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MINORITY ISSUES



**EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MINORITY ISSUES – ECMI KOSOVO**

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**Decentralisation Outreach – Serb Women in the Future Municipalities**

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Local Communities have often voiced complaints regarding the perceived lack of information on the decentralisation process. ECMI Kosovo is a member of the sub-working group on the information campaign of the Ministry of Local Government Administration (MLGA). In this capacity, and with financial support of the Government of Finland, it has conducted extensive outreach activities aimed at communities living in the 5+1 new municipalities (Gračanica/Gračanice; Klokot-Vrbovac/Kllokot-Vërbovc; Novobërdë/Novo Brdo; Partesh/Partesh; Ranilug/Ranillug; and Mitrovica North/Mitrovicë North)

Currently, ECMI Kosovo has completed a project aimed at informing Serb women living in the new municipalities on the decentralisation process. Over June and July 2009 ECMI Kosovo, in cooperation with local partners, organised 10 round tables and 2 focus group discussions in the 5 southern new municipalities with a particular focus women in Gračanica/Gračanice and Novobërdë/Novo Brdo. These activities had the purpose of increasing the awareness of Serb women in the new municipalities on decentralisation and at the same time allowing them to formulate their most important concerns regarding the local situation. These concerns will be presented to the new municipalities. The activities were conducted in coordination with the MLGA and ICO and several meetings were attended by ICO representatives.

Below is a list of some of the most important concerns and needs of women in the new municipalities:

<b>Areas of Concern:</b>	<b>Needs of the Community:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Distrust exists among local communities regarding the willingness of Kosovo institutions to deliver everything that is promised by decentralisation;</li><li>❖ Local communities face strong pressures from within the community not to participate in the process;</li><li>❖ A fear exists that certain political parties will monopolise the decentralisation process through corruption and nepotism;</li><li>❖ A sense of isolation and a lack of information prevails among the citizens of the new municipalities;</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Lack of employment opportunities in general and for women in particular;</li><li>❖ Lack of cultural and sports activities;</li><li>❖ Poor infrastructure: unreliable water and electricity supplies, poor roads, and poor sewage systems;</li><li>❖ Poor public transport connections;</li><li>❖ A lack of kindergartens;</li></ul>