



## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – December 2012

### Political Developments:

#### The Dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia

In December, Kosovo and Serbia started to implement the agreement on Integrated Border Management (IBM) at 4 crossing points: Merdarë/ Merdare and Jarinjë/ Jarinje, Brnjak/ Bërnjak and Končulj/Dheu i Bardhë. Under the deal, Kosovo and Serbian customs and police officers will be working under one roof. On 4 December, the Prime Ministers of Kosovo and Serbia Thaçi and Dačić met for the third time in Brussels with EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and discussed the implementation of the IBM agreement and agreed to appoint liaison officers in both Pristina and Belgrade.

#### Serbian platform for Kosovo

Serbian authorities have prepared a document demanding a high level of territorial and political autonomy for Serbian municipalities in Kosovo and setting Serbia's principles for the EU-facilitated negotiations. However, Kosovo PM Thaçi indicated that Kosovo would pull out of the Belgrade-Pristina talks if Serbian Prime Minister insists on the solutions in Serbia's platform for Kosovo.

#### Speculation about new coalition

Following the acquittal of former Prime Minister Haradinaj by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), there has been speculation that the ruling Democratic Party of Kosovo is considering a "partnership" with Haradinaj to provide support for an unstable majority in parliament. However, nothing has been confirmed by these two parties.

#### North Kosovo

8 December, the Deputy Head of the Mitrovicë/a North Administration Office was wounded by a firearm at night. Police have qualified the attack as attempted murder. The masked authors of this crime remain unknown.

#### Minority Communities in the 2011 Kosovo Census

ECMI Kosovo published a policy brief assessing

the statistics for minority communities established by the 2011 Kosovo Population and Housing Census. The policy brief compares final census data, released in September 2012, with previous population estimates made by ECMI Kosovo and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo in 2010 and 2011, as well as electoral participation data. The policy brief is available at [bit.ly/UKLkT6](http://bit.ly/UKLkT6).

#### Appointment of Language Commissioner

19 December, Slaviša Mladenović was appointed to the position of Language Commissioner. The position has a mandate of six years, and the Commissioner is tasked with preserving, promoting and protecting the use of official languages and the languages of all communities in Kosovo.

#### New EULEX Chief

5 December, Bernd Borchardt from Germany was appointed as new head of the EU's rule-of-law mission in Kosovo, EULEX.

#### New Recognitions

In December, the Governments of Pakistan and Dominica officially recognised Kosovo's independence. A total of 98 countries have recognised Kosovo's independence, over half of the 193 UN member states.

#### ECMI Kosovo Project Updates:

##### Empowering Civil Society to Participate in Policy and Decision-Making Processes

In December, ECMI Kosovo started implementing the 2-year project 'Empowering Civil Society to Participate Effectively in Policy and Decision-Making Processes through Dialogue with Government Institutions' in cooperation with Communication for Social Development (CSD) and Network of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Women Organisation of Kosovo (NRAEWOK).

ECMI Kosovo and its partners began implementing the first activity: mapping all active minority CSOs in Kosovo and developing an online database to ensure that minority CSOs are informed about the

benefit of this project's activities.

This project is funded by the European Union Office in Kosovo.

##### Supporting Effective Governance for Minority Communities in Kosovo

ECMI Kosovo is currently conducting the inception phase of the 1-year project 'Supporting Effective Governance for Minority Communities in Kosovo.'

This project aims to improve minority governance in Kosovo, including developing and testing a training curriculum on community rights for civil servants; monitoring and providing technical support to key government institutions dealing specifically with community issues; and establishing a school for community rights and civil society advocacy.

This project has incorporated the recommendations made in a comprehensive independent evaluation commissioned by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), which analysed three projects successfully implemented by ECMI Kosovo between 2006 and 2011: the first project focused on ensuring minority communities' participation during the Kosovo's Status negotiation process and the development of a comprehensive constitutional and legal framework for their protection; the second aimed at increasing the capacity of government institutions, specifically the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) to implement community rights; and the third sought to further strengthen the capacities of the Kosovo government to address minority communities' issues.

This project is funded by the Swiss FDFA.

##### Legal Aid to Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups

19 December 2012, ECMI Kosovo presented the final version of its handbook on the legal rights of vulnerable and marginalised groups (VMGs) in Kosovo, at





## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – December 2012

the EU Information Office. The handbook provides an overview and assessment of the existing legal and institutional framework for the protection of VMGs in Kosovo (see <http://bit.ly/V555Gs>). 24 and 25 December, two workshops were organised with Roma community members in Mitrovicë/a and Priluzhë/ Preluzhë to discuss issues of discrimination. These ended the series of six workshops organised in cooperation with NGO 'Multiethnic Culture of Kosovo'. This project is funded by the European Union and managed by the European Union Office in Kosovo.

### **Youth of Mitrovica/ë for Democratic Society**

ECMI Kosovo and its partner, Association for Peace Kosovo (AFPK), held the first two training sessions on "Peace and Reconciliation" and "Democracy and its Historical Developments" with the active participation of 30 attendees between 16 and 29 years old. The next training session will be 25-27 January 2013 and will address 'Citizenship - the Building Blocks of Society'. Interested participants (high school pupils, students, youth centre members, or any other young people in North Mitrovica/ë) can still enrol by contacting the following e-mail address: [nptmitrovica@gmail.com](mailto:nptmitrovica@gmail.com). These activities are part of the project financed by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Pristina.

### **Support to Minority Communities during and after the Decentralisation Process**

ECMI Kosovo supported the establishment of the Association of Serbian Entrepreneurs (Asocijacija Srpskih Privrednika, ASP) and is glad to announce that the constitutive assembly was officially held on 21 December 2012 in Gračanica/Gračanicë. A public Launch Event will be organised in the coming weeks in the presence of civil society, official representatives and the local business community. Regarding socioeconomic issues in northern Kosovo, a "best of" emission was realised with highlights from the series of six emissions of the TV show 'Nešto... između' ('Something... in-between'), co-produced by Radio KIM and ECMI Kosovo. The podcast is

available at: <http://goo.gl/6hTk5>. This project is financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland.

### **Knowledge Increase of the Socioeconomic Situation in Northern Kosovo**



Further to the analysis of socioeconomic data collected in the field, ECMI Kosovo presented the preliminary findings during two consultation workshops with international and local stakeholders and finalised the report. The final Conference will take place 31 January 2013 in Pristina, with the participation of high-level government and civil society representatives. This will be an opportunity to present and discuss conclusions and recommendations from ECMI Kosovo's report soon be released online.

This project is financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland.

### **Improving the Delivery of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Education**

6-7 December, ECMI Kosovo presented key achievements from its work in the municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje at the workshop on 'Out-of-School Children Initiative in Kosovo' organised by UNICEF in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST). The aim of this initiative, launched in Kosovo, is to achieve a breakthrough in reducing the number of out-of-school children.

### **Integration through learning of official languages in Kosovo**

In December, ECMI Kosovo concluded its 7-month project promoting integration of Kosovo's community members into wider society by improving their knowledge of both

official languages. A certificate award ceremony was organised in Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, Obiliq/Obilić and Štrpcë/Shtërpcë for municipal officials who had successfully completed language courses. Altogether, 46 officials were handed over certificates for successful attendance by the Mayors.

ECMI Kosovo drafted language teaching programmes for Albanian and Serbian languages, targeting specifically the needs of municipal officials. ECMI Kosovo also drafted a policy brief that proposes a set of policy measures on how to enhance the knowledge and use of Kosovo's two official languages, Albanian and Serbian, at the municipal level. Following the finalisation of the draft, the policy brief will be presented at a press conference, with participation of representatives of HCNM, Office of the Language Commissioner and civil society.

ECMI Kosovo would like to thank OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities for providing support to this project.

### **ECMI Kosovo in Media**

Our colleague Gazmen Salijević was invited to Radio KIM to discuss the integration of minority communities in Kosovo society. The program is available at: <http://bit.ly/XuU80E>.

### **Staff Changes**

Ivan Shalev has completed his internship at ECMI Kosovo; we thank him for hard work and dedication and wish him well in his future endeavours.

