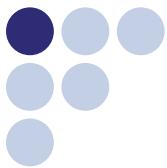


ANNUAL PROGRAMME



EUROPEAN CENTRE
FOR
MINORITY ISSUES

2014



ANNUAL PROGRAMME

European Centre
for Minority Issues (ECMI)

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ANNUAL PROGRAMME



Tove H. Malloy
ECMI Director

FOREWORD

With the Annual Programme 2014, the ECMI continues its tradition of communicating to our existing and potential new partners our initiatives and ideas for research and action for the next calendar year. A number of ongoing initiatives will continue in 2014, such as our cross-cluster foci on Roma empowerment and minority indicators, while new initiatives, especially aimed at action-oriented projects, will be added.

The **Justice & Governance** cluster will continue developing the topics of Non-Territorial Autonomy, and of Ethnicity, Territoriality and Equality, elaborating further identified deficiencies and gaps in minority protection. This cluster will also embark on a new effort to research methods aimed at understanding the link between indigenous peoples' rights and climate change governance, with specific attention to the North of Europe.

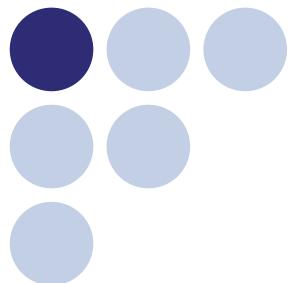
In the **Politics & Civil Society** cluster, we are embarking on a project seeking to document the funding schemes of minority institutions, including political parties, and how these are implemented in reality. With the strengthening of the **Conflict & Security** cluster by our new colleague Raul Carstocea, we will embark on exciting new research focusing on human security and emergent security issues such as the increasing incidence of extremist violence directed against members of minority groups, the proliferation of hate speech in the new media, and the resurgence of the radical right in the post-Cold War political environment.

Our **Citizenship & Ethics** cluster will continue addressing active citizenship and seek to develop further methodology in this respect, while the **Culture & Diversity** cluster will focus on manifestations and management of diversity and on the power of culture to foster positive societal change. We are also strengthening this cluster with our colleague Zora Popova taking up the challenge to develop its programme. The right to education, its intercultural dimension and its role in community empowerment will remain among the key areas of research throughout 2014.

On the action side, we are excited to announce that we will start up a new programme targeted at the **Eastern Partnership** countries. This will include a network-type knowledge transfer project aimed at capacity building in non-discrimination bodies and ombudsperson institutions. In **Kosovo** we maintain our focus on decentralization and capacity building in municipalities, with specific focus on Serb municipalities in **North Kosovo**. We also expect to disseminate the first results of our efforts to pilot indicators for the language policy area.

Of course, our permanent features, such as the summer school on "National Minorities and Border Regions" and the publications of the *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* (JEMIE) and the *European Yearbook of Minority Issues* will continue.

We thank you for your support if you are a returning reader and welcome new readers to our network.



EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MINORITY ISSUES

RESEARCH





JUSTICE & GOVERNANCE

As issues of norm diffusion and convergence have come to the fore at the macro level with the EU taking a greater role in Europe's normative regime, aspects of legitimacy and responsibility of protection schemes at local and regional levels entail focused attention. In 2014, through a series of research and action-oriented projects, the Cluster will continue its work in three thematic areas that still have significant gaps and deficiencies in the existing research:

- 'Non-Territorial Autonomy: Interpretations, Forms, and Opportunities', addresses a range of ideas and institutional arrangements related to the notion of autonomy on non-territorial grounds, seeking to describe, compare, and critically evaluate these ideas and their implementation.
- 'Ethnicity, Territoriality and Equality', analyses the links between the notions of territory and ethnicity in public debates and policies concerning ethnic minorities, as well as such related issues as promotion of equality, cultural policies, and categorization of ethnic groups through territorial affiliations.
- 'Translation of norms and ideas into practice', investigates how the notions of non-discrimination, minority protection, and participation co-exist in national and sub-national legislation, public institutions and public debates.
- 'Deficiencies and Gaps in Minority Protection', seeks to identify the cases where the ideas of minority protection are applied contrary to their substance, elaborate the criteria for the selection of such cases, and analyse their causes and consequences.

The Eastern Partnership Programme, developed jointly by all ECMI clusters and field offices, addresses minority issues at various levels, seeking to invest in the development of the expert and practitioner communities dealing with minority issues in the EU Eastern borderland and to facilitate communication concerning minority issues between this region and the rest of Europe.



COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ABOUT NON-TERRITORIAL AUTONOMY

Aims

The scholarly network on issues related to non-territorial autonomy (NTA), established at the ECMI-led workshop in June 2011, works on a series of academic and policy events and publications on NTA issues.

Action Setup

ECMI works in cooperation with the Tom Lantos Institute (Hungary) on a guidebook concerning the practical application of NTA; with EURAC on a volume about territorial and non-territorial autonomy; with the Political Science Department of Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, on an online database and the compendium 'Autonomy Arrangements in the World'; with the University of Glasgow on a conference about NTA arrangements in the Black Sea region.

Timeline

The project runs throughout 2014

Outcome

Three volumes on autonomy arrangements are to be submitted to publishers

Partner Institutions

Tom Lantos Institute (Hungary), EURAC (Italy), University of Glasgow (UK), Political Science Department of Babes-Bolyai University (Romania)

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STUDY OF INTER-ETHNIC COALITIONS WITHIN AND ACROSS STATES

Aims

This cross-national multidisciplinary collaborative project aims at empirical study and theoretical analysis of institutional arrangements designed to practically implement the notions of ethnicity-based 'participation' and 'representation'. The project particularly focuses on ethnicity-based public consultative or representative bodies including multi-ethnic umbrella organizations designed for the provision of inter-ethnic dialogue and prevention of conflicts. The project addresses several types of ethnicity-based organizations designed to provide for civil participation, representation, reconciliation and self-government.

Action Setup

The project is envisaged to become a springboard for a comparative cross-national study bringing together legal, sociological and political science approaches. The geographical scope should be the OSCE area in Eurasia.

The project envisages a conference, which is meant to bring together scholars and practitioners who work on issues of integration and promotion of inter-ethnic dialogue.

Timeline

Throughout 2014

Outcome

A book volume and collaborative research network

Partner Institutions

University of Glasgow (UK), Uppsala Forum (Sweden), University of Bradford (UK)

JUSTICE & GOVERNANCE

MINORITIES AND TERRITORIAL ARRANGEMENTS

It is assumed that territorial arrangements are crucial for minority protection, since until recently setting up cultural and linguistic regimes on territorial grounds has been deemed a rule and is common practice. Although there has been extensive research and a significant amount of scholarly publications concerning the ethnic and cultural dimensions of sub-national territorial arrangements, some deficiencies and gaps in these studies and public debates still persist.

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Aims

On one hand, the project addresses the variety of models under which linkages between ethnicity and territory are articulated (or acknowledged implicitly) and conceptually organized. On the other hand, it initiates discussion on the practical applicability of such models, *inter alia* on the outcomes already achieved and the prospects for the future.

Action Setup

Activities include looking for funding and supervision for PhD students (or interns) who are hosted by ECMI and working on the selected issues.

Timeline

Throughout 2014: looking for funding and supervision

Outcome

ECMI Working Papers

People

PhD students or interns working on the selected themes and hosted by ECMI



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ECMI participates in festival of national cultures in Hrodna, Belarus

FROM CLOSED DECISION-MAKING TO PUBLIC POLITICS: THE TRANSFORMATION OF DIVERSITY POLICIES BEFORE THE DEMISE OF COMMUNISM

Aims

The project seeks to launch a scholarly discussion on the active phase of the communist diversity policies and their transformation in the late 1980s.

Action setup

The project seeks to hold a conference on minority policies in the late 1980s, before the demise of the communism.

Expected outcomes

An academic volume and revitalization of the collaborative research network on communist legacies

Partner Institutions

University of Glasgow

RISKS STEMMING FROM MODERN IDEAS OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND THE WAYS THEY CAN BE CURBED

Aims

The project is aimed at launching a scholarly discussion on the risks posed in the long run by misinterpretations of minority protection, non-discrimination and related ideas. Identification of potential research topics and objectives and assessment of their relevance must lead to the establishment of a collaborative research network and/or launch of a research project with ECMI's involvement. The practical relevance of the project is identification of the deficiencies and pitfalls in the existing minority-related mechanisms and of the ways in which they can be overcome.

Action Setup

The cluster seeks to arrange a kickoff seminar, and function of the seminar's outcomes to participate in some further joint projects, and to host PhD students and post-doctoral researchers working on the respective issues.

Expected outcomes

Collaborative research network; publications

Partner Institutions

University of Groningen
(the Netherlands)

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JUSTICE & GOVERNANCE



POLITICS & CIVIL SOCIETY

The capacity of national minority groups to exert influence over decisions taken in the political, socio-economic, or cultural spheres represents a fundamental condition for a peaceful and democratic society. As such, the extent to which non-governmental organizations of citizens belonging to national minorities are capable to successfully advocate change in favour of the groups they represent is an important indicator of the level of empowerment of national minorities.

Consequently, the Politics & Civil Society Cluster focuses on the analysis and evaluation of the capacity of minority non-governmental organizations to induce desired changes at the local, national, and European levels, with the purpose of identifying the best practices and most appropriate solutions that would lead to improving the level of participation of national minority groups to public life. The theoretical underpinnings of the cluster's activities lie both in the classic understandings of participation, which focus primarily on electoral processes such as voting or participating in election-related campaign activities, as well as on more recent developments in understanding participation, such as non-electoral mobilization, protest, or participation through new media.

More specifically, the cluster approaches participation from two main perspectives. On the one hand, it analyzes how non-governmental organizations are empowered by the state by looking at the consultation mechanisms in place, the public funding available, and the general patterns of interaction between non-governmental minority organizations and relevant state institutions. This top-down approach is complemented by a bottom-up one, analyzing patterns of mobilization at the grass-roots level and their impact on decision making. The cluster focuses also on transversal patterns of representation, looking at how minority women and young persons participate to public life. Finally, with Roma being one of the most vulnerable minority groups in Europe, the issue of how this particular ethnic group is represented in decision making at both national and European levels represents another area of research of the Politics & Civil Society Cluster.



MONEY MATTERS: DISTRIBUTION OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTING NATIONAL MINORITIES

Aims and objectives

The participation of national minorities to political and public life is to a great extent determined by the activities of their representative organizations, for whose functioning adequate funding is of fundamental importance. Building on the results of an expert meeting on this topic organized by ECMI in 2012, this project aims to create a comprehensive overview of the practices employed by governments for distributing funds to minority organizations across Europe, thus creating the premises for a conceptual and practical framework that would lead to a better understanding of how participation of national minorities is enabled through funding throughout Europe.

Background

Despite the fundamental importance of ensuring adequate funding to minority organizations for the effective participation of national minorities to political and public life, both the academic literature and policy analysis on this topic are extremely sparse, so that such a project appears as both relevant and timely. The amounts earmarked for use by national minority organizations, their distribution, the funding priorities of states, as well as the monitoring and transparency mechanisms in place are all important aspects of the financial support offered to such organizations across Europe. The project thus aims to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and understanding of the issue of funding of minority organizations by identifying areas in need of further research and by attempting to create a framework that will allow for future comprehensive recommendations to governments in this respect.

Thematic areas of research

The project will focus on the issue of funding as directed by states to minority organizations by analyzing three main thematic areas. First, the funding of projects proposed by minority organizations will be analyzed, taking into account the criteria employed by states in selecting the projects and the recipients of the funds, the respective amounts earmarked, the procedures by which states determine their spending priorities, and the evaluation and impact assessment mechanisms in place. Second, the issue of funding as related to the political participation of minority groups will be researched, including the manner in which political minority organizations obtain their funding, the transparency and reporting requirements, the legal restrictions in place, and their practical effects. The third component analyzes minority funding from an international perspective, with a focus on minorities' kin states, which sometimes provide them with material help (financial or in kind). As shown by the Hungarian Status Law, such an approach invites a host of normative questions, starting from the very general (i.e. whether states have a moral duty to provide such help) to more particular (e.g. what forms of help are acceptable, and in what areas). Here, in addition to much needed research on specific case studies, there are many normative questions to be answered, such as the limits of such involvement, the impact on domestic politics, etc.

Timeframe

2014-2015

Expected outcomes

Database; Conference; Book;
Policy recommendations

POLITICS & CIVIL SOCIETY

CONTESTED ETHNICITIES: SELECTIVE RECOGNITION OF MINORITIES IN ROMANIA, POLAND, AND UKRAINE

Aims and objectives

This project aims to contribute to a better understanding of the situation of three unrecognized ethnic groups (Aromanians, Rusyns, Silesians) present on the territories of three states (Romania, Ukraine, and Poland, respectively), all signatories of the FCNM. All of these states recognize the presence of national minorities on their territories; however, this recognition is selective, with certain ethnic groups that claim the status of national minority remaining unrecognized. In addition, although in all three cases the FCNM reports recommend states to address the issues regarding these minority groups, these reports have had no effect to date. As such, the present study proposes to fill a gap in knowledge concerning the political situation and prospects of these groups, to propose a series of policy recommendations, and to potentially contribute to theoretical debates concerning identity and the politicization of ethnicities.

Background

A lot of the debates surrounding non-recognition of ethnic / national minorities are concerned with issues of citizenship and the 'blanket' non-recognition by certain states (France, Greece) of those ethnic groups present on their territory. However, the issue of 'selective' recognition by states, whereby some ethnic groups are recognized as national minorities while others are not, has been largely ignored by the academic literature dealing with minority groups; this is particularly true for the three cases which are the focus of this project.

Activities 2014-2015

The methodology will place a strong emphasis on empirical research, including qualitative analysis of official documents, legislation, and policy papers concerning these populations for the three states under consideration. Semi-structured interviews will be carried out with stakeholders, leaders of these unrecognized minorities, independent experts, researchers in linguistics and cultural studies, etc. The results of the empirical research will be interpreted on the basis of the existing theoretical literature on identity, and an attempt will be made to clarify these groups' prospects for recognition in light of the existing European policy instruments.

The steps towards the implementation of this project are the following: identification of project partners and organization of a kick-off seminar (2014); creation of a comprehensive research project together with project partners (2014); identification of funding opportunities and submission of funding applications (2014); implementation of the project (2015).

Expected outcomes

Research study; Policy recommendations

Timeframe

2014-2015

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CONFLICT & SECURITY

With Europe on the path to peaceful integration, conflict resolution gives way to post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation. At the same time, however, new challenges to the peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups emerge, while historical ones resurface in modified forms that are adapted to the realities of 21st century Europe. As such, state and nation building processes remain enduring topics that however require fresh approaches in an era of European integration achieved through norm diffusion and external conditionality. As the roots of inter-ethnic conflict can often be traced back to the history of groups inhabiting a certain territory, often manipulated by nationalist interpretations that emphasize divisiveness and antagonism, the research carried out within the Conflict & Security Cluster will approach contemporary challenges to minority groups by placing due weight on their historical legacies. This approach brings a historical perspective to the understanding of these conflicts, which in turn appears as a necessary prerequisite for the development of effective strategies leading towards their contemporary resolution and the reconciliation of the ethnic groups in question.

At the same time, the new challenges confronting minority groups, as well as the new modes of mobilization they often entail, call for a more elastic concept of security, departing from traditional interpretations that have focused on the state to concentrate more on the individual. This focus of the Cluster on human security allows addressing emergent security issues such as the increasing incidence of extremist violence directed against members of minority groups, particularly the Roma, the proliferation of hate speech in the new media, or the resurgence of the radical right in the post-Cold War political environment. This reorientation in focus towards the individual implies that potential solutions to these challenges need to take into consideration the new vulnerability emerging in the context of the double threat posed on the one hand by extremist radical groups and on the other by the enhanced state surveillance and control associated with their monitoring, and the fact that this new, global vulnerability is particularly salient for minority groups. In line with the ECMI's approach to bridging the distance between theory and practice by drawing on the synergy between research, action and standards, the projects developed by the Conflict & Security Cluster aim to combine theoretical re-conceptualizations of the issues under consideration with practical recommendations meant to increase the level of involvement of civil society in their resolution.

HATE SPEECH AND ITS PROLIFERATION IN THE NEW MEDIA

Aim and Objectives

The overall aim of this project is to contribute to a better understanding of the shifting patterns of hate speech in Europe, with a particular focus on tackling its proliferation in the new media and the subsequent radicalization of online space. The project hence addresses one of the most complex challenges to policy making, respectively the need to strike a balance between the effective monitoring of online hate speech and the threat posed to individual liberty by the encroachment on personal freedom in the name of providing effective security. The project will be developed in cooperation with the Citizenship and Ethics Cluster and will involve interested international partners as well.

CONFFLICT & SECURITY

Background

From the resurgence of anti-Semitism during the last decade to the propagation of anti-Roma discourse and various forms of xenophobia, the proliferation of discriminatory discourse shows on the one hand a continuity with historical patterns of prejudice in the perpetuation of a rhetoric of radical difference and exclusion, and on the other the emergence of new conceptualizations that are adapted to contemporary European and global developments. At the same time, the relative anonymity offered by virtual space, coupled with its ever-growing importance as a source of information and communication, particularly for youth, facilitates the dissemination of hate speech, as well as the establishment and maintenance of networks connecting radical groups across Europe. As a consequence, while previously limited and specific to national contexts, discriminatory discourse is now acquiring a distinctly European, if not global dimension. Minority groups are particularly vulnerable to this type of discourse and its effects, ranging from so-called 'quiet' discrimination to violent attacks on members of minority communities.

Action Setup and Outcomes

Addressing a pressing need to investigate the new challenges associated with the proliferation of hate speech, the project seeks to carry out innovative research on this topic, as well as to establish a network of scholars and practitioners working on this subject. Shifting the focus from an exclusive preoccupation with perpetrators in order to explore the role of government agencies and representatives of civil society in monitoring and reporting instances of hate speech, one of the potential practical outcomes of the project is the formulation of policy recommendations that would lead to a more responsible and responsive media, and, in general, to strategies that would identify other means to counteract the proliferation of hate speech that would go beyond the criminalization of its most excessive instances. As such, in line with ECMI's vision of bridging the gaps between theory and practice, the project aims both to theoretically explore the dynamics of contemporary hate speech in Europe and to devise strategies for its practical containment and mitigation.

Activities in 2014

Organizing a workshop on the topic of "Hate Speech – Historical Patterns, Contemporary Challenges"; creating a network of potential partners for developing a research project focusing on selected case studies; developing a research strategy for the project, to be delivered by the end of 2014.

Timeframe

2014-2015

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THE CONTEMPORARY RADICAL RIGHT – FROM MARGIN TO THE MAINSTREAM?

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the project is to examine the impact of the recent rise of the radical right in contemporary Europe on the life of minority groups. The project focuses on the one hand on the security dimension implicit in the escalating number of violent attacks on members of ethnic minorities, often carried out or instigated by members of extremist right-wing groups. On the other hand, addressing the increasing importance of the populist right in mainstream politics in a number of countries in Europe, the project will also trace the effects of the radicalization of the mainstream political agenda in some countries on the political participation of minorities to public life.

Background

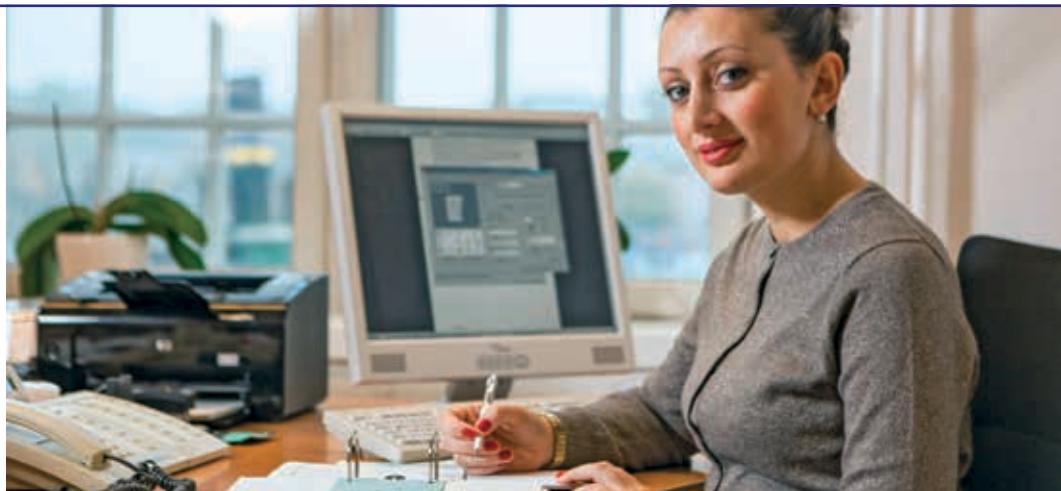
In recent years, Europe has witnessed a growth in the popularity of populist radical right parties promoting, directly or in veiled form, xenophobic or anti-immigration agendas. Extremist groups are also making an unfortunate comeback, visible in the increased incidence of violent attacks carried out against members of ethnic minorities. More alarmingly, the activities and discourse promoted by radical right groups sometimes hark back to the legacy of interwar fascism, as reflected either in the active adoption of fascist symbols and rhetoric by certain groups, or in revisionist approaches to the atrocities committed by fascist movements and regimes. As such, this project will analyze the resurgence of the contemporary radical right according to a threefold division, dealing first with the populist radical right parties that promote an exclusionary agenda from within the democratic political system, second with the extremist cellular groups and networks that are becoming increasingly difficult to censor due to their extensive use of the new media, and third with the cases of so-called 'lone-wolf' terrorists, often having links with the aforementioned groups.



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CONFFLICT & SECURITY



Action Setup and Outcomes

The increasing convergence of the Eastern and Western European radical right calls for an integrated approach to this phenomenon at a European level. However, any such approach would also need to be sensitive to the historical specificities of the countries under consideration, as these are often reflected in the discourse and activities of contemporary right-wing groups. Partly related to the project on the proliferation of hate speech in online media, the present research could thus make a theoretical contribution to the conceptualization of the new type of threats facing minority communities in contemporary Europe. Practically, since the increase in popularity of radical right groups is partly related to voter apathy and lack of participation to the democratic political process, launching a set of targeted awareness-raising campaigns, especially among young people, regarding the threat posed by the radical right or the value of diversity for a multicultural Europe, has the potential to counteract exclusionary, nationalist rhetoric. The involvement of civil society by promoting alternative forms of political mobilization emphasizing grassroots activism will also represent a valuable tool in combating these phenomena.

Activities in 2014

Identifying partners from academia, civil society, and governmental bodies for the purpose of organizing an international conference on this topic in 2015

ECMI Working Paper; the publication of a special issue of JEMIE as a result of the conference debates

Training courses for relevant non-governmental organizations; creation of a network of civil society and governmental representatives

Timeframe

2014-2016



RECONCILIATION AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES

Aim and Objectives

The overall aim of the project is to determine whether post-conflict reconciliation processes can be facilitated through policy-making. The primary question this project seeks to answer is why some post-conflict reconciliation processes work while others do not. One of the key objectives of the project is thus to identify some of the parameters, variables, and characteristics that lead respectively to success or failure.

Background

Countries experiencing post-conflict trauma are often driven by outside forces to seek reconciliation through internationally brokered transitional justice approaches and policies that are sometimes inappropriate with regards to the intercultural nature of the community. Often such policies are based on assumptions about closure, harmony and consensus, and, as a result, they may lead to protracted divisions rather than unity. At the same time that post-conflict communities experience a need to find shared visions for the future based on inter-dependence and positive relationships, they are also asked to deal both with issues of guilt and with socio-economic and political changes of insurmountable proportions. The 'logic of reconciliation' in externally imposed policies is therefore not always addressing the pressing needs of post-conflict societies. In this respect, the restorative justice approach, through its involvement of all stakeholders in the reconciliation process and its focus on the needs of both victims and offenders, as well as of the community at large, might represent a step forward from transitional justice practices that focused almost exclusively on punishment and compensation. The resulting intensified dialogue ensuing as a result of the restorative justice approach could thus be beneficial for building social capital in deeply divided, post-conflict societies.

Action Setup and Outcomes

Through a comparative study, the project will seek to assess the positive and negative impact of existing reconciliation processes in a number of case studies. The focus will be placed on the ongoing reconciliation processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Transnistria, and Northern Ireland, but also taking into account examples of historical conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction strategies. Following a first selection of case studies, the project will proceed with the development of indicators, considered in both their qualitative and quantitative dimensions, to assess the impacts of existing reconciliation processes. The identification of eventual gaps and potential examples of good practices resulting from such research should then be functional in extrapolating the useful lessons learned for the design and implementation of coherent reconciliation strategies.

Output

Toolkit for practitioners; policy recommendations; ECMI Working Papers

Timeframe 2014

SECURITY
&
CONFLICT

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CITIZENSHIP & ETHICS

The Citizenship and Ethics Cluster aims to foster minority research into the new 21st century discourses that require different approaches to understanding national minority narratives. While the security and justice discourses continue to be articulated discourses of cohesion, citizenship and environmental survival are forming. These are discourses that have yet to manifest themselves in the area of minority research.

The European citizenship discourse has formed over the last couple of decades and often takes its cues from the public debate on EU constitutionalism and the so-called 'democratic deficit'. Incorporating articulations of values-driven acts and actions, national minority narratives inform the European citizenship discourse. Forces of acts and actions are bigger and wider than those generated by top-down contributions to the integration of Europe. They are social and cultural trends aimed towards the formation of a European civil society, a vast, dynamically inter-connected and multi-layered European social space consisting of many thousands of non-governmental initiatives, networks, personalities, movements and organizations. In fact, national minorities are likely to accumulate more social and human capital than the average citizen due to the nature of national minority existence (Competency Analysis, 2007). Social capital and participation are thus the key words in the narratives that national minorities put forth in terms of citizenship.

Because most of Europe's national minorities live in border regions, the importance of the acts of citizenship that they perform takes on a European dimension, not only as a bilateral phenomenon but as a European integration phenomenon creating spaces of co-operation rather than confrontation. In 2014, the Cluster will continue exploring the current dynamics within minority communities that contribute or challenge the active citizenship values and practices, and will pay particular attention to education as a powerful mechanism for bringing about positive social change.



NATIONAL MINORITY CITIZENSHIP

Aim and objectives

The overall goal of *National Minority Citizenship* (MINCIT) is to inform the contemporary academic discourse on European citizenship with a model of national minority citizenship. The specific purpose is to research 'national minority regions', such as the Danish-German border region, which appear to exhibit new citizenship behaviour. These could include but may not be limited to the border regions of Germany-Netherlands, Germany-Belgium, Germany-Poland, the Czech Republic-Poland and Poland-Lithuania.

Background

There are between 80 and 100 million Europeans who claim to belong to a national minority. Most of them are legal citizens of a national state. But a large part also declares allegiance to a neighbouring state. Decades and at times centuries have gone by in which these national minorities have lived in a new home state due to border revisions, while retaining cultural and national ties to the former home state, now kin-state. As proponents of bicultural and binational identities, these national minorities have either overcome the 'daily plebiscite' syndrome of whether to show loyalty and allegiance to one nation, or they have become accustomed to a 'double daily plebiscite'. It is therefore questionable to speak of the national identity and national allegiance of these groups. As a minimum there must be two foci of allegiance. This poses potential challenges to the conventional concept of national citizenship as defined in terms of solidarity with a cultural group, loyalty to a national state, and allegiance to the symbols and traditions of that national state.

Taking as its starting point the national minority citizenship which is being forged in the Danish-German border region, where two kin-state minorities and a linguistic minority have created a new narrative of active citizenship, MINCIT will investigate whether the citizenship skills of these minorities are to be seen as a trend informing the European citizenship concept and thus European integration.

This is crucial at a time when, on the one hand, a European citizenship model is being defined, and, on the other hand, citizenship as 'Bürgerschaft' is in decline. Policy makers as well as academic scholars are keen to define a new model of citizenship for Europe and in particular the EU. At the same time, Europeans increasingly turn away from political processes. Social movements mobilize outside political processes in protest. Active and participatory citizenship remain theoretical constructs while disempowerment in the democratic process is taking hold, thus presenting the risk of the demise of a European tradition of democratic citizenship.

Activities in 2014

A comparative study based on the political sociological narratives of the 'acts of citizenship' of national minorities, compiled and analyzed through quantitative and qualitative data collection, will provide the basis for a theorization of a new model of citizenship not yet conceptualized in Europe.

Timeframe

2013-2014

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CITIZENSHIP & ETHICS

MAPPING OF NATIONAL MINORITIES' ORGANIZATIONS IN BORDER REGIONS

Aim and objectives

This project is a pilot project on mapping the minority and minority-related organizations in the European border regions. The project aims to collect empirical data on all institutions, organizations, projects, actors, as well as on the cooperation between them that is currently in place. The objectives of the project are to develop a new picture of the regions and their borders in order to better assess their situations from the perspective of minority-related issues after the collapse of communism. From a minority-related perspective, particular focus should be devoted to:

- the subsequent EU membership of some post-communist states
- their relations both within the EU and with the EU Eastern Neighbourhood countries
- their role, challenges and opportunities within the newly-established reality of the so-called "Europe of regions"

Better understanding of the situation in the border regions will significantly contribute to the promotion, maintenance and sustainment of democracy and democratic values in post-communist societies, as well as to human rights protection, dissemination of information with an emphasis on multiculturalism and diversity, and civil society institutions building.

As a result of this project, the implementation of a practical map of minority organizations would be elaborated that will later on be incorporated into the Minority Map and Timeline of Europe (MMTE). The output of the project will be a detailed list of organizations active in border

areas whose scope of activities includes a particular emphasis on cross-border cooperation.

Background

Peaceful coexistence, respect for territorial integrity and the inviolability of borders, as secured by the Helsinki Final Act, are some of the main achievements of the European continent. The collapse of communism significantly marked not only the democratization of most of the CEE states, but also entailed an in-depth integration at the level of the European continent. Cooperation among states, democracy, diversity and multiculturalism are seen as core European values. Considering the existence of minorities along European borders, the borders may per se be seen as a micro-cosmos for democracy, since they provide an option for intercultural cooperation among the states and their societies, thus encouraging interregional and international cooperation in various areas. With regard to minorities, the transformations taking place on the European continent also provided them with additional opportunities and challenges. Pan-European integration at the continental and regional level limits to a certain extent the role of the nation states in Europe through the primacy of international law over domestic one. This therefore increases the role of regions and implies the maintenance of a "Europe of regions". In a minority-related context, this means that they are provided with additional challenges and opportunities, since the cross-border cooperation opportunities encourage collaboration both with the kin-states and among the minorities in the cross-border regions. Furthermore, the combination of democratization



minorities in the cross-border regions. Furthermore, the combination of democratization with the 'softening' of national states provided minorities with a possibility to maintain their institutions and organizations in politics, the social sphere, and culture in a way that would meet minority needs. The power stems from the two fundamental definitions (of "Education for democratic citizenship" and "Human rights education") that by endorsing the document all 47 member states have accepted incorporate the same values that minority rights promote.

Methodology

The project has a practical result-oriented approach of mapping and categorizing minorities and minority-related frameworks and focuses on the assessment of the following categories:

- the minority-related operational framework provided by a given state (coordinating organs and institutions, advisory councils, programmes and possible legal opportunities for the support of minority cultures and revitalization / stimulation of minority languages)
- cooperation and coordination opportunities among minorities
- cooperation framework with a kin-state, if applicable
- diverse and often poly-centric self-organization of the minorities (cultural, political and educational representations, opportunities for certain categories of population)

The assessment will be achieved through analyses of the respective websites of the minority-related state bodies, kin-state agencies for cooperation with minorities, coordinating organs for minority cooperation, and minority organizations. Additionally, open sources and direct communication with the involved parties will be used.

Activities

The first two years will be devoted to the collection of information and categorization for the minority database, while the third year will be used for the maintenance of the database and publication of categorization-related and country / minority-related articles / working papers.

Output

A major online database of minorities and their organizations in European border regions will be maintained by developing a minority map. This will later be incorporated into the MMTE. A number of categorization-related and country / minority-related articles / working papers will be produced.

Timeframe

3 years, 2014-2016

CITIZENSHIP & ETHNICITY

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ACTIVE BORDER CITIZENS FOR EUROPE (ABC FOR EUROPE)

Aim and objectives

“ABC for Europe” aims at:

- opening an intercultural dialogue about EU identity and values but also about practical experiences of “being European” and future benefits from active civil participation
- involving in dialogue and action a range of EU citizens, CSOs and public institutions throughout Europe, to foster involvement in democratic processes and cooperation by establishing the ABC- network
- promoting a sense of ownership of the EU among its citizens and fostering regional development and cooperation by raising awareness about possible platforms for interaction
- filling in research gaps and equipping decision and policy makers with new instruments and knowledge
- studying the acts of citizenship of minority groups and organizations and evaluating the impact of EU citizenship on regional development
- identifying existing regional / community differences in the EU-citizenship profile and in the dynamics of citizenship practices

Background

Out of the 87 distinct “peoples of Europe” 33 represent the majority population in at least one sovereign state, while the remaining 54 constitute minorities. The ECMI views EU citizenship as a platform that enables human and minority rights protection, and respect for cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic diversity.

It equips individuals and communities with tools and powers to participate in the decision making processes and to become owners of their own future. Fostering the EU citizenship identity and active participation will increase tolerance, will promote new values and will enable people to practice their unity in diversity.

EU citizenship is challenged by a number of borders: political, legal, cultural, linguistic, religious, mental. Aiming at overcoming those, “ABC for Europe” will establish a platform for dialogue and citizenship action based on shared citizenship-values that overarch cultural, linguistic, religious, ethnic, national, minority / majority, social, educational, age, gender and any other differences. By focusing on the minorities’ acts of (EU) citizenship, the project addresses issues pertaining to minority rights protection, but also fundamental citizens’ rights such as freedom of assembly and freedom of speech (press).

The emblematic added value of “ABC for Europe” is that EU citizenship will be approached through the experience of minority communities and that at the same time it aims at creating a platform for dialogue and action open to all stakeholders who support and want to strengthen the voices and the role of ACTIVE EU CITIZENS.

Activities

“ABC for Europe” will hold a series of one-day conferences in border regions, involving a range of stakeholders: minority, cross-border, regional and other civil society organizations (CSO), as well as public officials, to discuss their past and current experience as active EU citizens and organizations, their values, priorities and goals, their involvement in democratic life as well as the prospects for future (civil, regional, and EU) cooperation and development. The events will aim at raising public awareness and fostering trans-national and multilevel intercultural dialogue, but also at establishing an EU ABC-partnership-network. The model of border minorities’ EU citizenship could become a basis for advancing the processes in mainstream societies.

Expected outcomes

Action

- Fostering regional and EU dialogue and interaction among minority groups, CSOs, public authorities and all interested parties through regional conferences
- Fostering the development of local networks to form an EU-level ABC network
- Raising public awareness about EU citizenship, the challenges before it and the minority groups’ contribution to it



Roma Festival in Tbilisi

Research

- Studying the acts of citizenship of minority groups and organizations
- Evaluation of the EC citizenship impact on regional development
- Clarification of the notion of EU citizenship and better understanding of its dimensions in practice, profiling the current ‘EU-citizenship model’ in border regions – values, goals, challenges
- Fostering interdisciplinary research with impact-in-action

Policy impact

- Collection of different practices of EU citizenship and different types of cooperation
- Elaborating a model for fostering development of EU citizenship (based on best practices)
- Impact on the public debate and increasing awareness
- Dissemination of results among various stakeholders from all over the EU

Timeframe

2014-2015



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CITIZENSHIP & ETHICS

EDUCATION AND NATIONAL MINORITIES

Aim and objectives

The overall goal of the programme Education and National Minorities is to look at the specific power of education as a fundamental human right and at the same time as a mechanism for minority empowerment, for strengthening democracy, for fostering social cohesion and respect for diversity. To obtain a better understanding of the current issues and to identify needs for further research and action, the programme will focus on exploring the different types of educational models and provisions available to minority communities with regard to their effects on community, social and regional development. With regard to the new impetus that The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE) provides for, particular attention will be placed on assessing its impact on minority communities.

Background

Encouraging citizens to actively engage in social and political life has become a growing political priority both at national and European levels. To stimulate this process, social and civic competences were introduced among the eight key competences for lifelong learning, identified by the Council of Europe and the European Parliament in 2006. The Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training (ET 2020) has introduced active citizenship among the main objectives for education systems throughout Europe, supporting the understanding of the role of education as a defence mechanism against the rise of violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance.

Education can make a major contribution to social cohesion and social justice and hence enable positive social change. It is an instrument that can foster democracy and the promotion and protection of human and minority rights by equipping not only young people but all members of society with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that empower the active citizens so that they can contribute to the development and well-being of the society in which they live.

The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE), adopted in 2010 and signed by the 47 member states, is the first official international document that focuses explicitly on education as a mechanism for fostering democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and for promoting active citizenship as a concept and practice. Although the Charter does not make particular reference to minority rights, by promoting diversity, protection of democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, it has the potential to become an important instrument available to communities for endorsing and exercising their minority rights and fostering dialogue, raising public awareness and enabling positive changes in minority-majority relations. The power stems from the two fundamental definitions (of "Education for democratic citizenship" and "Human rights education") that by endorsing the document all 47 member states have accepted to incorporate the same values that minority rights promote.



Activities

Focusing the research interest on education and national minorities, the programme will explore the current dynamics and challenges confronting minority communities in relation to EDC/HRE, as well as existing and future opportunities for empowering the active citizens with the knowledge and skills to exercise their human, minority, civil and democratic rights. It will address issues such as the need for developing particular educational programmes but will also analyze on a comparative basis the existing minority schooling practices with regard to the impact on community, regional and social development.

Research will be undertaken on the basis of the legal provisions and national/regional standards with regard to the education of national minorities. The findings will enable assessing the variety of models adopted throughout Europe, analyzing them as consequences and/or factors for specific social, economic, and political developments and their impact on communities in general.

A series of case studies will be employed to explore whether and to what extent the provisions of the EDC/HRE Charter have been adopted by minority communities and how their adoption affects their lives. The key question that the research will address is whether the EDC/HRE can become a tool for community empowerment and for fostering positive social change.

Expected outcomes

ECMI Working Papers

Timeframe

2014-2015

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CITIZENSHIP & ETHICS

CULTURE & DIVERSITY

- Is diversity a societal asset or a key challenge to integration and social cohesion?
- Which are the points of intersection between cultural groups that could enable efficient societal cohesion?
- What mechanisms are needed and which of the existing ones should be fostered or improved so that cultural diversity is managed in a win-win game format?
- Can linguistic divides be reconciled within multilingual societies through targeted implementation of language rights?



ECMI participates in festival of national cultures in Hrodna, Belarus

These are some of the key questions that the Culture and Diversity Cluster is exploring, through a number of research projects addressing one of the key issues of contemporary politics – the governance of cultural diversity.

Acknowledging the rise of cultural conflicts at the end of the 20th century, the cluster research programme departs from the assumption that politically relevant *cultural differences such as language, religion, traditions and ethnicity have a significant potential to fuel tensions if manipulated or abused*. Elaborating strategies and practices of diversity management hence needs to become a policy priority in the age of globalization. Ensuring societal stability and cohesion while respecting democracy, human and cultural rights is one of the key challenges of the 21st century.

To avoid terminological confusion with the numerous definitions of 'culture', and with respect to the goals of the research programme, the Cluster addresses the concept through the idea of the 'others', looking not so much at the reasons for 'us versus them' but rather than at the possibilities for 'us with them'.

DIVERSITY AND MEDIA

Although freedom of opinion and expression are recognized as fundamental rights both by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 19) and by the Charter of the Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Article 11), pluralism in society cannot be achieved unless stakeholders are actively engaged in using and protecting their rights provided by law. Therefore, effective inter-cultural communication, as an aspect of pluralism, is determined by the environment within which it develops, by the medium and by the agents of communication.

Aim and Objectives

Public media can contribute significantly to promoting and fostering the cohesion of diverse societies. But, certainly, media can also hamper all integration efforts by disseminating manipulative messages, by promoting fear and hostility and spreading negative stereotypes.

As a key tool of public communication, media is a crucial factor for enabling pluralism and inter-cultural dialogue, for increasing the levels of tolerance towards and understanding of diversity, and for encouraging inter-community cooperation. Therefore, by examining the structural and cognitive projection of diversity in media, the research aims at identifying and reflecting upon successful practices of and challenges to social cohesion within plural cultural societies.

The research aims at addressing intercultural dialogue as projected through media. With the assumption that a dialogue needs two active parties, the project has two focal points:

- the official (majority) public media and
- the minority media outlets



CULTURE & DIVERSITY

With regard to the mainstream public media, targeting usually the wider audience, it is important to assess how diversity issues are presented, if at all, how the image of 'the other' is constructed, whether media promote understanding and pluralism or stereotypes. With regard to minority outlets, the research will aim at establishing what is their share in the national media landscape, which communities are better represented and why, what are the main issues covered, what is the perspective on majority-minority relations, and are there stereotypes transmitted. And, certainly, since the public media is regulated by the state, understanding the legislative and the social and political contexts is crucial for the objective analysis of developments within particular countries and within the EU.

Starting from the idea that what defines the public (mass) media as such is the public, the research will focus on communication channels such as TV, radio, newspapers and their online versions. Social and new interactive media would not be taken into account at this initial stage of the research since communication there quite often bypasses legal provisions and public norms, it is regulated via other mechanisms (not necessarily state authorities) and circulates within particular networks, even when expanding beyond the initial one. In contrast, public media needs to operate within a pre-set legal and political environment and it aims at reaching out a mass audience based on imagined profiles but not on actual networks. Therefore comparing the behaviour of majority and minority 'official' media would provide a better understanding of the level and quality of the intercultural dialogue as a public policy and societal practice, while the focus on the social networks and interactive media could bring insights into the aspects of personalization of the formal processes.

Activities

- The project will start with a series of case studies, each looking at the mainstream and minority media, how they project the issues of diversity and what is their role in fostering or impeding intercultural dialogue within a particular society. For gathering the data, a non-resident internship scheme is envisaged.
- Further, the project will report and analyze identified challenges to social cohesion or points of intersection, on the basis of which policy recommendations will be developed.
- The project will also initiate the development of a database of minority media in Europe.
- As an output of the research, a series of working papers will be developed.

Timeframe

2014-2015

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MINORITIES IN CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

As a soft power mechanism, cultural diplomacy can facilitate the exchange of ideas and values, raise awareness, promote cooperation and enhance understanding of 'other' cultures, practices and traditions. Developing at the level of people-to-people relations, cultural diplomacy has become an important part of the international politics of states aiming to achieve higher levels of trust within the targeted society, of influence and of cooperation opportunities.

Governments exercise cultural diplomacy at two levels. The 'horizontal' aspect addresses the governments of the other countries, while the 'vertical' level involves a two-way cultural relation between government and societal groups.

Focusing on this vertical aspect, the research aims to explore what is the role of minorities in cultural diplomacy – are they active agents in the vertical communication or passive 'objects' of top-down cultural policies?

By exploring the soft power strategies and projecting those over the current activities of minorities in various countries, the research would aim at assessing to what extent cultural diplomacy could become a mechanism for raising awareness of minority issues and promoting minority rights in Aim and Objectives.

Aim and Objectives

The research project will address the following key questions:

- What is the place of minorities in the *soft power mechanisms* of international politics – can they support the establishment and improvement of international relations or are they mostly a 'hot' issue on the international agenda?
- Do governments tend to replace the real political participation of minorities with their 'empowerment' as agents of intra-state cultural diplomacy?

- Are mechanisms of cultural diplomacy used by minorities to promote themselves, to raise awareness, and to achieve collective goals?
- Can cultural diplomacy and its instruments become mechanisms for promoting and advancing minority rights?

Outputs

ECMI Working Papers

Timeframe

2014-2015

CULTURE & DIVERSITY

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CROSS CLUSTER

NATIONAL MINORITY INDICATORS

Aim and Objectives

This project will develop indicators to assess the levels of implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) in the state parties to these instruments. The main objective is to provide the FCNM Advisory Committee and the ECRML Committee of Experts, as well as state parties and minority groups, with two practical toolkits of minority indicators, on an article by article basis. With the overall goal of improving the implementation of the FCNM and ECRML, the outputs of the project will provide a detailed description of indicators offering a multi-dimensional and multi-domain approach to assessing the performance of states. The indicators will aim at revealing to what extent the instruments' legal provisions are translated into practical implementation.

Background

Indicators for measuring the performance of international human rights treaties are increasingly a requirement in the assessment of the impact of legal standards. In the case of national minority standards, the Council of Europe's Secretariat to the FCNM began its work on indicators in 2008. A preliminary study to theorize and conceptualize political indicators describing the performance of the FCNM was produced in the areas of legal and political adaptation of provisions in member states party to the instrument.

There are two logical follow-ups:

- to pilot performance indicators to assess the direct impact of the FCNM's minority standards
- to initiate a parallel process for the other Council of Europe legally binding instrument of special relevance to national minorities - the ECRML

To respond to this need, ECMI has designed a project to develop detailed indicators for both instruments. In 2012 ECMI produced a preliminary study on the conceptualization of indicators to measure the impact of the ECRML.

Methodology

The project will develop two sets of common indicators and indices (for the FCNM and ECRML), which are:

- Multi-dimensional and compounded
- Multi-domain and inter-disciplinary
- Quantifiable and qualitative
- Applicable cross-country

The indicators will be developed by an inter-disciplinary network of experts. Professional evaluators will aid with the formulation of methodologies and methods. The work will be overseen by two steering groups (for the FCNM and ECRML).

Outputs

- Two handbooks with indicators for each article of the FCNM and ECRML
- Two academic publications (on FCNM and ECRML respectively)

Timeframe

2013-2016

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ECMI ROMA EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

In light of the platform for development, aiming to reduce poverty and social exclusion in the EU, the integration of the largest ethnic minority in Europe dispersed in all member states – the Roma – appears as one of the most significant societal challenges. Although as EU citizens the majority of the estimated 10-12 million Roma in Europe can exercise their political and civil rights, *de facto* they constitute a number of disadvantaged communities in terms of level of exclusion, quality of life and prospects for the future. For a number of years now, efforts to advance Roma inclusion in the mainstream European societies have been made at national, European and international level.

With its Cross-Cluster research programme, ECMI aims not only at addressing the complexity of Roma inclusion, but also at promoting the need for a general policy shift with focus on 'Roma empowerment'. The programme is an outcome of more than 10 years of active research and project work carried out by ECMI headquarters, regional and country offices. The particular culture-sensitive approach to Roma rights developed during that period has enabled ECMI to bring about new perspectives to the issues of Roma education, empowerment, discrimination, etc. A series of publication and events in 2014 will launch the new programme framework.

ASSESSING THE MECHANISMS FOR ROMA REPRESENTATION

Aims and objectives

The research project will analyze the effectiveness of the mechanisms for the political representation of the Roma minorities in selected European countries. With the help of the local knowledge and expertise of partner organizations in these countries, the project will engage in an assessment of the opportunities for political representation of this minority, by analyzing both the legal / institutional arrangements and their implementation and impact in practice.

Background

Political representation of the Roma minority is generally acknowledged as one of the essential paths toward the empowerment and integration of this ethnic group in the wider society. After the fall of communism, countries in Central and Eastern Europe have adopted a wide range of legal and institutional measures aiming to facilitate the representation and participation of the Roma in public life. In spite of these developments, to date academic research concerning the appropriateness, implementation, and efficiency of these measures is lacking, both on a country-by-country basis and comparatively between countries.

CROSS CLUSTER



Thematic Areas of Research

The analysis of the legal and institutional arrangements will include (but will not be restricted to) an overview of electoral legislation, of special legislation for the Roma minority (where available), relevant policy documents, consultative bodies, elected bodies, ethnic parties, mainstream parties, appointed representatives at both local and national level, and any other relevant legislative or institutional developments. In addition to this mapping exercise, the assessment of the quality of the political representation of this minority will include an evaluation of the functioning and impact of these arrangements, based on existing data and on a series of additional interviews with Roma stakeholders.

Activities 2014

The research will be conducted in four stages, as follows: a preparatory workshop bringing together the project partners, with the purpose of drawing up a timeframe, agreeing on a methodology, outlining a budget, and identifying funding sources for the project (2014); mapping the institutional and legislative arrangements for the political representation of the Roma minority in the selected countries (2014); a critical assessment of the effectiveness of the arrangements for political representation of the Roma in these states, using existing quantitative and qualitative data, as well as additional interviews with political stakeholders (2015); comparative analysis of the data collected (2015)

Expected outcomes:

Research study, Policy recommendations



EU TOOLKIT FOR ROMA INTEGRATION POLICY (EU TRIP)

Aims and Objectives

Drawing on the ECMI policy evaluation report produced for the European Commission in 2006, the project will assess the national country strategies on Roma inclusion, submitted to the European Commission by the 27 EU member states in 2012, aiming at:

- Identifying common EU Roma integration challenges and respective good practices
- Identifying the possibilities for approaching Roma integration as a synchronized EU policy with common mechanisms for Roma integration
- Developing a system of integration indicators and a standardized EU Instrument for monitoring and evaluating integration mechanisms

Background

The EU Council conclusions of May and June 2011 on Roma integration, following the proposal from the European Commission for an EU Framework for national Roma integration strategies, instructed all member states to present to the European Commission a strategy for Roma inclusion or alternatively to present sets of policy measures within existing social inclusion policies for improving the situation of Roma people. The EU Framework aims to bring about a change in the approach to Roma inclusion from scattered, project-based and unrelated interventions to a comprehensive approach embracing four key areas through an integrated and coordinated effort.

The European Commission's own review and assessment of the national strategies focus on specific issues addressing mainly the structural requirements specified in the EU Framework, including the involvement of all important national stakeholders, the creation of a robust monitoring system, the appointment of a national contact point, ensuring the protection of fundamental rights and monitoring. Strategies are reviewed as policy documents (i.e. lacking an evaluation of the content and of the relevance of measures based upon the needs-goals analysis). Likewise, independent assessments undertaken by independent institutions (OSI, ERPC, EU FRA) either focus on a limited number of member states or lack a clear guide for monitoring and evaluating integration mechanisms, as well as indicators for monitoring implementation mechanisms.

Activities

In-depth research on the National Roma Integration Strategies submitted to the European Commission in 2012 under the EU's new policy to strengthen the member states' policy and programming on Roma integration.

Timeframe

2014

CROSS CLUSTER

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ENVIRONMENT AND MINORITIES PROGRAMME

Elaborating effective policy responses to environmental threats requires not only a comprehensive and holistic approach and understanding of the complexity of the issues, but also the active involvement of all stakeholders, in particular the most directly affected.

Through the development of this programme ECMI aims at supporting not only the ongoing efforts of the international academic community to explore the causal chain between environmental degradation / climate change and conflict, but also to contribute to the embedding of the human aspect into environmental studies and of the human rights aspect into developmental policies. The particular attention given to minority rights and issues will foster an understanding of the environmentally induced societal challenges faced by the most vulnerable groups (such as indigenous peoples, internally displaced persons, particular minority communities (eco-migrants), Roma) and will explore the mechanisms for overcoming these. ECMI is convinced that the programme will have a direct positive impact for all target groups and specifically on the empowerment of indigenous peoples and other cultural communities.

VULNERABILITY AND POLICY-MAKING: LINKING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION STRATEGIES (VULPOL)

Background

Climate change, often referred to as a “fundamental threat to sustainable development”, is negatively affecting approximately 2.6 billion of the world’s poorest people. They face severe difficulties in protecting themselves against increasingly frequent disasters or longer term climate trends. VulPol focuses on the most vulnerable groups exposed to climate change – indigenous peoples (IPs). IPs constitute 6% of the world’s population and are closely intertwined with nature in their livelihoods and cultural practices. They face the challenge of developing specific adaptation mechanisms in order to protect their social and cultural rights.

Through interdisciplinary research on the cases of the Inuit and Sami indigenous peoples, VulPol will bring in the human dimension to climate change studies and introduce human rights, in general, and social / cultural rights in particular, to environmental and development studies on IPs. Exploring the effects of climate change on IPs, their survival strategies, and their involvement in mitigating climate change, policies will provide new scientific and sociological insights contributing to policy making on mitigation and adaptation.



Aims

VulPol aims to address the intersections between climate change and the human and cultural rights of the Sami and Inuit indigenous peoples from an international, as well as interdisciplinary perspective. Developing and disseminating an innovative scientific approach to climate within the SSH community, VulPol will raise awareness among policy and decision makers about the problem and identify possible mechanisms geared at developing a potential solution. VulPol will empower IP groups to actively participate in climate change mitigation strategies and will develop policy recommendations based on identified good practices.

Timeframe

2013-2017

Expected outcomes

VulPol will result in developing a network of SSH researchers with enhanced knowledge of the impacts of climate change on human rights, particularly concerning social and cultural rights. Documenting the impact of climate change on the IPs of Northern Europe, the project will link already existing research on environmental issues and human rights to a broader spectrum of social and cultural rights.

Along with the development of an innovative scientific approach, VulPol will produce policy recommendations for national and local governments, as well as other stakeholders.

Partner Institutions

- KlimaCampus, University of Hamburg, Germany
- Northern Institute for Environmental and Minority Law, Arctic Center of University of Lapland, Finland
- Lulea University of Technology, Sweden
- Lex Justi sprl, Brussels, Belgium
- Norwegian Institute for International Affairs, Norway

CROSS CLUSTER



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ACTION





Kurdish family, Tblisi

ECMI CAUCASUS

In 2014 ECMI Caucasus will expand its scope to other countries of the region and will focus on the inclusion of minority issues in various aspects of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) cooperation. With upcoming prospects of the EU signing Association Agreements with Georgia and Azerbaijan in the South Caucasus and with other countries of the Eastern Partnership – Ukraine and Moldova – the inclusion of minority issues and minority organizations into different platforms will be a priority. Although Armenia and Belarus are not expected to join such agreements, it will be equally important to include them into policies and practices of the EaP in order to strengthen their domestic mechanisms for minority protection and governance.

Promotion of democratic values and European standards for the implementation of human and minority rights through institutional cooperation and minority institutions among individual countries in the South Caucasus but also across the EaP region, based on their own best practices, will enhance mutual learning and encourage big and small minorities to take ownership of existing institutions and improve the effective dialogue with relevant state structures.

One of the examples of such dialogue is related to local self-governance, where minority representation and participation in the decision-making process is essential for inclusion and empowerment, for the benefit of both minority communities and society at large.

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CAUCASUS

GEORGIA: CONSOLIDATING MINORITY GOVERNANCE

In preparation for ECMI's exit strategy from the Georgia programmes, the following programmes will be developed and implemented in 2014: the launch of a sustainability programme for CSOs, as well as a capacity building programme for ensuring the functioning of the Council of National Minorities as a consultative body for state agencies and the Parliament.

DESIGNING A NEW STATE STRATEGY FOR MINORITY INTEGRATION

With the expiry of the first ever Georgian strategy on minority integration – the "National Concept on Tolerance and Civic Integration" – in early 2014, the Georgian government has initiated preparations for a new strategy, based on the evaluation of the previous one, with the assistance of ECMI Caucasus. Following the recommendations of ECMI Caucasus, the new strategic priorities and respective Action Plan will also include a gender perspective, as well as a focus on integrating the Roma population.

The gender perspective will be aligned with the Georgia Gender Equality National Action Plan adopted by the Georgian Parliament at the end of 2013. As soon as the strategy and action plan have been approved by the Parliament, ECMI Caucasus will assist the State Ministry for Reintegration, responsible for minority integration, in the implementation of the strategy.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE HUMAN AND MINORITY RIGHTS ACTION PLAN

The EU Special Representative to Georgia, Thomas Hammarberg, in his capacity as independent expert, conducted in 2013 a series of consultations with CSOs on how to effectively implement human rights. The consultations will result in the preparation of an action plan on human rights for the Georgian government. ECMI Caucasus has contributed to the process and will assist the government in the implementation of the action plan by mainstreaming minority issues into the activities of various state bodies relevant for minorities.

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Roma festival, Tbilisi

ASSISTANCE TO THE GEORGIAN OMBUDSMAN OFFICE

The Public Defender of Georgia has established six local offices in the regions of Georgia, including two in the densely minority-populated Samtskhe-Javakheti (with a significant Armenian minority) and Kvemo Kartli (with a significant Azeri minority). The project aims at consolidating the competencies of the Georgian Ombudsman and upgrading the capacities of regional offices to monitor and report on human and minority rights and to resolve cases at the local level.

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INTEGRATION OF DEPORTED MESKHETIAN RETURNNEES

This EU EIDHR-funded programme, implemented together with Action Against Hunger Caucasus, will enter its final phase in facilitating community cohesion in three areas of Meskhetian settlement – Western Georgia (Imereti), Central Georgia (Gori region) and Southern Georgia (Akhaltikhe-Abastumani). The main goal of the project is to support the Meskhetians with community initiatives, encouraging their self-reliance.

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CAUCASUS

REGIONAL PROGRAMME SOUTH CAUCASUS

ARMENIA: EMPOWERING STAKEHOLDERS

The Armenia programme seeks to support the protection and integration of national minorities and to enhance diversity management policies in Armenia. The programme will assist in building the competences of the Ombudsman to tackle minority issues, and will facilitate the state-minority dialogue and develop capacities among minority NGOs and community-based organizations to improve democratic governance.

The Armenia programme has as its major objective establishing national and religious minority civil society networks based on the “Georgian model” of minority organizations being affiliated with the Ombudsman’s office. The programme will assist in building the institutional capacity of the Armenian Ombudsman’s office, with a view to foster best practices in minority-state relations and enhance cultural diversity.

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SOUTH CAUCASUS OMBUDSPERSON INSTITUTIONS NETWORK

The work of Ombudsperson institutions in the South Caucasus is specific in terms of approaches to monitoring and reporting tasks, to hearings on anti-discrimination, to promotion of tolerance and addressing of minority issues. An early action with the Ombudsperson offices to create a network for building capacity in the areas relevant to minority protection, including institutionalization of monitoring and hearings, will be at the core of the cooperation of regional Ombudspersons.

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SOUTH CAUCASUS MINORITY COUNCILS NETWORK

The Georgian Council of National Minorities will serve as a model and an anchor for the development of an independent and effective Council of National Minorities in other countries in the South Caucasus. The capacity building programme will target the establishment and the further development of the agenda of all the three Councils (in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan) as minority consultative bodies providing advisory services to the state authorities. The optimal placement of the councils would be under the auspices of the respective Ombudsman offices, allowing for close cooperation between different independent structures.

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CROSS REGIONAL PROGRAMMES EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP MINORITY NETWORK

In the second year of the implementation of the project led by Minority Rights Group Europe, the programme operates in six countries of the EaP and has established a primary network of minority organizations. It will focus on trainings – both live and online – to improve cooperation between minority organizations and local authorities. In addition, a special training programme will be designed for Roma organizations across the EaP to promote better involvement and inclusion of the Roma into the work of local EaP National Platforms of civil society organizations and thematic working groups. The trainings will be delivered in collaboration with primary project partners in each country.

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FOSTERING DEMOCRACY & STABILITY IN THE EAP

This programme will aim at ensuring the sustainability of the results achieved in building minority governance in Georgia through adaptation and transfer of the GEORGIA MODEL to Armenia at the level of civil society organizations (mainly those representing minorities), public institutions and government agencies. In order to propagate the model, IMPACT reports will be prepared and published, presenting the tested models and best practices for fostering minority rights and democracy.

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CAUCASUS TRAINING CENTRE (CTC) IN TBILISI

In 2014, the launch of the Caucasus Training Centre (CTC) in Tbilisi will be directed towards the delivery of seminars and trainings in minority governance for CSOs and public officials from Armenia and Azerbaijan, promoting policy change on minority-related issues and building capacities of governmental bodies.

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CAUCASUS

ECMI KOSOVO

The year 2014 is a key year for Kosovo, as it should witness the full implementation of the EU-sponsored agreement reached by Belgrade and Pristina on 19 April 2013 in order to normalize their relations. Local elections in November and December 2013 were the first ones to be held on the entire territory of Kosovo, leading to the establishment of new Serb-majority municipalities under Kosovo's jurisdiction.

In light of these developments, ECMI Kosovo has identified five strategic objectives for 2013:

- Consolidate Presence in Northern Kosovo: ECMI Kosovo will support the operationalization of newly-established municipalities, with a focus on local economic development to trigger a sustainable and inclusive growth paving the way to stabilized inter-ethnic relations.
- Support Government Minority Policy: ECMI Kosovo will continue to work with the most important government agencies responsible for minority policy, including the Consultative Council for Communities in the Office of the President and the Office for Community Affairs in the Office of the Prime Minister.
- Raise Awareness on Domestic Violence in Kosovo: ECMI Kosovo will support the socio-economic integration of women and help them access the judicial system in order to effectively empower them to fight gender-based violence.
- Promote Education and Language Rights: Education and language rights are central concerns to minority communities in Kosovo, and their effective implementation remains one of the main challenges faced by the Kosovo Government. Building on its previous work in these fields, ECMI Kosovo will support Kosovo institutions in transforming formally adopted rights into a reality on the ground.
- Build Capacities of Minority Civil Society: Minority civil society has an important role to play, through dialogue and advocacy, as the link between local communities and institutions. Unfortunately, minority civil society continues to be underdeveloped, with limited capacities and weak relations with decision-making authorities. In order to address this issue, ECMI Kosovo will implement a comprehensive programme of capacity building support to minority civil society.



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TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH FOR ALL NEWLY-ESTABLISHED MUNICIPALITIES IN KOSOVO (TSIGAN)

Aim and objectives

The goal of the TSIGaN project extension is to promote strong, effective, accountable and transparent local self-government for Kosovo Serbs, triggering sustainable and inclusive growth as a means to improve inter-ethnic relations and to contribute to a stable, democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo as envisaged in the Ahtisaari plan.

The project seeks to increase the capacities of local governments to fully and effectively implement their competencies attributed by the Ahtisaari plan, by the Constitution of Kosovo and by the Law on Local Self-Government, in order to establish growth-oriented policies at municipal level for the benefit of the local communities.

The project also seeks to encourage active participation and engagement of all local communities and vulnerable and marginalized groups (VMGs) in the decision-making process, in social life, and in local economic development.

Background

The decentralization process has insofar re-engaged the Serb community within Kosovo institutions, but important socio-economic issues persist. Hence the project aims to address the pressing need for better socio-economic perspectives, more job creation, the empowerment of vulnerable and marginalized groups, and improved social cohesion. It also seeks to reach northern Kosovo, where the 19 April agreement between Pristina and Belgrade and the upcoming local elections open a new era.

Hence, the TSIGaN project extension will promote strong, effective, accountable and transparent local self-government in Serb-majority municipalities, triggering

sustainable and inclusive growth as a means to strengthen reconciliation and to contribute to a stable, democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo as envisaged in the Ahtisaari plan. The project will cover the Serb-majority municipalities of Gračanica / Gračanicë, Klokoč / Kllokot, Leposavić / Leposaviq, Mitrovica / Mitrovicë North, Novo Brdo / Novobërdë, Parteš / Partesh and Ranilug / Ranillug, Štrpce / Shtërpçë, Zubin Potok, and Zvečan / Zveqan.

Activities in 2014

- Training for newly-elected Municipal Assembly members and newly-appointed municipal officials on their roles and responsibilities, as well as on how to develop and implement business-conducive policies at local level.
- Reinforcing the economic attractiveness of territories and promoting local tourism and local agriculture.
- Providing legal support to the harmonization of local regulatory framework.
- Running awareness-raising focus groups with vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- Conducting a needs assessment of vulnerable and marginalized groups' professional and entrepreneurial skills.
- Developing and administering a capacity-building programme for grassroots civil society organizations on participation in and monitoring of public life.

Funding

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Timeframe

2014-2016

KOSOVO

EMPOWERING MINORITY COMMUNITIES IN KOSOVO AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Aim and objectives

This project will aim to reduce the vulnerability of minority women to domestic violence and early marriages, through increased socio-economic opportunities, better access to treatment services for gender-based violence (GBV), and by addressing discriminatory attitudes within minority communities. The project will target minority communities in three municipalities in southern Kosovo with sizable Serb, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities (Ferizaj / Uroševac; Gračanica / Graçanicë; Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje) and in the predominantly Serb-inhabited municipalities of northern Kosovo.

Background

Women belonging to minority groups in Kosovo – particularly Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian and Serb minorities – face a de facto double discrimination, as women and as members of minorities. In this context of heightened vulnerability, statistics show the high prevalence of (domestic) violence affecting these communities.

Minority women face three main problems, which particularly contribute to their vulnerability to gender-based violence. First, minority survivors of gender-based violence face limited access to services, due to linguistic, geographical, social and political obstacles. Second, minority women in Kosovo are subject to extreme socioeconomic vulnerability, with high unemployment rates, low levels of education and high illiteracy rates. Third, minority communities, both men and women, often lack awareness on women's rights, gender equality and mechanisms against GBV, and as a result often subscribe to discriminatory gender norms.

To address the above mentioned three problems that are at the core of causing the vulnerability of minority women to gender-based violence, ECMI Kosovo will implement three intervention strategies, described below, in the targeted municipalities, in order to achieve positive change for minority women in these areas.

The project will be implemented in partnership with NGO Aktiv, with the Network of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Women's Organizations of Kosovo (NRAEWOK), and with the Centre for Legal Aid and Regional Development Kosovo (CLARD).

Activities in 2014

- Train, engage and support eight local minority female activists as community-based paralegals. These paralegals will provide survivors of gender-based violence with advice and assistance in accessing Kosovo's available prevention and treatment services;
- Make available in each of the four targeted locations skills training and professional coaching for minority women;
- Organize continuous awareness raising activities aimed at teachers, students and male leaders, including the organization of discussion workshops with minority men, and the development and implementation of a school-based teaching programme on women's rights.

Funding

UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women

Timeframe

2014-2015



EMPOWERING CIVIL SOCIETY TO PARTICIPATE EFFECTIVELY IN POLICY AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES THROUGH DIALOGUE WITH GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

Aim and Objectives

The overall aim of the project is to contribute to creating the necessary conditions for a constructive, systematic and effective dialogue and partnership between minority civil society and government institutions at the local and central levels in Kosovo.

Background

In Kosovo, various legal provisions and institutional mechanisms are in place to allow for public participation in policy and decision-making at the local and central levels. However, despite some 'success stories' of minority civil society engagement in particular policy areas, there is no regular, systematic and effective dialogue between minority civil society organizations (CSOs) and institutions. Several challenges thus remain to ensure that participation mechanisms become meaningful, and minority civil society can effectively fulfil its role as a key actor in the development and strengthening of a pluralistic, participatory and accountable democracy.

Activities in 2014

The following activities will be conducted by ECMI Kosovo and its partner organizations in 2014, the second year of the project:

- Continue the research on mapping minority CSOs in Kosovo and compile the findings in a database;
- Organize workshops at local level and dialogue sessions between minority CSOs and Kosovo Assembly members to follow up on issues raised during the first year of

the project and evaluate the cooperation between civil society and government institutions;

- Develop and broadcast promotional videos on minority issues and minority civil society – government dialogue focusing on success stories related to advocacy activities conducted during the first year of the project;
- Provide a comprehensive advocacy support programme to the six selected CSOs and CSO coalitions to implement their one-year Advocacy Plans;
- Support the two established minority networks to advocate with one voice for their needs and interests;
- Organize a conference to present the report on minority civil society – government dialogue.

The project is implemented by ECMI Kosovo in partnership with Communication for Social Development (CSD) and the Network of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Women's Organizations of Kosovo (NRAEWOK).

Funding

European Union Office in Kosovo

Timeframe

2013-2014



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KOSOVO

ENHANCING ACCESS TO AND RETENTION IN EDUCATION FOR VULNERABLE AND DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

Aim and objectives

The project aims to enhance the access to education and retention in education for vulnerable and disadvantaged children in six municipalities through strengthening the capacities of municipal officials and teams for prevention of and response to school drop-outs and non-registration at school and municipal levels, in order to reduce the number of out-of-school children.

Background

The Government of Kosovo committed to developing and implementing inclusive policies, pursuing the establishment of an inclusive education system with equal opportunities and quality education for all children in the Republic of Kosovo. However, despite the strong legal basis, children from vulnerable and marginalized groups – especially Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children, children with disabilities and repatriated children – continue to face significant challenges in their education, with the issue of drop-outs and out-of-school children being particularly alarming. Presently, both the relevant municipal government institutions and the drop-out prevention and response teams lack adequate capacities and knowledge to fully implement the legislative and policy framework aimed to reduce the numbers of out-of-school children and school drop-outs. Therefore, ECMI Kosovo will support municipal officials and the drop-out prevention and response teams in six target municipalities in addressing the issue of out-of-school children in a systematic and coordinated manner and thus ensuring the right to education for all children in Kosovo.



Activities in 2014

- Support the municipalities with implementation of municipal action plans aiming at increasing access to and retention in education.
- Support the development of mechanisms for identification and recording of out-of-school children.
- Support the teams for prevention of and response to school drop-outs and non-registration at school and municipal levels recording out-of-school children and case management, with a view of integrating out-of-school children and preventing drop-outs of at-risk students.
- Provide support for the establishment and effective functioning of municipal mechanisms for monitoring of out-of-school children.
- Document best practices in reducing the number of out-of-school children and advocate for their institutionalization.

Funding

UNICEF

Timeframe

2013-2014



INTEGRATION THROUGH OFFICIAL LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Aim and objectives

The project aims to increase and sustain the proficiency of municipal officials working in mixed municipalities to communicate in both official languages. This should lead to more accessibility of municipal services to communities, a more attractive working environment for non-majority individuals considering a career as a municipal official and more efficiency within municipal administrations.

Background

Albanian and Serbian are the two official languages of Kosovo. They have equal status and equal rights as to their use in Kosovo institutions. The Law on the Use of Languages provides that official languages are used on an equal basis by and within municipal administrations. Municipal officials and municipal administration are responsible for ensuring that every person in Kosovo can communicate with municipal authorities and receive available services and public documents in the official languages of Kosovo. Yet, only a limited number of municipal officials interacting with the public currently speak a second official language. Kosovo legislation also contains provisions for the proportionate representation of communities within the civil service, at Prishtinë / Priština and municipal level. However, non-majority communities still find themselves under-represented in mixed municipal administrations. The lack of knowledge of both official languages, together with under-representation, creates a number of problems, especially in the mixed municipalities across Kosovo. It inhibits

requests for and the provision of public services to some communities, making the integration of Kosovo society harder. It also hampers co-operation and integration within the workplace. ECMI Kosovo will thus conduct Albanian and Serbian language courses for municipal officials in at least ten municipalities, aimed at enhancing their ability to communicate and provide municipal services to communities in both official languages.

Activities in 2014

Organize and conduct training in Albanian and Serbian languages

Funding

OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

Timeframe

2013-2014



KOSOVO



SUPPORTING CIVIL SOCIETY MEMBERS OF THE CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITIES (CCC)

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the project is to improve the effective protection and promotion of the rights and interests of all communities in Kosovo at the central level.

Background

Kosovo's institutional framework recognizes the important role of civil society organizations (CSOs), particularly in relation to minority communities. The creation of the CCC within the Office of the President of Kosovo in 2008 was a positive step. Over the past years, the CCC has been significantly strengthened. However, some challenges remain to make it an effective and influential institution, including some inconsistencies in the documents governing its functioning and lack of clarity about the relation between CCC and local minority CSOs; the difficulties of the CCC in making its voice heard to government institutions and the low capacities of its civil society members; and the weak link between the latter and the local communities whose interests they represent.

Activities in 2014

The following activities will be conducted by ECMI Kosovo in 2014, the second year of the project: Amending the CCC's Statute;

- Updating the "Handbook for CCC Members: Legal Documents and Training Manuals";
- Organizing a second series of outreach workshops to increase the level of cooperation between the local and central level;
- Supporting CCC civil society members and local minority community NGOs in cooperating together to organize advocacy campaigns to achieve concrete change in government policy;
- Providing technical support in the utilization of communication tools in order to reach out to communities, including a website, leaflets, a newsletter, social media, and a promotional film.

Funding

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Timeframe

2013-2014 (24 months)

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PROMOTION OF A TRANSPARENT MEDIA ENVIRONMENT IN NORTHERN KOSOVO

Aim and Objectives

The project seeks to increase the media transparency and independency in northern Kosovo by providing the general public with quality daily radio information related to socio-economic and political issues; and by increasing the capacities of local actors to deal with the media and to provide public information. First, the projects will increase the awareness of citizens of northern Kosovo on socio-economic (Social Welfare, Education, Healthcare, Economic Development and Employment) and political issues via quality radio programmes as a safe space for dialogue. Second, it will strengthen local public authorities' and local civil society organizations' professional ability to provide independent information in an efficient way.

Background

Freedom of the press is all relative in northern Kosovo. Some explanatory reasons are related to the situation of the press in Kosovo as a whole, such as pressure against journalists, low quality of journalism training, financial burdens, and poor implementation of the regulatory framework. However, this situation is even more worrying in northern Kosovo, where the political situation makes these factors particularly acute. Although the Serb community in northern Kosovo can access online information as well as Serbian press in their own language, the quality of local information is uneven, leading Serbian-speaking residents from Leposavić / Leposaviq, Mitrovica / Mitrovicë North, Zubin Potok, and Zvečan / Zveqan to be misinformed and thus often to perceive socio-economic and political issues from a single point of view.

Activities in 2014

In order to provide the audience with relevant and quality information, Radio Kontakt Plus, the implementing partner of the project, will be engaged in production and broadcast of 183 daily 30-minutes news programmes covering local current events, which will be presented by professional journalists.

Furthermore, activities for the following year include conduction of 36 weekly 30-minutes interviews on different current social, political and economic topics, with relevant guests answering questions raised by the audience and by journalists.

The activities implemented by Radio Kontakt Plus also include production and broadcast of 4 bi-monthly one hour debates covering socio-economic issues with the participation of experts and representatives of civil society and public authorities.

Finally, ECMI Kosovo will be engaged in developing and implementing a 3-day training programme, as well as individual coaching for staff of the local public authorities on drafting press releases, appearing in the media and public speaking. Another 3-day training covering the same topics will be organized for local civil society organizations, as well as a 4-day awareness-raising programme for representatives of local media on how to report about majority/minority relations and human rights.

Funding

Finnish Embassy in Kosovo

Timeframe

2013-2014

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KOSOVO

FLENSBURG

ECMI EASTERN PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME (EEaPP)



Aims and Objectives

- Fostering democracy and participation through building sustainable institutions, promoting good governance and bridging stakeholders
- Enhancing civil society and empowering stakeholders
- Transfer of best practices, of EU and CoE values and standards
- Fighting discrimination, supporting reconciliation and conflict resolution

ECMI Methodology

- Implementing the ECMI Synergy Wheel approach
- Enabling dialogue between stakeholders at both horizontal and vertical levels
- International and cross-regional transfer of knowledge, tested models and best practices
- Capacity building and provision of trainings
- Fostering networks and cooperation (at local, national, regional and international level)

ECMI Regional Impact

- Eastern Europe (Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine): The ECMI intends to transfer the successful ECMI GEORGIA MODEL to Ukraine and Moldova, adapting it accordingly to the specific country needs. ECMI will focus its activities on public institutions in charge of equality and diversity policies at national and local levels, as well

as on the facilitation of their cooperation with the civil sector and will work for enabling better institutional conditions for the latter's future active involvement;

- Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia): The ECMI GEORGIA MODEL will be adapted and transferred to Armenia, where despite the considerable efforts of state authorities, minorities are still not fully enjoying their rights, also due to shortfalls in their civil structures. To ensure sustainability of our achievements in Georgia and the successful transfer of practices and models, ECMI will provide direct support to CSOs and public officials from the EaP countries.

ECMI Thematic Interventions

- Fostering democracy, protection of minority rights and inter-ethnic dialogue and cooperation
- Knowledge transfer and capacity building for public officials, CSOs, and media
- Establishment of regional networks of ombudsperson institutions and other public equality bodies pursuing diversity policies
- Minority consultative and non-discrimination bodies

Funding

Various funding options are under review

Timeframe

Ongoing



CO-OPERATION FOR A STABLE FUTURE: INTER-NATIONAL AND INTER-CULTURAL DIALOGUE AS A TOOL FOR ENSURING PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Intercultural dialogue is a powerful tool for overcoming the negative effects of conflicts and for fostering peace and sustainable development. The knowledge and the experience of using this tool and the appropriate adaptation of successful mechanisms are crucial factors for bringing about positive societal changes.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the project is to enhance the capacities of the Council of State Support to Non-Governmental Organizations under the Auspices of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan (CSSN) to foster peace and sustainable development in Azerbaijan by providing project participants with new ideas, knowledge and experience, and by strengthening and widening their contacts with European and international institutions and NGOs. The project has the following key objectives:

- To equip participants with new ideas and knowledge about successful mechanisms for overcoming negative conflict consequences
- To share best practices (German, Danish, political, civil) with regard to the use of intercultural dialogue as a mechanism to foster peace and sustainable development
- To share the ECMI's experience of bringing about positive changes in post-conflict regions
- To enable the intercultural dialogue between CSSN and German and Danish institutions and NGOs with regard to possible future cooperation
- To raise the awareness of the wider public about Azerbaijan in the context of the currently negotiated Association Agreement (to succeed the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement) that will deepen Azerbaijan's political association and economic integration with the EU, as viewed by the European Union External Action
- To enable EU policy makers, public officials, academia and NGO sector representatives to obtain first hand information on issues of their interest with regard to Azerbaijan and CSSN

Project Activities

To achieve the objectives, a study visit to Germany and Denmark will be organized for 10 delegates from CSSN in May 2014. Through the planned workshops, the participants will acquire new knowledge on the topics of fostering peace and stability, overcoming negative conflict consequences, promoting intercultural dialogue at international and national levels, establishing constructive majority-minority relations, and enhancing civil activism for combating societal problems. The delegation will be introduced to the experience of the border region of Schleswig-Holstein and the successful reconciliation and diversity management practices employed in this region. The planned meetings with NGOs and public officials from Germany and Denmark will enable all sides to exchange views on topics of mutual interest, to establish contacts and discuss possible future cooperation.

Funding CSSN, Azerbaijan

Timeframe Nov. 2013 – July 2014

STRENGTHENING MINORITY RIGHTS THROUGH INTER-REGIONAL NETWORK COOPERATION OF EQUALITY BODIES

This inter-regional project will build on the experiences gained by the ECMI in Georgia and the Western Balkans. Through trainings and mainstreaming efforts, stakeholders will be supported in establishing minority focal points as an integrated part of the functioning of the institutions. The focal points will be linked to the Minority Councils supported under the EEaPP (South Caucasus and Eastern Europe).

As a result of the project, it is envisaged that permanent units / focal points on minority issues will be established in the six EaP countries and that the focal points will be enabled to function as efficient units that may take appropriate action on behalf of equality bodies in relation to national minorities. The action will further enable relevant national structures to engage in networking and cross-regional collaboration and take advantage of knowledge transfer based on good European practices. Finally, the equality bodies will be supported in mainstreaming reporting on minority issues in their regular state reports and in elaborating and publishing specific minority issues reports.

Aims and Objectives

This project will seek to include minority issues systematically into the competencies of national and regional anti-discrimination bodies, such as Public Defenders and Ombudsperson institutions as well as complaint bodies throughout the two regions, in the EEaPP, with the aim of establishing permanent structures within existing institutions that specialize in combating discrimination through minority rights. A major aim is to create a network to encourage knowledge transfer and support regional approaches.

Project Activities

Throughout the implementation period coordination workshops will be organized on a rotation basis in the focus countries, and an annual conference will be held to ensure broader involvement with national authorities and representative minority organizations.

A manual on good practices regarding the inclusion of minority issues in the work of equality bodies will be developed as a collaborative effort of the six focal points, supported by ECMI experts. Furthermore, efforts will be made to encourage effective and systematic reporting in relevant state reports focusing specifically on minority issues and, as part of these efforts, bi-annual national minority reports will be elaborated based on the model of the "Minderheiten Bericht" drawn up by the government of the German federal state of Schleswig-Holstein.

Funding

Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine: Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2014-2017
Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan: Funding options under review

Timeframe

Ongoing

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For Eastern Europe:
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ECMI REGIONAL MINORITY ROUNDTABLE

Every year the ECMI invites the local national minority organizations from the Danish-German border region to a roundtable discussion on a topic which has touched upon all of them in the past year and which is seen as relevant for understanding minority issues and minority politics.

The ECMI Regional Minority Roundtable 2014 will invite the relevant minority organizations to discuss and jointly analyze the events and developments in the area of minority issues which took place in the border region in 2013.

ECMI NON-RESIDENT SRA MEETING

An important part of the ECMI's research capacity is the non-resident Senior Research Associate Network (SRAN), consisting of younger academic colleagues attached to university departments across Europe.

This is a body of scholars working in different fields who have a research interest in minority issues. It is a multidisciplinary body of experts which complements ECMI's core team of researchers by being integrated in the relevant research clusters as external ad hoc advisers and sparring partners for resident researchers.

Members of the SRAN participate in the ECMI's research projects and contribute to our publications. The SRAN supports our action projects and provide expertise and capacity building for our trainings and technical assistance contracts.

ECMI ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Advisory Council (AC) is a 15 member body of eminent experts in the area of minority studies appointed by the ECMI Executive Board in consultation with the founders of the Centre. The overall aim of the AC's support to the ECMI is to help ensure the Centre's position as a leading research and competence institution in Europe in the area of minority issues and as a primary sparring partner for governments, international governmental organizations, as well as the European Union in this field.

The members of the AC support the ECMI mission by establishing contacts with persons, institutions and organizations, by assuming duties of representation and promotion of the activities of ECMI to European institutions and in specialist circles.

The AC is thus seen as an added value to the ECMI's combined research and competence capacity, as well as to the Centre's international networking capacity. The purpose of the AC is therefore to support the ECMI in its efforts to fulfil its mandate as stated in the Centre's mission statement. The tenure of each Council is three years. For membership and chairperson, please refer to the ECMI website.



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ECMI SUMMER SCHOOL

National Minorities in Border Regions Theme 2014: Alternative Approaches to Reconciliation

European history has linked many national minorities intrinsically to borders. Nation building processes in 19th and 20th century European history constantly involved challenges and adjustments to existing territorial structures. Borders and border revisions have shaped not only the identity of Europe but also the identity of individuals living through the history of redrawn borders and changing notions of national belonging. Concepts of national inclusion and exclusion resulted in a multifaceted reality of a Europe of nationalities, much more complex than the situation shown on political maps of Europe.

With European integration and especially EU policies of redefining 'hard' borders into 'soft' borders, national minorities may have new roles to play in an environment formerly very hostile to national minorities claiming allegiance to a foreign national state. Border politics in Europe pose new challenges as well as provide new opportunities to neighbouring states, not only in terms of minority governance but also in so far that in a globalizing world national minorities may provide intercultural tools that the new border regime requires to develop Europe united in diversity.

The 10-day intensive course will address the topic from an interdisciplinary perspective. The programme will include academic lectures, workshops, seminars delivered by participants, and social activities.



The summer school programme will explore national minorities in border regions from the perspectives of different disciplines, including economics, law, human geography, anthropology, linguistics, sociology, and politics. The aim of this interdisciplinary summer school is to integrate two subjects that are often treated separately, in order to offer a comprehensive picture of national minorities in border regions.

The summer school is aimed at Master and PhD students.

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ECMI INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

To interested students and researchers, ECMI HQ in Flensburg, ECMI Kosovo and ECMI Caucasus offer the possibility of unpaid internships on pre-agreed research topics or projects. Additional information about the application procedure and the internship opportunities for all the offices can be obtained from the ECMI Secretariat.

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ECMI TRAINING COURSES

ECMI offers tailor-made training courses for academics and professionals from a range of fields: human rights, development work, humanitarian work, education, law and law enforcement, social work, healthcare, and media.

ECMI provides in-house trainings on minority rights and related issues on demand. The courses designed to serve the needs of NGOs, public institutions, government agencies, international agencies and organizations pay particular attention to topics like programming, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, international and regional human rights mechanisms.

The trainings can include various elements of the standard courses, compiled to adjust to particular needs. ECMI delivers trainings in Danish, English, German, Italian, Polish, Russian, and Spanish.

List of courses

General courses

- Minority Rights in Theory and Practice (offered also as an e-course)
- Minority Politics in Practice
- Minorities and Conflict
- Minority Governance
- Minority Rights Framework
- Mainstreaming Minority Issues in Governance
- Mainstreaming Minority Issues in Development

Country-based courses

- Minority issues in the Eastern Partnership (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova)
- Minority issues in the Balkans
- Minority issues in the Caucasus
- Minority issues in Europe

A full description of the courses is available online, at:

www.ecmi.de/trainings/

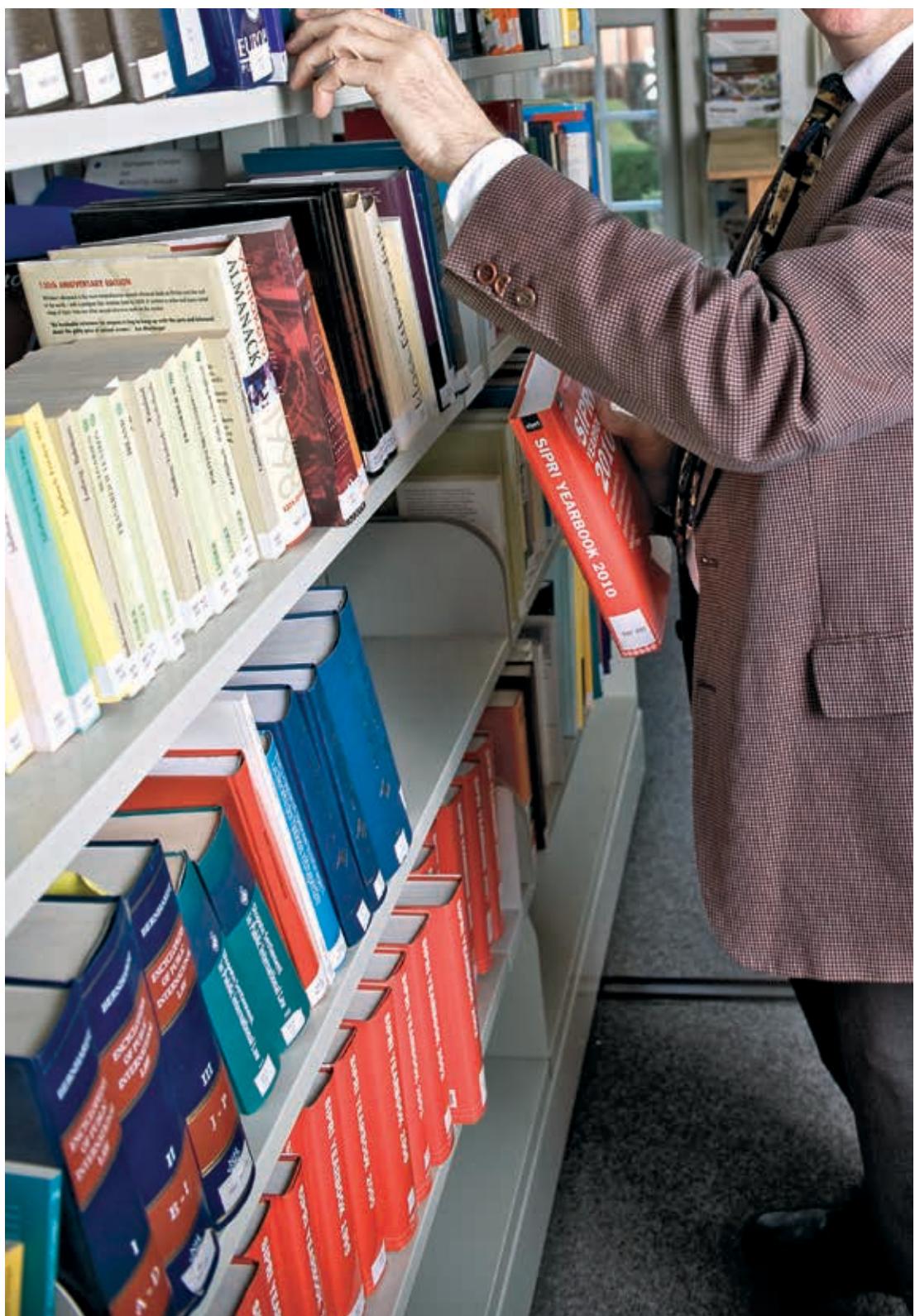
For more information or to place a training request, please contact the ECMI Secretariat.



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TRAININGS

PUBLICATIONS





JOURNAL ON ETHNOPOLITICS AND MINORITY ISSUES IN EUROPE

Aim and Objectives

JEMIE is a peer-reviewed electronic journal. Its approach is multi-disciplinary, addressing issues across a broad range of studies, such as ethnopolitics, democratization, conflict management, good governance, participation and minority rights. It publishes articles by established academics but also supports young scholars in the initial stages of their careers. The journal aims at stimulating debate among the academic community by publishing high-quality articles that are freely accessible on the internet (<http://www.ecmi.de/publications/jemie/>)

Background

JEMIE has been in existence since 2000. It has published both issues around specific themes (special issues) as well as general articles. ECMI produced four issues for Volume 11 (2012) of JEMIE, on:

- Minority Languages Revitalization
- The EU and National Minorities in the Balkans
- Reconciliation in the Western Balkans
- New Media and Minorities (combined with general articles)

Planned outputs 2014

Four issues are planned for 2014, around four main themes:

- Non-Territorial Autonomy
- Freedom of Expression of Minorities in the Digital Age
- Reconciliation in the Basque Country
- Europeanization and National Minorities

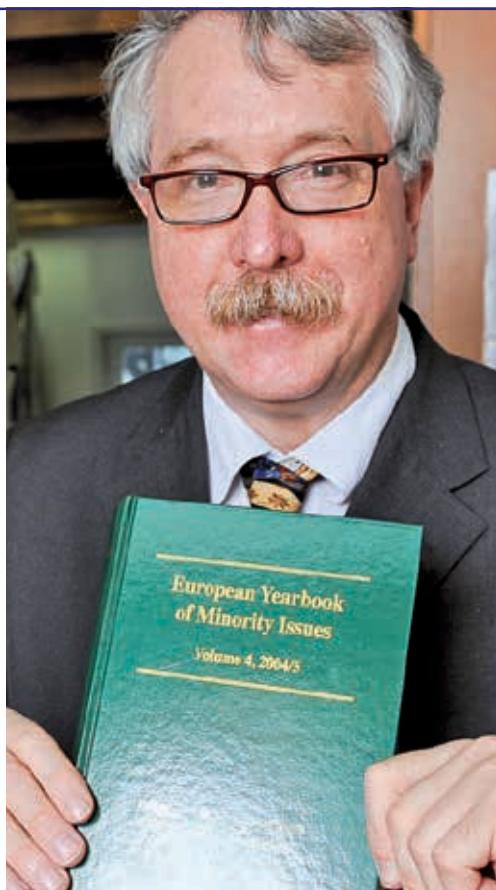


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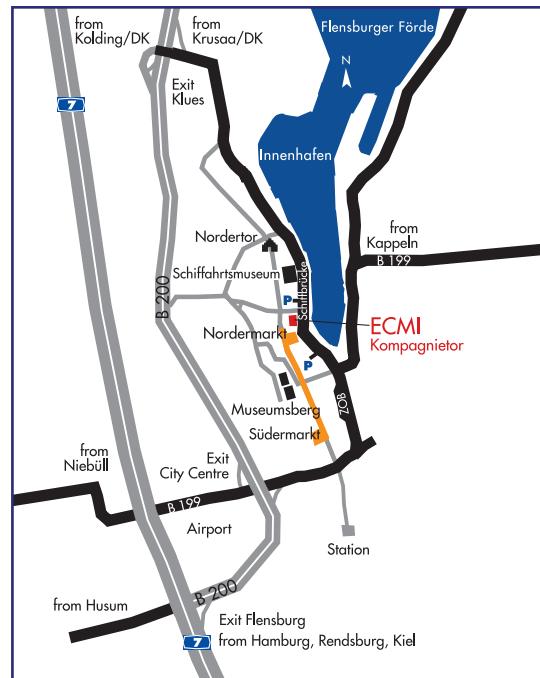
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