



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – September 2012

Political Developments:

The End of Supervised Independence

The International Steering Group declared the end of Kosovo's supervised independence, stating that the 'Ahtisaari plan' had been substantially implemented. President of Kosovo Atifete Jahjaga said the conclusion of supervised independence was an important and historic moment for Kosovo. "This is an achievement of the citizens, institutions of Kosovo and international factor that always stood by Kosovo in the path of state building,"; while Prime Minister, Hashim Thaçi, said that much remained to be done, but that the state of Kosovo was being consolidated and strengthened every day.

Martti Ahtisaari, the international facilitator who proposed independence as a solution for Kosovo's status, celebrated the "end of a long journey." Ahtisaari acknowledged that there is work still to be done, especially in northern Kosovo, but he insisted that state building is a continuous process and that Kosovo has achieved even more than expected since declared independence. Ahtisaari said that attention should be focused on state institutions that have assumed full responsibility for the next phase of state building.

Kosovo-Serbia Dialogue

EU High Representative Catherine Ashton met with leaders of Serbia and Kosovo in New York. Serbia and the EU presented proposals for the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue at the UN General Assembly meeting. Whilst Serbia called for direct negotiations with Kosovo, it informed the Assembly that it would never recognise Kosovo. Serbia has appointed a new negotiator for the dialogue, Dejan Pavičević. Serbian President Nikolić confirmed Serbia will implement agreements agreed by the previous government, such as integrated border management.

EU Integration Condition for Serbia

The Speaker of the European Parliament Martin Schulz became the first senior European official to openly state that Serbia should recognize the independence of Kosovo if it wants to become a member of the European Union. The official position of Brussels is that "Serbia should normalize relations with Kosovo and not necessarily recognize Kosovo as a state."

Final Results of the 2011 Census

The Kosovo Agency of Statistics published the final results of the Population and Housing Census conducted in April 2011 representing the first internationally recognized census data for Kosovo since 1981. The data provides detailed and accurate information on the total population and by municipality and essential updated information about the housing, demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the population. However, northern municipalities are excluded from the final results are Kosovo's. Without these municipalities, Kosovo has a total of 1.739.826 residents, from which 92.93 % are Albanians. The census results are significant for minorities in Kosovo and could change the political arrangement and decision-making power of minority groups.

A New International Prefix for Kosovo

The Kosovo Assembly approved a Resolution calling on the Government to replace current telephone codes of Serbia, Monaco and Slovenia used by Kosovo with the +355 prefix of Albania. Kosovo is still unable to get its own code being that it is not a member of the UN and the ITU, resulting in substantial financial losses through the use of different foreign telephone codes. Serbia has called on the ITU to halt the process due to violation of agreements and international standards.

ECMI Kosovo Project Updates:

Integration Through Learning of Official Languages in Kosovo

Albanian and Serbian language classes continued to be provided twice a week to municipal officials in the municipalities of Obiliq/Obilić, Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, and Štrpcë/Shtërpçë. Whilst, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) established a commission to review and select the materials submitted for the tender of the textbook for Albanian as second language.

The project 'Integration through learning of official languages in Kosovo' is financed by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

Improving the Delivery of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Education

ECMI Kosovo assisted municipal officials of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje in the organization of the 6th meeting of the Task Force monitoring the implementation of the education component of the Municipal Action Plan dealing with the integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The meeting focused on the enrolment situation with the new academic school year, including the integration of out of school children that had attended intensive catch up classes during the summer. ECMI Kosovo is developing a Manual for municipal officials on improving education for these communities. The Manual will be presented at a conference in October.

This project is supported by UNICEF.

Knowledge Increase of the Socioeconomic Situation in Northern Kosovo

ECMI Kosovo developed the methodology for the opinion poll, including the sampling





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and questionnaire. A consultation workshop with stakeholders, 12 September, provided valuable input from representatives of the UK Embassy, Finnish Embassy, EU Office, UNDP, UNKT, Swiss Cooperation and local CSOs (Youth of Jazas, Swiss Peace). The survey subsequently kicked-off in North Mitrović/ë, Leposavić/Leposaviq, Zubin Potok and Zvečan/Zveqan. Our 10 local researchers began operating on 17 September and nearly 200 questionnaires are already completed.

These activities are part of the project 'Knowledge Increase of Socioeconomic Issues in North Kosovo' financed by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office complementing the project 'Support to Minority Communities during and after the Decentralisation Process' financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland.

(particularly in regard to individual applications) for the Constitutional Court of Kosovo, aiming to increase awareness of the jurisdiction and competences of this Court among human rights practitioners in Kosovo.



Meanwhile, the 4-week-long outreach campaign raising awareness of the legal aid provision continued with ECMI Kosovo legal outreach officers visiting all regions of Kosovo to distribute leaflets and register cases.

These activities were part of the project: 'Enhancing the Positive Impact of the Law for Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups in Kosovo', funded by the EU and managed by the EU Office in Kosovo. [See online.](#)

Support to Minority Communities during and after the Decentralisation Process

ECMI Kosovo and the newly-established Mitrović/ë North Administration Office (MNAO) held a workshop on 6 September with all 7 departments of MNAO which helped improve mutual understanding of the organisations and identify common activities, dealing mainly with local economic development, communication, and outreach. Consequently, a Memorandum of Understanding and joint Outreach Plan will be developed by ECMI Kosovo and MNAO. In addition, the first 2 emissions of TV show Nešto Između ("Something in-between"), co-produced by Radio KIM and ECMI Kosovo, were broadcasted on 12 and 24 September. They covered issues of education and decentralisation, with a focus on northern Kosovo. The next emissions address socio-

economic issues such as cultural heritage, rule of law, and employment. The podcasts are available at: <http://bit.ly/RaUR3b> and: <http://bit.ly/S5m6xi>

These activities are part of the project 'Support to Minority Communities during and after the Decentralisation Process' financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland.



Youth of Mitrović/ë for a Democratic Society

ECMI Kosovo has signed a Grant Agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for a 6-month project in North Mitrović/ë targeting the culture of war and violence among Mitrović/ë's youth by raising knowledge and understanding of human rights, democracy and tolerance amongst the region's youth, and establishing a network of active and motivated young people promoting peace and tolerance. This will be achieved via training sessions in partnership with some schools of the region.

Staff Changes:

ECMI Kosovo would like to welcome *Ivan Shalev* and *Nora Huseinovic* to the team. We would like to thank *Edita* for her outstanding work with ECMI and we wish her good luck and success in her studies.



Legal Aid to Vulnerable/ Marginalised Groups

Legal-aid lawyers provided free legal assistance to 66 beneficiaries in September. ECMI Kosovo organised a two-day training session 20-21 September focused on advocacy and legal tools, targeting NGO participants working on issues such as minority rights, people with disabilities and women's rights. The aim was to equip participants with legal tools and further understanding of legal mechanisms through which to enforce rights, working towards ensuring compliance with international human rights standards.

ECMI Kosovo published an informational booklet ([see online](#)) on admissibility criteria

