



## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – November 2011

### Political Developments:

#### Kosovo – Serbia Talks

During the reporting period, the seventh round of EU-mediated talks between Kosovo and Serbia resumed after delegates from the latter left negotiations in September protesting that the talks should include the situation in north Kosovo. The seventh round, which also addressed the issues of managing the border between the two countries, has seen an agreement between both parties to accept each others' higher education qualifications. Concerning the border issues, representatives discussed the EU's Integrated Border Management (IBM) solution which proposes joint and fully integrated border control posts which already operate at Kosovo's borders with Macedonia and Albania. At the end of the reporting of period, on 2 December, the Eighth round of talks has seen the agreement between the two sides on the integrated management of border crossings. Notably, the EU press release on this issue only used the acronym 'IBM' which, analysts believe, allows those that recognize Kosovo's sovereignty to understand this as 'border management' and those that dispute it to interpret it as 'boundary management' since the former implies statehood.

#### Border Dispute

The border dispute has continued during the reporting period, most prominently with two violent disturbances on 23 and 28 November. On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 21 KFOR peacekeepers were injured when they were confronted by Kosovo Serbs who attempted to stop them from removing a roadblock at the border crossing at Jarinjë/Jarinje. KFOR had to fire warning shots into the air in response before abandoning the operation and withdrawing. Local media reported that many Kosovo Serbs had been injured. The violence continued on the 28<sup>th</sup>, when KFOR removed a barricade at Jagnjenicë/Jagnjenica. KFOR stated that the incident was an illegitimate protest and it revealed "the existence of a criminal hardcore minority amongst the demonstrators". Reportedly, 30 KFOR soldiers have so far been hospitalized by the violence, while at least 50

Kosovo Serbs were injured. Following the border agreement, Kosovo Serbs and KFOR have reached agreement (supported by the Serb Mayors of the parallel institutions), for the former to dismantle the barricades at Jagnjenica and Jarinje and the latter to withdraw its military vehicles blocking the road.

#### Kosovo Re-Issues Old KS Number Plates

From November 1<sup>st</sup>, pre-independence 'KS' car number plates (withdrawn in 2010), will be available for purchase until December 31<sup>st</sup> 2011. These plates will be deemed valid alongside the new RKS plates, and Kosovo Serbs will be able to register vehicles with the Kosovo authorities using their Serbian identity cards and licences. However, old and new Serbian issued plates will be confiscated. These developments are the result of the new EU mediated freedom of movement agreement between Serbia and Kosovo.

#### Defence Ministers Meeting in Kosovo

The Defence Ministers of Albania, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Slovenia met in Pejë/Peć, Kosovo, on November 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss regional security issues. The delegates agreed to cooperate more on civil emergencies and supported Kosovo's involvement in regional projects and security structures.

#### Postponement of Limaj Trial

The 'Klecka Case' war crimes trial has been delayed until December 1<sup>st</sup> after the death of the brother of Sabit Shala, one of the defendants. Limaj and the other defendants, who all pleaded not guilty to the charges, have been allowed to attend the funeral.

#### ECMI Project Updates:

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

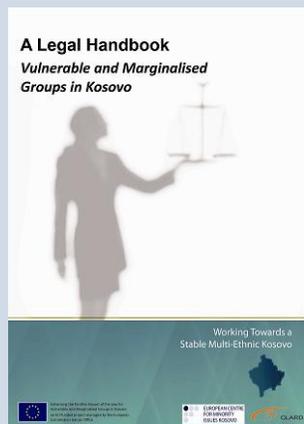
ECMI Kosovo continued with the implementation of the project 'Improving the Delivery of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Education in the Municipality of Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje', funded by UNICEF. In November, ECMI Kosovo provided two training sessions on "Municipal Budgeting



Procedures and Budgeting of Activities" and "Monitoring & Evaluation of the Municipal Action Plan (MAP)" to the municipal officials of the Education Directorate and the Office for Communities and Returns. The training aimed at increasing the capacities of municipal officials to operationalise the action plan for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities, with specific emphasis on the educational component. In addition to ongoing technical support, ECMI Kosovo also assisted the municipal officials with organizing a coordination meeting with stakeholders active in the field of education in the municipality. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain inputs relevant to fully operationalise the action plan as well as setting up the Task Force for monitoring and coordinating the activities.

#### Legal Aid to Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups

During the reporting period, ECMI Kosovo





## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – November 2011

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 November, ECMI Kosovo published a legal handbook on domestic and international legislation affecting vulnerable and marginalised groups in Kosovo. This legal handbook is a working document and open to comments. To access the document please click visit the project website at [www.kosovo-legalaid.com](http://www.kosovo-legalaid.com).

During the reporting period, legal aid lawyers provided free legal assistance to 119 beneficiaries in 11 municipalities. Due to the low number of beneficiaries being received, ECMI Kosovo has decided to close its legal clinic in Suharekë/ Suva Reka and open an alternative legal clinic in Malisheve/Malishevo. At the same time, ECMI Kosovo was able to expand its activities to the municipality of *Vushtrri/Vučitrn* through cooperation with the Public International Law & Policy Group (PILPG) and continued with a project funded by the Office of The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), through which ECMI Kosovo organised weekly visits to Novo Brdo/Novobërdë and *Klokot-Vrbovac/Kllokot-Vërboc*.

For more information on this project please visit [www.kosovo-legalaid.com](http://www.kosovo-legalaid.com).

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

During the reporting period, ECMI Kosovo continued with implementation of the project extension *'Support to Minority Communities during and after the Decentralisation Process'*, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Finland. During this period, we commenced with the field research, namely hiring the field research team covering all the five beneficiary municipalities under the Project Component I (Gračanica/Graçanicë, Klokot-Vrbovac/Kllokot-Vërboc, Novo Brdo/

Novobërdë, Parteš/Partesh and Ranilug/Ranillug). ECMI Kosovo also developed two types of questionnaires for this field research: one for Municipal administrations and one for local businesses.

Furthermore, we organized two rounds of workshops with senior municipal representatives and with the field research team, during which, detailed explanations were provided on what data and information needs to be collected, in addition to how and from which sources. Following that, ECMI Kosovo commenced with actual data and information collection. Thus far, around half of the data and information possessed by each target Municipal administration have been collected, and surveys with around 30 local businesses have also been completed.

During November, ECMI Kosovo also commenced implementation of the Project Component II, focusing on supporting the decentralisation process in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica North. Under this component, during the reporting period, ECMI supported the Municipal Preparatory Team for Mitrovicë/Mitrovica North on public awareness on local government reform, specifically in producing public Awareness leaflets. Finally, consultations were held with the Municipal Preparatory Team (MPT) for Mitrovicë/Mitrovica North and the ICO Mitrovicë/Mitrovica Office on the drafts of the detailed Plan of Activities under this component and Terms of Reference for a Local Outreach Expert.

### **Language Training for Municipal Officials**

In November, ECMI Kosovo concluded its project on provision of Serbian and Albanian language courses to municipal officials in Štrpce/Shtërpçë with a certificate award ceremony for successful course participants. ECMI Kosovo also drafted an evaluation report assessing the impact of the project on improving the competencies of municipal officials to communicate in the official languages of Kosovo in order to promote

greater cooperation and integration of community members working in the civil sector. This pilot project has been funded by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.



### **Building Sensitivity for Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian Communities in Schools**

In November, ECMI Kosovo started with the drafting of the informational handbook using the content and outcomes of the workshops, including an overview of local Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, challenges for their education and new approaches to promote their inclusion. The dissemination of the booklet within the target schools represents the last activity of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities funded project.

### **Institutional Support for the Consultative Council for Communities (CCC)**

During November, ECMI Kosovo continued its technical support to the CCC and its working groups, it also signed a MoU with the Office of the President of the Republic of Kosovo – Consultative Council for Communities agreeing that ECMI Kosovo will organize a workshop for the CCC members. Therefore, during the month, ECMI Kosovo, together with the CCC Secretariat, has started preparation for the workshop. The training will be from 01 to 04 December 2011 in Durres, Albania.

