MCR, established in February 2013, has revised its mandate: it will be in charge of the development of a new Strategy on Communities and Returns, which will have relevant and updated objectives, goals

and recommendations. ECMI Kosovo is now a member of the WG, along with the Embassy of Switzerland, the Royal Norwegian Embassy, the British Embassy, EU, IOM, OSCE and UNDP.

Political Developments

EU-mediated Pristina-Belgrade dialogue

In March, the dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade entered into its final phase, with pressure on Kosovo and Serbia to reach agreement before the European Commission's delivery of the progress report. The progress report will be crucial for both countries' EU integration processes as they will form the basis for EU's decision on whether to launch membership talks with Serbia and to open SAA negotiations with Kosovo.

The 6th and 7th rounds of talks were held between Dačić and Thaçi on 3 and 20 March. Both rounds failed to produce any concrete agreements, especially on the Association of Serb municipalities. Dačić is requesting nine Serb majority municipalities in Kosovo be granted more autonomy and executive powers in order for Serbia to dismantle its parallel structures in northern Kosovo. Thaçi has stated that such a request cannot be granted. EU Special Representative Catherine Ashton met with leaders in both Pristina and Belgrade on 11 and 15 of March to consult with the leaders on progress made thus far in the EU-mediated dialogue.

Developments in northern Kosovo

The security situation in northern Kosovo remained tense, with several explosives set off throughout March, including against police stations in Leposavić/Leposaviq and Zvečan/Zveçan, resulting in minor damage.

After former mayor of the parallel Kosovska Mitrovica municipality, Krstimir Pantić resigned last month, the Municipal Assembly elected Dragiša Vlašković. Vlašković belongs to the SNS (Serbian Progressive Party). The SNS along with the SPS (Serbian Socialist

Party) now comprise the ruling coalition in Kosovska Mitrovica.

Human rights activist attacked

On 27 March, a well-known human rights activist, Nazlie Bala, was attacked outside of her apartment building. Bala had received previous threats to her life after appearing on RTK, where she was lobbying for amendments of the 'Law on the Status and Rights of Martyrs, Invalids, Veterans, Members of Kosovo Liberation Army, Civilian Victims, and their Families' in order to guarantee the rights of women who suffered war crimes of sexual violence during the conflict. The current law does not mention sexual violence victims as beneficiaries of compensation and rehabilitation.

New Kosovo recognition

On 16 March, Kosovo Foreign Minister Enver Hoxhaj confirmed that Guyana became the 99th country to recognize Kosovo.

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About ECMI Kosovo

ECMI Kosovo is the principal non-governmental organisation engaged with minority issues in Kosovo, with the overarching aim to develop inclusive, representative, community-sensitive institutions that support a stable multi-ethnic Kosovo. ECMI Kosovo contributes to the developing, strengthening and implementation of relevant legislation, supports the institutionalisation of communities-related governmental bodies, and enhances the capacity of civil society actors and the government to engage with one another in a constructive and sustainable way.

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