EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MINORITY ISSUES KOSOVO

Annual Report

2010

ECMI Kosovo

ecmikosova.org

Preface

In 2010, ECMI Kosovo concentrated on the institutions that would put Kosovo's commitments to communities into practice. We worked with the Consultative Council for Communities and the Office for Community Affairs on their mandates and with municipalities on ways to communicate with residents during decentralisation.

The year's research showed how closely institutional capacity and everyday access are connected. We examined how public institutions applied language rights, assessed the language skills of municipal officials and looked at how municipalities could improve education for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children. We also developed reference tools to help officials and community representatives find the laws, policies and information relevant to their work.

ECMI Kosovo reported on its work in the ECMI Flensburg Annual Report 2010. This Kosovo-only annual report was reconstructed from that contribution, contemporaneous programme records and ECMI Kosovo's audited financial statements.

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Community consultation and public institutions

ECMI Kosovo supported the Consultative Council for Communities and the Office for Community Affairs as they developed ways to bring community concerns into government decisions. It worked with both bodies on their capacity to exercise their mandates. For the Office for Community Affairs, ECMI assessed how central and municipal authorities and other public institutions were complying with language rights. The study also examined how community members experienced the implementation of those rights.

The office's annual submission describes work on the ethnopolitical map and a database of minority legislation and policy. These tools were intended to help officials and community representatives identify obligations and find information scattered across laws, regulations and strategies.

The Council set up an education working group that produced its first formal recommendations, covering common issues and urgent concerns in particular communities and places. The Council presented them in a plenary session attended by the Ministry of Education. It also reviewed steps taken under the government's strategy for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, and used consultations to identify measures that were making a difference locally.

The Office for Community Affairs contributed to a review of Kosovo's strategy for reintegrating people repatriated from abroad. With the responsible ministry and ECMI Kosovo's support, it assessed how the existing arrangements worked and helped ensure that the revised strategy considered the rights and needs of minority communities.

Municipal government and education

In southern Kosovo, ECMI helped municipal authorities in newly established municipalities build channels of communication with residents. The decentralisation programme paid particular attention to the position of Albanian and Roma residents in municipalities where the Serb community formed the majority. In the north, the office worked with local actors to explain the decentralisation process and opportunities for participation. The programme was supported by Finland.

Language access remained a practical issue for municipal services. For the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, ECMI assessed civil servants' language skills in five multi-ethnic municipalities. The findings documented limits on communication both within municipal administrations and between officials and residents. The office also reported work on education for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, with attention to how municipal authorities could implement national commitments.

We supported the Municipal Preparation Team for North Mitrovica and took part in coordination for the decentralisation information campaign. In the south, the emphasis was on giving residents a way to communicate with the authorities elected the previous year and ensuring that those authorities heard from communities that were a minority within the new municipalities.

In Prizren, Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje and Gjakovë/Đakovica, a school initiative supported by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities brought teachers, education officials, civil society and parents into discussions about the circumstances of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children. An information brochure shared the findings. A related study of municipal officials in five multi-ethnic municipalities identified language barriers in public services and recommended practical training.

Making community concerns part of public decisions

Support to the Office for Community Affairs included a study of language use across institutions and communities. The study looked at both the formal protections and the experience of people using services. The work on an ethnopolitical map and a database of legislation and policy gave public officials and community organisations reference points for applying those protections.

The updated ethnopolitical map added profiles and statistics for the municipalities created in the decentralisation process. The policy and legislation database organised provisions by the right they protected and the institution responsible for implementing them. These tools were designed to help the Council and the Office for Community Affairs follow how changing laws and policies affected communities.

The Council still relied on the Office of the President for its running costs and was consulted by government bodies on an ad hoc basis. Strengthening the secretariat, securing a budget and making consultation routine therefore remained priorities.

Publications and practical resources

- Protecting and Promoting Education for Minority Communities: A Manual for Municipal Officials

Financial record

The joint 2010–2011 audited statements give distinct cash-flow and income-statement figures. The cash-flow categories below retain the audit's separate treatment of staff, taxes and contracted services.

Audited line	2010
Grant receipts in cash	€491,041
Total cash payments	€500,402
Of which, staff costs	€164,301
Of which, taxes and contributions	€13,535
Of which, contracted services	€83,141
Grant income and expenditure recognised, each	€500,402

Sources. Kosovo office draft transmitted on 4 March 2011. ECMI Flensburg Annual Report 2010, printed pp. 33–36. Audit & Conto, ECMI Kosovo financial statements for 2010 and 2011, printed pp. 6–7.

Independent audit

Audit & Conto expressed an unmodified opinion on ECMI Kosovo’s 2010 financial statements. The auditor’s report is dated 19 March 2012.