EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MINORITY ISSUES KOSOVO

Annual Report

2009

ECMI Kosovo

ecmikosova.org

Preface

2009 was ECMI Kosovo's first year as a locally registered organisation. We continued the work of the Kosovo office at a time when communities were learning how the new institutions and municipalities would work in practice. Our priority was to help residents understand the changes and give institutions practical ways to hear and respond to their concerns.

The November municipal elections made voter information especially important in the newly established municipalities. Alongside that work, we helped the Office for Community Affairs and the Consultative Council for Communities develop their work, and worked with UNICEF and municipalities to improve minority education. These different efforts had a common purpose: making new public arrangements usable by the people they were intended to serve.

ECMI Kosovo reported on its work in the ECMI Flensburg Annual Report 2009. This Kosovo-only annual report was reconstructed from that contribution, contemporaneous programme records and ECMI Kosovo's audited financial statements.

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The first year of the locally registered organisation

ECMI Kosovo registered as a local NGO on 24 April 2009, continuing the work of the Kosovo office. The year's programme concentrated on decentralisation, the public bodies responsible for community affairs and the practical delivery of minority education. The implementation of the Ahtisaari settlement and the November municipal elections shaped much of this work.

Decentralisation and elections

Under a Finland-supported programme, ECMI Kosovo worked with the Ministry for Local Government Administration, municipal preparation teams and local civil society. It organised public debates and discussions on how decentralisation would affect residents and helped the preparation teams publicise opportunities and explain the process. In cooperation with the International Civilian Office and the Central Election Commission, it prepared voter information for the new municipalities. The campaign used local radio, printed material and direct meetings. ECMI staff also observed polling.

The public discussions were designed to answer practical questions about how the new arrangements would affect daily life. Officials from the Ministry of Local Government Administration and the International Civilian Office joined local discussions to hear residents' concerns directly. Printed information and a radio documentary extended the discussion beyond those who could attend. The November voter-information campaign, organised with the International Civilian Office and the Central Election Commission, used local radio, leaflets, posters and direct meetings to explain how to participate.

Preparing the new municipalities

The decentralisation work combined public information with direct support to Municipal Preparation Teams. These teams had to explain changes in local government while putting the arrangements for the new municipalities in place. ECMI Kosovo helped them communicate with residents and gave communities opportunities to raise questions about representation and local services. The voter-education work continued that effort in the run-up to the municipal elections.

Each Municipal Preparation Team was responsible for technical work such as preparing a draft budget and municipal statute. We helped the teams publicise vacancies, build their capacity and explain the elections and the decentralisation process to residents. On election day, our staff observed polling in the new municipalities.

Consultation and community affairs

Swiss support enabled ECMI Kosovo to help the Office for Community Affairs develop its 2009–2011 strategy and begin implementing it. Work included legislative monitoring and preparation for greater civil-society participation in oversight. With UK and German support, ECMI helped the Consultative Council for Communities develop its working plan, orient members and establish channels for outreach to community organisations.

The Office for Community Affairs began putting its 2009–2011 strategy into practice through legislative monitoring, a study of community employment and work on public information resources. A further phase began in November to bring community concerns into government policy and make it easier for community organisations to participate in monitoring the implementation of laws.

We supported the Consultative Council for Communities as it completed its first year of operation. Following induction training in May and work with members through the summer, the Council adopted its working plan unanimously in October. The Council presented the plan publicly in November. Workshops with community organisations helped them nominate representatives and prepare their accreditation applications.

Education

A UNICEF-supported pilot in Ferizaj/Uroševac, Peja/Peć and Prizren examined municipal capacity and the role of community organisations in minority education. ECMI Kosovo produced two analytical reports and prepared a manual for municipal officials and an advocacy guide for civil society. In November, the education ministry invited ECMI Kosovo to provide technical and administrative support to the newly established Independent Commission for Serb Curriculum Review.

The UNICEF pilot produced two studies, one on municipal staff capacity and knowledge gaps and the other on the role of community organisations in education. Their recommendations shaped two tools completed in draft in 2009, a manual on municipal responsibilities and a guide to local advocacy for civil society. Municipal officials and community organisations reviewed the drafts before translation and publication in 2010.

The Independent Commission for Serb Curriculum Review was established by administrative instruction in November. We provided technical and administrative support as it began preparing its review of the Serbian curriculum used in Kosovo.

Publications and practical resources

- Voter Education in the 3+1 New Municipalities
- Decentralisation Outreach – Serb Women in the Future Municipalities

Financial record

The table covers the new NGO from its registration on 24 April to 31 December. The activity account covers calendar year 2009. The predecessor's separate audit documents the transfer of assets and obligations.

Audited line	April–December 2009
Donations before carryforward	€325,243.23
Carryforward to the following year	€120,770.01
Project expenditure	€141,990.62
Total expenditure recognised	€207,100.02
Total expenditure paid	€204,473.22

Sources. ECMI Kosovo Annual Report 2009, final-labelled Word source. ECMI Flensburg Annual Report 2009, printed pp. 22–27. G2 Audit, *Audit 2009, ECMI*, new NGO financial statements, printed pp. 2–3. G2 Audit, predecessor statements, PDF pp. 3–4.

Independent audit G 2 Audit expressed an unmodified opinion on ECMI Kosovo's financial statements for the period from 24 April to 31 December 2009. The auditor's report is dated 30 June 2010.