EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MINORITY ISSUES KOSOVO

Annual Report

2013

ECMI Kosovo

ecmikosova.org

Preface

In 2013, ECMI Kosovo helped community organisations take part in public decisions and supported the institutions expected to respond. We worked with civil society on practical advocacy, helped establish two community networks, and supported the Consultative Council for Communities as it adopted its rules of procedure and code of conduct.

Our work connected research with local activity. We published analysis of the municipal elections and studies on entrepreneurship, repatriation and local economic development. We also worked with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women on economic participation and with young people and civil society in North Mitrovica. The report records the partnerships behind this work and the different ways communities used them to advance local priorities.

ECMI Kosovo reported on its work in the ECMI Flensburg Annual Report 2013. 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 participation and accountable government

The Kosovo office's annual project list records nine projects. Work on civil-society participation included a guidebook on public decision-making, a directory of community organisations and training on advocacy and community rights. Six advocacy proposals were selected. ECMI Kosovo helped establish and support two networks bringing together minority civil-society organisations.



Advocacy and community-rights workshop for Kosovo civil society organisations, Struga, 28-30 June 2013. Photo: ECMI Kosovo Facebook archive.

With Norwegian support, ECMI Kosovo helped the Consultative Council for Communities strengthen its working procedures. In June the Council adopted a code of conduct. In July it adopted rules of procedure. The President signed both instruments and a regulation on financial compensation. ECMI Kosovo also supported the Ministry for Communities and Returns in developing its strategy for 2014–2018.

The EU- and Swiss-supported advocacy programme combined a public guide with training and mentoring. A competitive call selected six advocacy proposals for support. We also worked with local partners to identify where closer cooperation among organisations would be valuable. The resulting work focused on Serb youth organisations in eastern Kosovo and Gorani organisations in Dragash and Prizren.

Norwegian-supported assistance to the Consultative Council for Communities helped clarify how it worked with accredited organisations and how its working groups and decision-making procedures operated. The Council unanimously approved a code of conduct in June and rules of procedure in July. ECMI Kosovo also worked with the Office of the President on a regulation for compensating Council members.

Women's economic empowerment and local participation

An economic empowerment initiative backed through the UN Women, UNDP and EU programme reported 12 entrepreneurship sessions for 41 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women and girls over its implementation. Eight participants from that group were selected for follow-up coaching. The project also held local roundtables and engaged ministries on barriers to women's economic participation. These figures describe this initiative and its participants.



Conference on the economic empowerment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women, 4 December 2013. Photo: ECMI Kosovo Facebook archive.

ECMI Kosovo helped develop a youth network in North Mitrovica and began a Finland-supported media transparency project with Radio Kontakt Plus. The local-election work included field observation and three public bulletins covering the campaign and election results. Other publications addressed minority entrepreneurship, repatriation and local economic development in newly established municipalities. The office continued projects on inclusive education and official-language learning.

The women's economic empowerment project combined training with practical support for business ideas. Forty-one Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women and girls took part in twelve entrepreneurship sessions, and eight continued with individual coaching to prepare business plans and apply for grants. Roundtables and meetings with government institutions brought the barriers identified by participants into the policy discussion.

Work on local livelihoods also included a policy paper on barriers to minority entrepreneurship and support for the Association of Serb Entrepreneurs. A legal handbook gave officials in five newly established municipalities a reference on powers affecting local economic development, land use, enterprise regulation, public property and services.

Education, language and monitoring of community rights

ECMI Kosovo began work on dropout prevention in six municipalities. With municipal officials and prevention teams, it supported situation analyses and action plans for children out of school. It continued language courses for municipal officials and, through the Swiss-supported governance programme, developed a framework for measuring how community rights were implemented. A pilot with the Office of the Language Commissioner examined how language rights could be monitored in the Assembly.

Research and civic engagement in northern Kosovo

A January conference presented research based on questionnaires with 721 respondents in North Mitrovica, Leposavić/Leposaviq, Zubin Potok and Zvečan/Zveçan. The study examined access to healthcare, education, social welfare and employment. A youth initiative delivered with the Association for Peace Kosovo established a network of young activists. A separate project with Kontakt Plus radio supported independent news, interviews and socio-economic debates, with training for journalists, civil-society organisations and local authorities.

We produced three information bulletins during the local elections covering the issues facing communities before voting, first-round results and the final results. Our short-term election observation informed the bulletins, including the analysis of the implications for Serb-majority municipalities.

Communities and returns

At the request of the Ministry for Communities and Returns, ECMI Kosovo supported development of the 2014–2018 strategy. The team reviewed the preceding strategy and used interviews, focus groups, a survey and desk research to identify practical concerns. The resulting advice focused on the legal framework, the needs of internally displaced people and how to monitor implementation. A separate publication explained the institutional and policy framework for repatriation and reintegration.

Publications and practical resources

- Civil Society Participation in Decision-Making Processes
- Socioeconomic Conditions in Northern Kosovo
- Minority Entrepreneurship in Kosovo
- Promoting the Economic Empowerment of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Women in Kosovo

Financial record

For comparison with 2014, the table uses the 2013 comparative column of the Grant Thornton statement on the cash receipts and disbursements basis. The underlying report says that comparative figures were reclassified where needed. The personnel line follows the scope of its salary-expenses category.

Audited category	2013 comparative
Grant receipts in cash	€718,261
Personnel costs for staff and contracted contributors	€383,132
Project activities	€216,818
Administrative costs	€66,443
Total expenditure	€666,393

The audit notes report an average of 48 regular and other contracted employees per month. The original 2013 financial statements also report €672,464 in recognised grant income and expenditure under their income-statement basis.

Sources. Original Kosovo office narrative and project list. ECMI Flensburg Annual Report 2013, printed pp. 26–33. ECMI Kosovo, 2013 audited statements, printed pp. 6–7. Grant Thornton, ECMI Kosovo 2014 audited financial report with 2013 comparative, printed pp. 3, 5 and 9.

Independent audit

Shpalosja S.P. expressed an unmodified opinion on ECMI Kosovo's 2013 financial statements in its report dated 20 August 2014.