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Publications

[Socioeconomic Conditions in Northern Kosovo: Perceptions about Education, healthcare, Social Welfare and Employment](#)

[Segregation in Education in the Municipality of Gjakovë/Đakovica](#) (bulletin)

Press Releases

[Socioeconomic Conditions of Communities in Northern Kosovo](#) (conference)

[Segregation in Education in the Municipality of Gjakovë/Đakovica](#)

ECMI in the Media

Radio kim: "[Emisija 'Dogovor!?' - Etem Arifi i Gazmen Salijević](#)"

Express: "[Diskriminim në Gjakovë](#)"

ECMI Kosovo is launching a new newsletter format this month. We hope you like it and please do provide us with any feedback. You can find our [December newsletter](#), which includes project updates and political developments from the end of 2012, on our website.

- [ECMI Kosovo Project Updates](#)
- [Institutional Developments](#)
- [Political Developments](#)

ECMI Kosovo Project Updates

Socioeconomic Situation in Northern Kosovo

ECMI Kosovo published a report on "Socioeconomic Conditions in Northern Kosovo: Perceptions about Education, Healthcare, Social Welfare and Employment".

This report was disseminated through 2 public events: in Mitrovica/ë North to reach local public authorities and local civil society organisations, and a conference in Prishtinë/Priština on 31 January attended by nearly 100 people. The conference called on all relevant stakeholders to propose concrete solutions to address the concerns expressed by communities in northern Kosovo. The report is [available online](#).

The project 'Knowledge Increase of the Socioeconomic Situation in Northern Kosovo' is financed by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and complements the decentralisation project financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Legal Aid

ECMI Kosovo finalised a 2-year project on the legal empowerment of vulnerable and marginal groups (VMGs): legal aid was delivered to over 3,000 beneficiaries; 65 judges were trained on human rights; over 150 civil society representatives participated in training activities; more than 6 strategic litigation cases were identified; a comprehensive [handbook on the legal rights](#) of VMGs and an informational booklet on [admissibility criteria for the Constitutional Court of Kosovo](#) were produced.

Jeta në Kosovë: ["Quint-i dhe ECMI Dënojnë Dëmtimin e Varrezave"](#)

Telegrafi: ["Komuna paditet për segregacion"](#)

Embassy of Finland, Pristina: ["ECMI published a report on Socioeconomic Conditions in Northern Kosovo"](#)

Mitrovica North Administrative Office: ["Conference on socio-economic conditions in north Kosovo held in Pristina"](#)

Radio kim: ["Pristina: Problemi običnih ljudi na severu Kosova"](#), ["Jan Klif: Niko ne razume šta je dogovoreno u Briselu"](#)

RTK: ["Analizohen kushtet socio-ekonomike të komuniteteve në pjesën veriore të Kosovës"](#)

Koha NET: ["Papunësia, preokupimi kryesor i qytetarëve të veriut të Kosovës"](#)

Staff

We welcome to the team new interns, Anna Calori and Amy Coulterman, and we wish them success in Kosovo.

In January, two final activities took place. On 16 January, a lawsuit was filed against the Directorate of Education of the Municipality of Gjakovë/Đakovica in relation to the segregation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children by the 'Mustafa Bakija' primary school in Gjakovë/Đakovica. ECMI Kosovo proudly supported this lawsuit initiated by a number of courageous parents of the affected Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children who were segregated into a first grade class separate from their Albanian peers. This discriminatory practice is explicitly prohibited by Kosovo's domestic legislation as well as by the European Convention on Human Rights. The lawsuit calls for the following actions: the segregated class is dismantled; the affected students are transferred to a multi-ethnic class; and that compensation is provided for the immaterial damages suffered due to the human rights violations. For more information please consult our [information bulletin](#).



On 15 January, ECMI Kosovo supported the NGO 'Organizata e Personave me Distrofi Muskulare e Kosves' to organise a stakeholder meeting on the accessibility of public buildings for people with disabilities.

ECMI Kosovo would like to express its gratitude to the European Commission for supporting this project and to the [Centre for Legal Aid and Regional Development](#) (CLARD) for the fruitful partnership.

Strengthening Civil Society

ECMI Kosovo is currently developing the project's website and the minority CSO database in three languages (Albanian, Serbian, and English). The website, which will go online in February, will contain detailed information about the project and will be updated to include relevant information. ECMI Kosovo with its partners [CSD](#) and [NRAEWOK](#), continued distributing questionnaires with the purpose of mapping all active minority CSOs in Kosovo. The database will be available online after this activity's completion.

This project 'Empowering Civil Society to Participate Effectively in Policy and Decision-Making Processes through Dialogue with Government Institutions' is funded by the EU Office in Kosovo.

Support to Decentralisation

Throughout January, ECMI Kosovo worked in partnership with targeted municipalities to formulate action plans identifying the main activities to be implemented this year in Gračanica/Graçanicë, Klokot/Klllokot, Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, Parteš/Partesh, and Ranilug/Ranillug. Activities include legal support to business registration, technical assistance for better communicating to attract donors and investors, support to the newly established business association and training on business development.

The project 'Support to Minority Communities during and after the Decentralisation Process' is financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Support to Minority Governance

In January 2013, ECMI Kosovo conducted various consultation meetings with relevant government institutions: the Office for Community Affairs, the newly appointed Language Commissioner, Mr. Slavisa Mladenovic, the Consultative Council for Communities, and the Kosovo Institute of Public Administration. During these meetings, cooperation between ECMI Kosovo and the institutions was discussed. In addition, ECMI Kosovo attended and monitored the Plenary Session of the Council and a meeting of the Working Group on Roma, Ahskali and Egyptian communities.

The project 'Supporting Effective Governance for Minority Communities in Kosovo' is funded by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

Youth for Democracy

ECMI Kosovo and the Association for Peace Kosovo (AFPK) delivered its third training session from 25-26 January, covering the topic "Political dynamics of idea of citizenship throughout centuries"; it was attended by nearly 20 young people. Potential participants (high school pupils, students, youth centre members or any other young people in North Mitrovica/ë) can still enrol for the last training session by contacting: nptmitrovica@gmail.com.

The project 'Youth of Mitrovica/ë for a Democratic Society' is financed by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Pristina.

Institutional Developments

Reform of Kosovo's judicial system

The Law on Courts (No. 03/L-99), adopted in 2010, came into effect on 1 January 2013 and completely transforms the court system structure into Basic Courts, the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court. The law introduces an improved salary system: the Supreme Court President's salary is tied to that of the Prime Minister, whilst other judges of the Supreme Court receive a salary equivalent to a Minister. The new law gives special attention to the ethnic and gender representation of judges. The composition of the judiciary must reflect Kosovo's ethnic diversity and respect international principles of gender equality. To ensure community participation, 15% of total seats must be guaranteed for judges from non-majority communities in both the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals.

Consultative Council for Communities (CCC)

In the CCC meeting on 31 January, the Working Group on Legislation reported plans to review the 2013 legislative strategy. The Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Working Group has started to develop a database on minority community members employed as civil servants. A complaint was raised that calls for grants are only published in Albanian language on municipal websites. Two members were appointed to represent the CCC in meetings related to a new project by the OSCE and the Office for Communities that aims to bring together relevant institutions to discuss community issues. The CCC plans to submit comments and recommendations to the Office of the Prime Minister on voting in national elections and follow up with a press conference to increase visibility of the CCC and its position.

Office for Community Affairs (OCA)

In January, the OCA together with OSCE and ODIHR established a Commission to grant awards to assist Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities improve their lives. The Commission decided 10 January to award grants for projects in Prizren, Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Gračanica/Graçanicë and Rahovec/Orahovac.

Office of the Language Commissioner (OLC)

The Language Policy Board of the OLC held a meeting on 17 January at which the newly elected Language Commissioner, Slaviša Mladenović, presented the work plan and priorities for 2013. The next task for the OLC is the recruitment of staff.

Political Developments

EU-mediated Pristina-Belgrade Dialogue

The 4th round of EU-mediated dialogues between Kosovo PM Thaçi and Serbia PM Dačić was held 17 January in Brussels. An understanding was reached on the collection of customs duties, levies and VAT; Kosovo will be one customs zone and customs paid at crossings in North Kosovo will go to a special fund for development under EU auspices for northern Kosovo. The two sides discussed a solution for parallel institutions that would be acceptable for both sides. They agreed that parallel security structures in the North would be removed.

Tensions in the Preševo Valley

A tense situation resulted from the removal on 20 January of a monument in front of the Municipal Assembly of Preševo to UCPMB Albanian fighters by the Serbian gendarmerie. Large protests followed in Preševo and Prishtinë/Priština.

Damage to Serb memorials and desecration of Orthodox graves

Kosovo police have launched investigations into vandalism, which appears to be in retaliation against Belgrade's removal of the Albanian monument in the Preševo Valley. Orthodox tombstones were damaged in a series of

incidents in the municipalities of Klokot/Kllokot, Obiliq/Obilić, Vushtrri/Vučitrn, Skenderaj/Srbica and Prizren and memorials situated in Viti/Vitina and Gorazdevac/Gorazhdevc were destroyed. Furthermore, the chapel of the Milloshevë/Miloševo Orthodox graveyard was set on fire. Police and international security forces also prevented a group of protesters from attacking the Gjakovë/Đakovica monastery.

Earlier in January, dozens of tombstones were desecrated at the Orthodox graveyard in Fushë Kosove/Kosovo Polje. These incidents have been widely condemned and Kosovo PM Thaçi has promised that the Government will cover all expenses to repair the cemeteries.

Council of Europe Resolution

On 22 January, the CoE Secretary General [authorised direct co-operation](#) with relevant Kosovo authorities; the Assembly [welcomed and committed](#) to this instruction in a subsequent resolution. This represents Kosovo's biggest advancement in strengthening relations with the CoE. Two-thirds of the 47 CoE nations must approve new members; despite recognition by 34 of the 47 members, it continues to apply a policy of status neutrality towards Kosovo and continues to apply UNSC Resolution 1244.

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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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