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## Call for Applications

REF Scholarship

Programme: [Application Guidelines](#)

## Publications

[Guidebook on Civil Society Participation in Decision-making processes](#)

## ECMI Kosovo in Media

Gazeta Jeta në Kosovë:  
[Shkolla "Mustafa Bakija"](#)  
[Paditet për Segregacion](#)

## In Focus

### Towards a strategy for local economic development in Gračanica/Graçanicë

From 12 to 14 April 2013, ECMI Kosovo organised a seminar in Ohrid, in partnership with the newly-established Association of Serbian Businessmen ASP (Asocijacija Srpskih Privrednika), and with the support of the Municipality of Gračanica/Graçanicë. This workshop was a first step towards the formulation of a strategy for local economic development to be adopted by the Municipal Assembly by the end of the year. The seminar gathered 22 participants, both municipal officials and local business owners, who jointly developed a first version of the SWOT analysis to be used as a baseline for the future strategy. This workshop was conducted as part of the ECMI Kosovo ongoing project '*Support to Minority Communities during and after the Decentralisation Process*', funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

### In this newsletter, you will find information on:

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KLAN Kosova: [Lajmet Qendrore](#)

Radio KIM: [Održana radionica o razvoju male privrede u Opštini Gračanica](#)

## **ECMI Kosovo vacancy**

[Administrative Assistant](#)

### **Staff**

Amy Coulterman has completed her internship at ECMI Kosovo; we thank her for her valuable contribution and wish her well in her future endeavours. ECMI Kosovo would like to welcome the arrival of two new interns, Valentina Pancaldi and Laia Pau Romani to the team; we wish them a fruitful and productive internship.

## **ECMI Kosovo's Work**

### **Individual coaching and mentoring to five business owners from newly-established municipalities**

Between 2 and 4 April, ECMI Kosovo organised individual coaching and mentoring sessions in Klokot/Klllokot, Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, and Parteš/Partesh. The beneficiaries were selected according to the credibility and reliability of their business plans, and are engaged in the following sectors: egg production, design, retail, plastic recycling, and restaurant. This activity was conducted as part of the ECMI Kosovo ongoing project '*Support to Minority Communities during and after the Decentralisation Process*', funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

### **Training sessions about photo shooting and logistics for the staff from the Mitrovica/ë North Administrative Office (MNAO)**

ECMI Kosovo provided MNAO staff with two training sessions on photography shooting and editing, and on logistics and protocol. These sessions took place in north Mitrovicë/Mitrovica respectively on 11 and 16 April 2013. This activity was designed with the objective of increasing the capacities of MNAO staff to welcome the general public, to organise events with high-level delegations, and to develop outreach and communication materials such as leaflets or booklets. These trainings were conducted under the Decentralisation project funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

### **Awareness-raising and trust-building workshops targeting minority CSO representatives and key local level institutions**

During April, ECMI Kosovo organised a series of nine (9) workshops where approximately 180 representatives of minority communities' Civil Society Organisations and municipal officials participated. These workshops were aimed at informing both CSO

and local government representatives on the importance and value of cooperation among each other; on the legal provisions requiring local government to consult civil society; and the rights of CSOs to complain if such consultations are not conducted; and enforce the discussion between civil society and local government on the challenges and opportunities for such co-operation. For more information about the project, please visit the [project website](#). The European Union Office in Kosovo supported these workshops under the project *“Empowering Civil Society to Participate in Policy and Decision-Making Processes”*.



### **Guidebook on Civil Society Participation in Decision-making Processes**

ECMI Kosovo published a guidebook on civil society participation in decision-making processes. The guidebook aims to contribute to strengthening the role of CSOs in public participation processes in Kosovo by providing a clear overview of the existing CSO participation mechanisms in Kosovo and how to effectively use them. The guidebook is available in Serbian, Albanian and English on [ECMI Kosovo's website](#). The development of the guidebook has been supported by the European Union Office in Kosovo and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

### **Preliminary court hearing of the segregation case in Gjakovë/Đakovica**

On 24 April 2013, the first preliminary hearing was held at the basic court of Gjakovë/Đakovica in relation to the segregated education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children by the 'Mustafa Bakija' school in Gjakovë/Đakovica. In the preliminary hearing the representatives of both parties (the municipality and the parents) presented their arguments to the court, and the plaintiffs' lawyer, Mr. Bahtir Troshupa, requested that the Department of Inspection of the Ministry of Education Science and Technology investigate the school, and that a psychological and pedagogical expert be consulted to assess the impact of the practice of segregation on the affected children. The second court session will take place after the Inspectorate has finalized its investigation. ECMI Kosovo is and will continue to provide support to the parents of the affected children in this lawsuit.

### **Capacity building programme on entrepreneurship for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women**

Six training sessions on entrepreneurial skills were held during the month of April in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and Ferizaj/Uroševac. Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian women took part in a series of interactive training sessions, on how to prepare a business plan, how to register a business, obtain business grants, and how to cooperate with other businesses. The participants provided strong feedback on the substance of the training and on the pedagogical approach taken. Out of 23 participants, four were chosen to receive further coaching sessions as they were deemed to be highly motivated and provided innovative ideas throughout the training sessions. These women will be supported on individual basis to apply for available business grants, so that they may better fulfill their career objectives. These activities are part of the project *"Promoting the Economic Empowerment of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian women in Kosovo"* jointly funded by UN

Women/UNDP/EU.

### **New project on enhancing education for vulnerable and disadvantages children**

ECMI Kosovo has signed a contract for a new project aiming to reduce the number of out-of-school children in six Kosovo municipalities. The project will aim to achieve this through strengthening the capacities of municipal officials and drop-out prevention teams in schools and municipalities throughout Kosovo. Municipal officials and drop-out prevention teams will plan and implement targeted drop-out prevention and response intervention manuals and will monitor and evaluate the efficiency of the activities undertaken. The project represents a continuation of previous collaboration with UNICEF in developing capacities of municipal officials in delivering improved education to minority communities.

### **The Roma Education Fund scholarship cycle for the 2013/2014 academic year still open for applications**

The REF Scholarship Program for Kosovo, facilitated by ECMI Kosovo, is open for applications from Roma students studying at state-accredited universities until 20 May 2013. The Roma Education 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. For more information, please visit the website of the [Roma Education Fund](#), or contact [Gazmen Salijević](#).

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## **Institutional Developments**

### **Consultative Council for Communities (CCC)**

The CCC Working Group (WG) on Languages and the CCC WG on Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities held meetings on 30 April 2013. The members of the WG on Languages discussed the issue of municipalities not publishing documents in both official languages and/or all applicable languages within the respective municipality. Possibilities for future cooperation with the Language Commissioner, Mr. Slaviša Mladenović were also discussed. The WG on Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities focused its discussion on the issue of repatriation and the poor conditions of the inhabitants of the Kristal neighbourhood in Pejë/Peć. ECMI Kosovo monitors the work of the CCC as part of the project *'Supporting Effective Governance for Minority Communities in Kosovo'*, funded by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

### **Working Group on Employment of Non-majority Communities**

On 25 April 2013 the Working Group (WG) on Employment Policy of Non-majority Communities conducted its first meeting under the auspices of the Office for Community Affairs (OCA). The WG established a sub-group which will research the current situation of the employment on non-majority communities and present policy recommendations to the WG for its consideration. ECMI Kosovo is an observer of the WG, along with the Swiss Embassy, the Royal Norwegian Embassy, the British Embassy, the US Embassy, the German Embassy, the OSCE, the EU Office in Kosovo/EU Special Representative, and the UNDP. ECMI Kosovo supports the work of the WG in the framework of the project, *'Supporting Effective Governance for Minority Communities in Kosovo'*, funded by Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.

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## **Political Developments**

### **Pristina and Belgrade reach landmark agreement**

On 19 April Prime Ministers Thaçi and Dačić met in Brussels and reached a 15-point agreement. The agreement comes after 10 rounds of talks facilitated by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton. The dialogue began as technical in October 2011 and became largely political entering a new phase in October 2012.

The 15-point agreement reached shall entail, inter alia, the creation of an Association of Serb Municipalities that will be in charge of economic development, education, health, urban and rural planning and will be represented in the Consultative Council for Communities (CCC). The agreement also foresees one court system under Kosovar law, which will include a panel of Kosovo Serb judges to sit permanently in the courthouse in north Mitrovicë/Mitrovica that will deal with issues related to the Serb-majority municipalities. Both sides have agreed to not block one another in their respective EU integration processes. The police force will be integrated, though the police in north Mitrovicë/Mitrovica will reflect the ethnic composition; the police force shall be called the Kosovo Police and will receive one salary from the Kosovo Police as opposed to double salaries from Pristina and Belgrade. A regional police commander will also be put in place, covering the four northern Serb majority municipalities and will cooperate with other regional police commanders throughout Kosovo. There shall be elections held in the northern municipalities in 2013 in accordance with Kosovo law and international standards. The OSCE will facilitate the elections. Several issues remained to be agreed upon such as, agreements on Energy and Telecommunications. An implementation commission is to be established by both sides with EU facilitation.

The agreement was accepted and adopted by the Kosovo Assembly on 21 April. The Serbian Government has adopted the agreement on 22 April, while the Serbian parliament adopted the government's report on the political and technical talks, including the Brussels agreement on 26 April.

## **Serbs in northern Kosovo calling for referendum on agreement**

A protest against the agreement was held by Serbs from north Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, Zvečan/Zveçan, Leposavić/Leposaviq, and Zubin Potok on 22 April. Serbs were demanding a referendum on the agreement reached. During the protest, Serbs called for the creation of the Assembly of Autonomous Province of Kosovo.

## **Serbia Director of Office for Kosovo quits over EU deal**

Aleksander Vulin, Director of Serbia's Government Office for Kosovo, resigned on 24 April. Vulin's resignation came as a result of his dissatisfaction with the agreement reached between Thaçi and Dačić on 19 April.

## **EC recommended start SAA with Kosovo**

As a result of the reached agreement, the European Commission has issued a formal recommendation to open negotiations with Kosovo on signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA). The SAA feasibility study released in October 2012 confirmed Kosovo's readiness to open negotiations for an SAA; however it was also contingent on implementation of agreements between Serbia and Kosovo. The SAA would provide a wide range of cooperation between the EU in Kosovo in fields such as promotion of economic and trade relations and cooperation in the field of justice. Furthermore, the European Commission adopted a proposal that if approved, would allow Kosovo to participate in 22 EU programmes.

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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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