



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – June 2011

Political developments

Outgoing UNMIK chief

After three years as head of UNMIK, Lamberto Zannier will be leaving Kosovo to take up the post of Secretary General of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) from 1 July. The Italian diplomat highlighted that the situation in the north of Kosovo remains a key challenge for the UN mission, and that he did not expect the Security Council to shut down UNMIK's mandate anytime soon.

Closure of ICO offices

The International Civilian Office (ICO) has announced that it will close its offices in Pejë/Peć, Prizren, Gjilan/Gnjilane and Prishtinë/Priština on 1 September, while maintaining its presence in the north of Kosovo through its operations in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and support for a new municipality in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica North.

Preliminary census results

Preliminary results of the census released in June number the population of the Republic of Kosovo at 1,733,872 residents; however these figures do not include residents in the north, highlighting data collection issues in this region.

EULEX investigations

In June, EULEX raided the Ministry for Communities and Returns as part of an investigation into corruption charges connected to tenders from the period 2007-2009. Meanwhile, EULEX has not yet appointed a replacement for the outgoing chief prosecutor, Johannes Van Vreeswijk, who faced controversy over the lack of indictments issued against current or former ministers believed to be connected to corruption.

EU Investigative Task Force

In June Kosovo media reported that the EU will

set up a task force to investigate accusations from Council of Europe Rapporteur, Dick Marty, in his report of December 2010. The report implicates members of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in organ trading and organised crime in the period 1998-2000.

Indictment of PTK chief

The head of the state-owned telecommunications firm Kosovo Post and Telecoms (PTK), Shyqyri Haxha, was indicted in June on corruption charges.

Recognition of Kosovo's independence

In June, Andorra became the 76th state worldwide to recognise Kosovo's independence from Serbia. A delegation of German parliamentarians visiting Belgrade in June said that Serbia would need to recognise Kosovo's independence as part of Serbia's negotiations on EU membership, while in the same month Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremić stated that Serbia will never recognise an independent Kosovo.

Statements on partition

The Kosovo Prime Minister, Hashim Thaçi, stated in June that Kosovo will not face partition at the conclusion of talks with Serbia. The visiting US Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Philip Gordon, also reaffirmed in June that the US does not support partition of Kosovo.

Kosovo War Crimes Institute

The Kosovo War Crimes Institute was inaugurated on 13 June, set up by the government to investigate and report on war crimes committed in Kosovo.

Legal aid to vulnerable and marginalised groups



During the reporting period, ECMI Kosovo continued with the implementation of the project: 'Enhancing the Positive Impact of the Law for Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups in Kosovo', funded by the European Union and managed by the European Commission Liaison Office to Kosovo. In June ECMI Kosovo organised three civil society workshops on 'Taking Action against Human Rights Violations' in Gračanica/Graçanicë, Prishtinë/Priština and Mitrovicë/ Mitrovica.

These workshops were aimed at increasing the awareness of vulnerable and marginalised groups in Kosovo of the legal aid services offered through this project.

Moreover, legal aid lawyers provided free legal assistance to 101 beneficiaries in eight municipalities: Gjilan/ Gnjilane, Mitrovicë/ Mitrovica, Skenderaj/ Srbica, Prishtinë/ Priština, Klinë/ Klina, Suharekë/ Suva Reka, Leposavić/ Leposaviq and Gračanica/ Graçanicë.





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Consultative Council for Communities (CCC)

During the reporting period, ECMI Kosovo started implementation of the project 'Institutional Support to the Kosovo Consultative Council for Communities 2011', financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The development of an informational leaflet on the CCC and business cards for all CCC members is also underway.

Moreover, ECMI Kosovo has supported the establishment of a steering group which will carry responsibility for keeping track of progress made in the implementation of the CCC working plan for 2011 and has provided assistance in the development of a tracking mechanism to support the steering group in its mandate.

Language training for municipal officials

During the month of June, ECMI Kosovo continued providing Serbian and Albanian language courses to municipal officials in Štrpce/Shtërpçë. A first month evaluation was also conducted in order to assess the participants' satisfaction. The project, which foresees provision of regular classes until November this year, is being financed by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

Building Sensitivity for Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian Communities in Schools

On June 1st, ECMI Kosovo launched a 6-month project funded by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, aimed at increasing the inclusion of Roma,

Ashkali and Egyptian children in schools. The project seeks to improve the understanding of teachers of the rights, interests and needs of children from these communities, increase the engagement of the parents with teachers and schools, as well as increase communication and cooperation among other education stakeholders.

This project represents the second phase of a project implemented in 2010, and will extend activities to another three municipalities with substantial Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population: Ferizaj/Uroševac, Obiliq/Obilić and Lipjan/Lipljan.



During the first month, ECMI Kosovo organised a training workshop for teachers and school directors in each of the project municipalities, which focused at improving teachers' understanding of the rights, interests and needs of local Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and at identifying new approaches to their inclusion. Detailed information about the training workshops can be found in a separate report attached.

ECMI Kosovo also designed an evaluation method to assess the impact of the last year's 'Building sensitivity' project in the three pilot municipalities of Prizren, Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje and Gjakovë/Đakovica. The first evaluation meeting with education stakeholders who participated in last year's project activities was organised in Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje.

In July, ECMI Kosovo will continue with evaluation meetings in the three municipalities, after which a report will be compiled.

