

**FINAL REPORT OF THE ECMI PROJECT
"NGO ROUNDTABLE ON INTERETHNIC
RELATIONS IN THE FYR OF MACEDONIA"**

Farimah Daftary and Sunoor Verma

LAUNCH OF THE "ECMI NGO NETWORK
FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF INTERETHNIC
RELATIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA"
AND OF THE "ECMI REGIONAL NGO CENTRES"

SKOPJE, FYR OF MACEDONIA
17-18 DECEMBER 2001

ECMI Report # 20

February 2002

ECMI Report # 20

European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI)

Director: Marc Weller

© Copyright 2002 by the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI)

Published in February 2002 by the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI)

CONTENTS

Preface and Acknowledgements	1
Note on Terminology	2
Map of Macedonia	3
I. Introduction.....	4
II. The "ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia"	7
A. Mission Statement and Aims	7
B. Field of Work and Action Plan	8
C. Membership and Structure of the Network.....	9
1. NGO Members.....	9
2. The Assembly	9
3. The Coordinating Body.....	9
D. Financing of the Network	10
E. Process of Establishment	10
1. December 2000 - June 2001: Constitution of a Core Group of NGOs	10
2. June-September 2001: Establishment of the ECMI NGO Network.....	12
a. Adoption of the Network's Mission Statement and Aims and an Official Name (Second Meeting of the NGO Roundtable, Ohrid, 30 June - 2 July 2001).....	12
b. Creation of the Network Task Force.....	14
c. Establishment of the ECMI NGO Network and Adoption of a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) (Skopje, 28 September 2001)	14
3. September-December 2001: Expansion of the Network	15
a. Formulation of the Network's Strategy and Refining of the MoC (Brainstorming Meeting, Flensburg, 20 - 21 October 2001)	15
b. Collection of Recommendations regarding New Members...	15

III.	Joint Project Proposals	17
	A. Concept	17
	B. Issue Areas for Joint Action.....	17
	C. Training in Project Development.....	18
	D. Development of Project Outlines.....	18
	E. Financing of Joint Projects.....	19
IV.	Official Launch of the ECMI NGO Network and of the ECMI Regional NGO Centres (Skopje, 17 - 18 December 2001).....	20
	A. Adoption of New Members and Election of the Coordinating Body	20
	B. Launch of the ECMI NGO Network and of the ECMI Regional Centres	20
	C. Presentation of the Network Website	21
	D. Project Proposal Presentations by NGO Network Members	21
V.	Follow-on for 2002: The ECMI Regional NGO Centres.....	22
	A. Concept of "Regional NGO Centres"	22
	B. Activities.....	23
	C. Further Steps	24
VI.	Conclusion	25
VII.	Annexes	28
	Annex A: Declaration of the First Meeting of the NGO Roundtable on "Interethnic Relations in the FYR of Macedonia" and List of Participants.....	28
	Annex B: Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) of the "ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia"	31
	Annex C: List of Network Signatories and Composition of the Network Coordinating Body.....	44
	Annex D: Contact Information of Network Member NGOs.....	47
	Annex E: List of Joint NGO Project Proposals.....	53

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Despite the conflict which broke out in Macedonia in February 2001 and which lasted well into August, the NGOs involved in this initiative participated with much enthusiasm and made every effort to ensure that all segments of the Macedonian population would be represented. Our thanks therefore go first and foremost to them and to their high sense of professionalism and commitment. We also wish to thank the ECMI Regional Representative in Skopje, Dr Sunoor Verma, who was available at all times and locations for the participating NGOs and spent endless hours assisting them with the development of joint project proposals. He was aided by Project Management Assistant Ms Gordana Velichkovska. We also wish to thank Professor Pande Lazarevski, Director of the Center for Refugees and Forced Migration Studies (CRFMS) at the Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Studies (ISPJR) in Skopje, Ms Gordana Micova Nestorovska, Ms Gordana Cvetkoska and the rest of the dynamic staff of the CRFMS. The project was fortunate to have two excellent interpreters, Ms Jasna Vrteva Shoptrajanova and Mr Gorazd Smilevski, and Mr Klime Matoski, Webmaster, who set up the website of the ECMI NGO Network. Last but not least, ECMI is particularly grateful for the advice and academic guidance offered by Ambassador Tore Bøgh, Ambassador of Norway en Mission spéciale and ECMI Board Member, Dr Mirjana Najchevska, Director of the Centre for Human Rights and of the CRFMS as well as Executive Director of the Macedonian Helsinki Committee, and Prof. Dr. Stefan Troebst, Deputy Director of the Centre for East European Culture and History, University of Leipzig.

Marc Weller
ECMI Director
11 February 2002

Farimah Daftary
ECMI Senior Research Associate

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

In this report, the term 'Macedonia' is used for reasons of convenience and stands for the "former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" or "FYR of Macedonia". The name of the NGO Network, which was adopted by consensus between the network members, uses the official name adopted by the country itself: "Republic of Macedonia". The use of different terms by the European Centre for Minority Issues in no way implies endorsement of one or another, although we hope that the name issue will be settled soon.

Furthermore, we have tried to use consistently throughout this report the term "Macedonian" to refer to any citizen of Macedonia regardless of ethnic background. In contrast, the term "ethnic Macedonian" or "ethnic Albanian" specifically refers to that person's ethnicity. In the same way, "Macedonian NGO" refers not to an NGO with ethnic Macedonian members but to any domestic NGO.

MAP OF MACEDONIA



I. INTRODUCTION

Macedonian NGOs must operate in a context in which various ethnic groups seek to promote their own identity and to claim their rights in a monoethnic framework, rather than seeking ways to reconcile their specific needs within the more general framework of a multiethnic and multicultural society. Despite the activities of a multitude of NGOs with various mandates (there are roughly 700 domestic non-governmental organizations registered under the 1998 *Law on Citizen Associations and Foundations*¹), their achievements appear to have been limited.

NGOs have generally not been able to effectively address interethnic issues because they themselves reflect the ethnic divisions of Macedonian society. Furthermore, domestic NGOs face many obstacles in their daily work and have limited financial, technical and human resources. A 23 per cent tax on philanthropic contributions discourages private enterprises from supporting NGO activities so that most rely on international project-based funding. There is no provision for tax relief to individuals donating to NGOs either. Also, the pool of NGO volunteers is almost non-existent; rather, the domestic Macedonian NGO sector constitutes an important area of employment in a country where the official unemployment rate is above 30 per cent. Another problem is that genuine and committed NGOs face difficulties in asserting their credibility due to the existence of many 'phantom NGOs'. The tendency of donors to work with a limited range of local organizations and the pressure on NGOs to come up with donor-friendly projects intensifies an atmosphere of competition and obedient service delivery rather than cooperation between NGOs. The limited coordination between international donors and international NGOs has also been a negative factor.

Fortunately, there are also many examples of 'good practice' amongst domestic NGOs which are either truly multiethnic or which cooperate with NGOs representing other ethnic communities, but the volatility of the NGO sector makes it particularly difficult

¹ See the Directory of Civic Organizations in Macedonia published by the Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation (*Adresar na građanski organizacii vo Makedonija*, Skopje: MCIC, 2001). The total number of civic associations is ca. 1,500. The "Law on Citizens Associations and Foundations" and an accompanying analysis may be found in: Natasha Gaber and Borce Davitkovski, *Comments of the Law on Citizen Associations and Foundations* (Skopje: Macedonian Center for International Cooperation, 2000).

to sustain cooperation. The chronic absence of a sustainability strategy for domestic NGOs has resulted in the disappearance of many of them. An additional factor has been the "brain drain" of qualified and trained staff from domestic NGOs to their donors or to implementing partner international NGOs.

The conflict which took place from February to August 2001 (and which at the time of writing has been contained but not definitely resolved) should not be seen as an overall failure of the NGO sector to prevent conflict. It would be justified to say that the consequences of the conflict could have been much more dire, had it not been for the efforts of many domestic NGOs and persons working in the Macedonian NGO sector. Indeed, many domestic NGOs have made a valuable contribution to conflict prevention efforts, together with numerous international governmental and non-governmental actors. While the scope for NGO activity during a conflict is limited, they now have a chance to contribute to the implementation of the Framework Agreement of 13 August 2001 (also known as the "Ohrid Agreement" after the name of the city where it was negotiated) and to build the basis for a tolerant, multiethnic society based on the principle of democratic citizenship. Although the level of scepticism is still high amongst the general population, domestic NGOs should take the lead and act as an integrating force of the various ethnic groups living in the country rather than reflecting ethnic differences and reinforcing the isolation of Macedonia's various communities. Slowly, many of the serious NGOs are realizing the benefits of cooperation. A positive sign has been the emergence of spontaneous local networks of NGOs during this latest crisis to coordinate assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs).

In December 2000, the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), Flensburg, organized the first meeting of the *NGO Roundtable on Inter-Ethnic Relations in the FYR of Macedonia* (Flensburg, 10 - 13 December 2000). This was the first of a series of events in this one-year project generously supported by the Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Secretariat for Peace and Stability / FRESTA) and the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The idea to initiate this project was conceived in December 1999 and it was launched following extensive research, preparation as well as a fact-finding visit to the country in June 2000.

The overall aim of this project was to foster constructive discussion between domestic NGOs in Macedonia on the question of interethnic relations in order to identify common ground for action. Two main objectives were set: (1) to encourage the development of *joint NGO project proposals* which cut across ethnic lines and which are responsive to the needs of local communities; and (2) to establish a *network of NGOs* committed to working together in order to improve interethnic communication and interethnic relations. One year later, despite major impediments, these aims have been achieved: on 18 December 2001, the "ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia" was officially launched in Skopje. Its membership currently stands at over forty non-governmental organizations, which have themselves developed and signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC). The basic structures for this member-driven network are also in place. Furthermore, the NGOs involved had already been meeting throughout 2001, with facilitation by the ECMI Regional Representative, to develop joint project proposals, nine of which have already been presented to the donor community.

This report, which concludes this one-year ECMI project, seeks to provide an overview of the process by which the ECMI NGO Network was established. It will also present the strategy of the network for the coming years including the creation in 2002 of six "ECMI Regional NGO Centres" in the following multiethnic cities: Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo, Gostivar, Bitola and Shtip. These Regional Centres will serve primarily to strengthen the capacities of member NGOs to further generate and implement joint interethnic projects. These projects will be developed in close consultation with the local communities according to locally established priorities and will therefore serve genuine needs of these local communities. The Regional Centres will also seek the cooperation of local authorities while maintaining full independence in the design and execution of projects.

We hope that this is only the beginning of what promises to be a challenging and rewarding process of supporting the development of a sustainable and effective Macedonian NGO Sector. We also hope that this Network will grow in status and extend to additional parts of the country.

Farimah Daftary, ECMI Senior Research Associate
Flensburg, 11 February 2002

II. THE "ECMI NGO NETWORK FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF INTERETHNIC RELATIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA"

A. Mission Statement and Aims

The "*ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia*" (hereafter "ECMI NGO Network") is the result of a joint initiative of ECMI and participating NGOs from Macedonia. It is an informal and voluntary association of NGOs that have decided to collaborate according to common standards of quality and which have agreed to adhere to the principles of tolerance, interethnic cooperation, transparency and accountability.

Membership in the ECMI NGO Network serves as a mark of quality of its affiliated NGOs. It aims to enhance the capacity of member NGOs to develop joint projects aimed at improving interethnic relations and provides a common platform to attract external funding for these projects. Furthermore, it establishes accountability through the monitoring of the implementation of these projects and of financial aspects. It will also seek to develop a culture of cooperation with local authorities and enhance the overall standards of the Macedonian NGO sector.

The Mission Statement and Aims of the ECMI NGO Network, as adopted at the second meeting of the *ECMI NGO Roundtable on Interethnic Relations in the FYR of Macedonia* (Ohrid, 30 June - 2 July 2001) are as follows:

Mission Statement:

Building and development of an NGO network dedicated to the improvement of interethnic relations in the Republic of Macedonia.

Network Aims:

1. Promotion of mutual cooperation through exchange of all available resources.
2. Initiation and implementation of joint projects.
3. Increasing the influence of NGOs in the community.
4. Creation and development of a joint strategy for the improvement of interethnic relations.
5. Expansion of the Network.

The aims of the ECMI NGO Network are further expressed in Section I of the Network's Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC), which was drafted by the Network Task Force between June and September 2001. Thus, the ECMI NGO Network will

enhance the cooperation of the member NGOs towards the development and improvement of interethnic tolerance, respect for differences and dialogue among all those living in the Republic of Macedonia. In particular, the ECMI NGO Network aims to strengthen the capacities of the participating NGOs to generate joint projects and other initiatives with a strong interethnic dimension and to implement such initiatives according to the principles mentioned above. In addition, the participating NGOs have adopted a "Code of Conduct" for Network members which has been annexed to the MoC (Annex 2) and which they will further develop to include best practice standards.

B. Field of Work and Action Plan

The field of work of the ECMI NGO Network is contained in Sections II and III of the MoC. It can be summarised as follows: (1) enhance the capacity of participating NGOs to devise and implement interethnic projects (through training, on-site advice, facilitation of dialogue between NGOs and their beneficiaries, local government and the local media and other capacity enhancing measures); (2) strengthen the credibility of participating NGOs by developing and adhering to a common Code of Conduct; and (3) support the development by participating NGOs of *joint interethnic projects*, their presentation to donors, and their implementation in strict accordance with these criteria.

The Network's strategy for reaching these objectives and its action plan are contained in Section III of the MoC. They include the development of a *web-based information resource* which will provide an opportunity for participating NGOs to exhibit their profile and activities and will contain vital information of relevance to member NGOs in terms of project drafting, funding opportunities and good practices in the delivery of projects. The Network will also highlight the contribution that NGOs can make to the development of civil society in Macedonia through e.g. joint lobbying for an environment in which NGOs dedicated to the principles of the Network can flourish and effectively deliver their mandates.

The Network's overall strategy and action plan was developed at a brainstorming meeting in Flensburg from 20 - 21 October 2001 during which the concept of *Regional Centres* was adopted. Thus, in an effort to ensure that NGOs are responsive to the

needs of their local communities and that they receive the full support needed at the local level, the idea was adopted to implement the overall strategy of the Network through six local resource centres, or "*ECMI Regional NGO Centres*", to be established in six multiethnic cities in Macedonia (Annex 3 of the MoC) (see Section V of this report for more on this initiative).

C. Membership and Structure of the Network

1. NGO Members

The ECMI NGO Network currently consists of 43 organizations, which are listed in Annex C of this report. They all fulfil the criteria for membership contained in Annex 1 of the MoC. Furthermore, the various communities present in Macedonia are represented in the Network, including also smaller ones. The current membership composition also reflects the present reality of the Macedonian NGO sector that, often, Roma NGOs are the ones with most experience and capacity due to the fact that they have received support from donors since 1995. It is expected that the membership will balance as capacity is built across all communities.

The contact details of Network members are provided in Annex D. Detailed information on these organizations and their activities may be found on the website of the ECMI NGO Network at: <http://www.ecmingonet.org.mk>. E-groups have been established facilitating information exchange between Network members.

The structure of the Network is defined as follows (see MoC, Section IV):

2. The Assembly

The Assembly, which convenes at least once a year, consists of all the signatories to the Network. It admits new members in accordance with the criteria presented in Annex 1 of the MoC. The Assembly, from within its members, elects a Coordinating Body.

3. The Coordinating Body

The Coordinating Body is composed of twelve representatives of NGOs and one representative of ECMI. The Coordinating Body represents as far as possible the

multiethnic composition of the Network and the regions in which the Regional Centres are based. The Coordinating Body is headed by its elected Chair.

The Coordinating Body takes on the principal responsibility for the implementation of the action plan of the Network. It is responsible, *inter alia*, for convening the members of the Network; for devising a sustainability strategy for the Network; for joint lobbying for the benefit of the Network; and for maintaining regular contacts with the Regional Centres.

The composition of the network Coordinating Body elected on 17 December 2001 is provided in Annex C.II of this report.

D. Financing of the Network

For 2001, ECMI obtained funding from the Ministries for Foreign Affairs of Denmark and Norway to facilitate the establishment and initial operation of the Network. Full follow-up funding for the Network and the Regional Centres for the period 2002-2004 is being sought to support Network activities and the establishment of the six Regional Centres. Planning in 2002 will be directed towards making the Network sustainable in the longer term.

E. Process of Establishment

The establishment of the *"ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia"* is the result of a careful and intensive field-based process carried out between December 2000 and December 2001.

1. December 2000 - June 2001: Constitution of a Core Group of NGOs

The first step in the process was to constitute a more or less homogenous core group of about twenty domestic non-governmental organizations committed to cooperating with one another to improve interethnic relations and communications in Macedonia. The project was launched with the first meeting of the *NGO Roundtable on Interethnic Relation in the FYR of Macedonia* in Flensburg, Germany, from 10 - 13

December 2000.² This meeting was attended by over twenty NGOs from Skopje and other parts of the country working mainly in the areas of human rights, civil society and conflict resolution; women's issues; and the media. At the same time, most ethnic communities living in the country were represented (Albanian, Bosnian, Macedonian, Roma, Serb, Turkish and Vlach). In addition, a representative from the OSCE and the Council of Europe as well as eight international experts on minority issues and networking in the areas of human and minority rights were invited. This first meeting was held in Flensburg, at the heart of the German-Danish Border Region, in order to offer a neutral environment and an atmosphere which would foster dialogue, cooperation and the exchange of ideas. This decision was also motivated by the desire of the participants to learn more about experiences in minority-majority relations in other parts of Europe.

As the enthusiasm and intense discussions at this first meeting of the Roundtable demonstrated, there appeared to be a genuine desire of the NGOs present to overcome divisions within the country as well as a desire to work together to achieve these aims. The principal challenges which emerged were the *need to learn how to interact with people from different ethnic backgrounds, how to appreciate and live with differences* and the difficulty for the participants from different backgrounds and NGOs to identify *common challenges*. The interest exhibited by the NGO representatives in each other's work confirmed the need for *increased networking* between NGOs with similar aims. *Enhanced access to electronic facilities and better knowledge of available resources* as well as the need for *training* were among the priority areas identified.

A major outcome of the Flensburg meeting was that the participants decided to draft a declaration on their commitment to the aims of working jointly to implement the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and to develop joint projects with the aim of improving interethnic relations and interethnic communication. A draft was later circulated and adopted by consensus (Annex A).

² See Farimah Daftary, *NGO Roundtable on Inter-Ethnic Relations in the FYR of Macedonia, First Meeting, Flensburg, Germany, 10 -13 December 2000*, ECMI Report #7 (Flensburg: European Centre for Minority Issues, February 2001) (at: http://www.ecmi.de/doc/download/report_7.pdf).

Due to the escalation of the conflict which broke out in Macedonia in February 2001 and the worsening security situation, the second meeting of the NGO Roundtable, originally planned for April, had to be postponed twice. Still, momentum was maintained between February and June by the ECMI Regional Representative (RR), Dr Sunoor Verma, who held bilateral meetings throughout the country, including crisis areas, with each of the NGOs which had attended the first meeting of the NGO Roundtable as well as with other potentially interested NGOs. The aim of these meetings was to evaluate the activities and capacity of these NGOs and to gauge their interest in participating in this initiative. The following criteria were developed by the ECMI RR for including NGOs in the Network:

1. Does the NGO have an interethnic relations promotion agenda?
2. Is the NGO interethnic in terms of its human resources?
3. What is the size and experience of the NGO?
4. Does the management of the NGO have a sustainable vision and strategy?
5. Does the NGO want to participate in a network?
6. Are the structures in place to provide for full financial transparency and accountability?

These meetings were also highly important in establishing a working relation and mutual trust between the ECMI RR and the NGOs. Group meetings were also organized at the premises of the Centre for Refugees and Forced Migration Studies (CRFMS) at the Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Studies (ISPJR) in Skopje (the implementing partner of ECMI for the year 2001 in Macedonia) to discuss the creation of a website for the Network and the sharing of responsibilities.

2. June - September 2001: Establishment of the ECMI NGO Network

a. Adoption of the Network's Mission Statement and Aims and an Official Name (Second Meeting of the NGO Roundtable, Ohrid, 30 June - 2 July 2001)

The second meeting of the NGO Roundtable was held in Ohrid from 30 June - 2 July 2001.³ Despite the tense situation in the country and general atmosphere of

³ See Sunoor Verma and Farimah Daftary, *ECMI NGO Roundtable "Inter-Ethnic Relations in the FYR of Macedonia," Second Meeting, Ohrid, FYR of Macedonia, 30 June-2 July 2001*, ECMI Report #13 (Flensburg: European Centre for Minority Issues, August 2001) (at: http://www.ecmi.de/doc/download/report_13.pdf).

insecurity, 20 NGO representatives attended. The basic principle behind the agenda was to evoke maximum response from the participants through expert facilitation, with four leading domestic experts acting as facilitators. Also, the meeting was held in Macedonian rather than English so that the discussion could flow freely.

The second meeting of the ECMI "NGO Roundtable on Inter-Ethnic Relations in the FYR of Macedonia" was judged successful for several reasons. First, the participants agreed that, because of the current crisis, it was more important than ever for the NGO community to develop cooperation and to devise means of strengthening interethnic communication. The group strictly followed the agenda of the Roundtable and all present contributed to the lively discussions. The meeting also led to the establishment of the foundations for an NGO Network which would generate inter-ethnic projects by domestic NGOs. Thus, the Network's mission statement and aims were adopted as well as an official name.

All major ethnic communities in the country (Albanians, Macedonians, Roma, Serbs, Turks, and Vlachs) were represented by the NGO representatives. However, the organizers greatly regretted that they could not persuade more ethnic Albanian NGO representatives to participate, especially given that they had previously expressed their commitment to attend. It was noted that the climate of insecurity might have been the major deterrent to travelling to the meeting, even though it was held as close as possible to the cities of Tetovo and Gostivar where most of the ethnic Albanian NGO representatives are located. It was also highlighted that there had generally been a very poor attendance of ethnic Albanians at other conferences on Macedonia since the beginning of the crisis, indicating the urgency of putting in place the structures which would ensure that the ethnic Albanian community does not further isolate itself and lose trust in the potential of resolving conflict through dialogue. An encouraging outcome was that the NGOs present at the Ohrid meeting offered to use their own contacts with ethnic Albanian NGO representatives to relay to them the results of the meeting and to encourage them to participate in the ECMI NGO Network.

b. Creation of the Network Task Force

At the Ohrid meeting, a task force consisting of six NGOs and the ECMI RR was constituted in order to meet throughout the summer and develop a draft Memorandum of Cooperation for the Network and Criteria for Membership in the Network.

► Network Task Force:

Union for the Culture of the Vlach in Macedonia	Ms Mirjana Nikolovska
Organization of Serbian Women of Macedonia	Ms Suncica Miljkovic
Turkish Women's Organization of Macedonia "MATUKAT"	Ms Sadika Aga
FELIX Group	Ms Dijana Georgievska
Inter-Ethnic Project - Gostivar (IPG)	Ms Yllza Ademi
Humanitarian and Charitable Association of Roma "MESECINA"	Mr Samet Skenderi
ECMI Regional Representative	Mr Sunoor Verma

The draft MoC was then reviewed by experts and by ECMI in September and circulated to all participating NGOs.

c. Establishment of the ECMI NGO Network and Adoption of a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) (Skopje, 28 September 2001)

On 28 September 2001, a meeting was held at the premises of the CRFMS in Skopje with the aim to establish the ECMI NGO Network consisting of a core group of nineteen NGO members and to adopt the MoC. The draft MoC was presented by the head of the Network Task Force Mr Samet Skenderi ("MESECINA"). Following an in-depth discussion and several amendments, the MoC was adopted by all NGOs present, thereby establishing the basis for the ECMI NGO Network.

The core membership reflected the ethnic diversity of the country; all regions were also represented. Indeed, as had been agreed at the Ohrid meeting, three new ethnic Albanian NGO members were proposed by the participating NGOs and unanimously accepted as new members, following a short presentation of their activities and the secondment of their candidacy by a second member NGO (see Criteria for admission and participation of new members, MoC Annex 1).

It was decided on 28 September to hold another Network Task Force meeting, this time in Flensburg, in order to discuss and develop a sustainability strategy for the Network.

3. September - December 2001: Expansion of the Network

a. Formulation of the Network's Strategy and Refining of the MoC (Brainstorming Meeting, Flensburg, 20 - 21 October 2001)

In addition to the original Network Task Force members, representatives from four more NGOs (ARKA Forum for Roma Rights – Kumanovo, Association for the Human Rights Protection of Roma – Shtip, "SONCE" – Tetovo, and Permaculture and Peacebuilding Centre – Gostivar) attended the brainstorming session in Flensburg to ensure that not only all major ethnic groups but also all major multiethnic cities in the country were represented. A Turkish representative from the Association for Education, Culture, Ecology and Humanity MILLENNIUM (Vrapciste) attended instead of the representative from the Turkish Women's Organization of Macedonia MATUKAT.

The aim of this meeting was (1) to fine-tune the network structure and develop decision-making procedures and (2) to discuss a sustainable strategy for the Network for the coming years and propose an action plan. The MoC was thus further refined to incorporate a new dimension of the strategy of the Network for the coming years. Indeed, at this meeting, a decision was made to focus on NGO cooperation at the *local level* in order to be as responsive as possible to the needs of local communities. The concept of "Regional NGO Centres" was thus jointly developed by ECMI and the Network members and adopted.

b. Collection of Recommendations regarding New Members

In order to expand the membership of the Network to a strong group of about forty NGOs and also to provide the basis for the establishment of the Regional Centres, member NGOs were asked to recommend several close local partners for membership. ECMI also compiled a list of recommended new members to ensure that, as with the national Network, the membership in each region (and therefore membership of a Regional Centre) would also be multiethnic. In Gostivar and Kumanovo, an informal local network of NGOs headed by NGOs participating in the

ECMI project had already emerged to deal with the humanitarian consequences of the crisis. Thus, MESECINA, PPC and IPG (Gostivar) and ARKA (Kumanovo) recommended several of their local partners for membership in the Network. FELIX Group, which is also in the process of establishing a network of NGOs in Bitola, submitted several recommendations for new members as well.

III. JOINT PROJECT PROPOSALS

A. Concept

A main objective of this initiative, as already stated above, is to support practical results arising from NGO cooperation, namely the development of joint projects between NGO members of the Network. This will be done not only by providing an opportunity for NGOs to meet and identify project partners but also by strengthening the capacities of the participating NGOs to generate joint projects and other initiatives. These projects will seek to achieve the overall aim of improving interethnic relations and communication by addressing real needs identified by entire local communities rather than addressing the concerns of a specific ethnic group. Furthermore, those projects will have a strong interethnic dimension due to the very composition of the project team consisting of activists from different NGOs and with varying ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds. Thus, it is not only the overall aim of the project but the partnership which has been formed to develop and realize it that allows these joint NGO project proposals to be called "interethnic".

The ideas for joint projects will be developed by the NGOs themselves. ECMI will act as a facilitator in this process and will assist in the development and evaluation of these joint project proposals. It will also assist in securing project funding from the international donor community within and also outside Macedonia.

B. Issue Areas for Joint Action

It had originally been envisaged to group the participating NGOs according to specific areas of activity – (a) human rights, civil society and conflict prevention, (b) women's issues, and (c) Medias – and to designate an 'Area Coordinator' for each area in order to establish a decentralized structure for the detailed discussion of joint project ideas in each of the three issue areas. However, due to the fact that most NGOs were not sufficiently specialized, the task of dividing the group into three issue areas proved difficult since a significant majority wanted to participate in the first issue area. The organizers therefore offered to act as overall coordinators until the second meeting of the Roundtable scheduled for April 2001. Until then, the NGO representatives were requested to forward to the ECMI RR their ideas and proposals for joint projects.

C. Training in Project Development

Requests for training in project proposal writing, fund-raising and project management were received by the ECMI RR from several member NGOs. Two training sessions on Project Proposal Development were conducted by the ECMI RR for NGO representatives in Kumanovo (members of the ARKA Interethnic Network) and in Shuto Orizari (Skopje) (members of the AVUTNIPE Interethnic Network) in October 2001 in accordance with a budget line developed for this purpose. This was considered to be a very urgent need if the aim of developing quality joint proposals was to be reached, since many NGOs were accustomed to developing project proposals tailored to the availability of funds rather than according to the needs of their communities. Each training session lasted two days and involved ten to fifteen participants from five to ten NGOs.

A schedule for further training will be developed by the ECMI RR for 2002 in close consultation with Network members.

D. Development of Project Outlines

At the same time as the Network was being formally established in 2001, participating NGOs began meeting to discuss ideas for joint projects with the facilitation and assistance of the ECMI RR.

At the second meeting of the NGO Roundtable (Ohrid, 30 June - 2 July 2001), Dr Mirjana Najchevska (Director of the Center for Human Rights and of the CRFMSat, the Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Studies in Skopje; Executive Director of the Macedonian Helsinki Committee) emphasized that joint projects need not necessarily seek to directly improve interethnic relations but that this aim could be achieved by addressing the many social and economic issues affecting the citizens of Macedonia. Her presentation "Interethnic Relations – A Source of Insecurity in the Republic of Macedonia. Results of a Research Study performed for the UNDP Development Report" thus sought to highlight some of the urgent areas for action.

The first joint project ideas were also presented by three lead NGOs in order to obtain feedback from the rest of the participants and to identify further partners. A brainstorming session was also held with the purpose of generating ideas for future joint projects.

The NGOs worked throughout the summer on their joint project proposals. A first set of eleven proposals was produced in September 2001. These are collaborative project proposals typically involving three to five NGOs, which have been carefully developed over the course of several meetings with the ECMI RR in Skopje as well as at the premises of the NGOs involved. Most of the projects also carry detailed budgets which have been reworked with the ECMI RR; as a result of this, most of them have been reduced by 30-50 per cent through the consolidation of activities and sharing of resources between partner NGOs. The programme aspects of the proposals have also been designed in close consultation with the ECMI RR. The proposals were subsequently standardized according to a project proposal guideline developed by the ECMI RR, together with the ECMI Project Leader and re-submitted to ECMI for evaluation. The narrative part of many of the proposals will be re-written and professionally translated from Macedonian into English, as this is often a stumbling block for otherwise sound project proposals.

The suitable donors for the most promising projects are now being identified by ECMI and the projects will be forwarded along with the evaluation and recommendations of ECMI.

E. Financing of Joint Projects

The Network itself will generally not be able to fund joint projects but will assist in the presentation of joint NGO projects to potential funders. ECMI as part of the Network will be available to assist in the monitoring of project implementation in relation to projects where funding was obtained as a result of such an effort conducted under the umbrella of the Network.

However, there will be a small project fund administered by the ECMI Skopje Office for direct funding of project initiatives that promise rapid and visible results. Such projects must be recommended by a Regional Centre. The Regional Centres can also recommend that ECMI make available seed funding for the full development of larger promising project proposals. The Regional Centres might also recommend partial funding from ECMI as a means of attracting more funding. Finally, the Regional Centre can recommend that the project be taken up by the Network infrastructure for lobbying for donor support.

IV. OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE ECMI NGO NETWORK AND OF THE ECMI REGIONAL NGO CENTRES (SKOPJE, 17 - 18 DECEMBER 2001)

A. Adoption of New Members and Election of the Coordinating Body

At a meeting in Skopje on 17 December 2001, a revised version of the MoC which incorporated the strategy developed by network members in Flensburg – namely the Regional Centres – was adopted. The revised MoC also included a "Code of Conduct for Network NGO Members" (Annex 2) which will continue to be developed and improved by member NGOs.

Membership of the "ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia" was also expanded to forty-three NGOs, all of which fulfil the criteria listed in Annex 1 of the MoC.

The Network then proceeded to elect a Coordinating Body consisting of twelve NGO representatives as well as the ECMI RR. The Coordinating Body was elected bearing in mind the need to reflect both the ethnic composition of the country as well as the six cities where Regional Centres are to be established. It includes the six members of the Network Task Force who were unanimously elected to the Coordinating Body. Members of the Coordinating Body then met and elected the Chairperson.

Finally, Network members reviewed the new website and practiced presenting the nine joint project proposals which were to be presented the following day to the local donor community.

B. Launch of the ECMI NGO Network and of the ECMI Regional Centres

The official launch of the ECMI NGO Network and of the ECMI Regional NGO Centres took place at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Skopje on 18 December 2001 from 10:00 - 11:30 and was followed by a reception. Simultaneous translation between English and Macedonian was provided throughout the event.

After a short introduction on the ECMI project by ECMI Director Mr Marc Weller and ECMI Project Leader Ms Farimah Daftary, the Chair of the Network Coordinating Body, Mr Samet Skenderi presented the "ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia" to

representatives of the international donor community and the press. He also introduced the MoC and summarized the process of establishment of the Network. He emphasized that the ECMI NGO Network was the result of the collaborative effort of all NGOs present.

C. Presentation of the Network Website

The website of the Network (www.ecmingonet.org.mk) was also officially launched and displayed to the audience. It is designed not only to serve as a valuable source of information on project proposal writing and sources of financing to NGOs but also to provide information to the donor community on effective Macedonian NGOs. It is currently available in Macedonian and English (and also soon in Albanian).

D. Project Proposal Presentations by NGO Network Members

Following an introduction to the concept of joint interethnic projects and the role of ECMI in their development by the ECMI RR, Dr Sunoor Verma, nine joint interethnic projects were presented to the audience by the lead NGO for each project. Since presentations were very short (about 3 minutes), project outlines were also distributed to potential interested donors. A list of the projects presented may be found in Annex E of this report.

V. FOLLOW-ON FOR 2002: THE ECMI REGIONAL NGO CENTRES

ECMI is now in the process of implementing the follow-on project for 2002-2004 entitled "Local and National NGO Network in Macedonia", which consists of (1) the establishment of the six ECMI Regional NGO Centres and (2) further functioning of the ECMI NGO Network.

A. Concept of "Regional NGO Centres"

In order to enhance the capacity of participating NGOs to support NGO cooperation at the local level and to facilitate the generation of joint projects on the basis of locally established priorities as well as to support the implementation of such projects, the ECMI NGO Network together with ECMI have decided to establish six local resource centres, or "ECMI Regional NGO Centres", in the following multiethnic cities: Skopje, Tetovo, Gostivar, Kumanovo, Bitola and Shtip. This concept was developed during a Brainstorming meeting in Flensburg from 20 - 21 October 2001 on the overall strategy of the Network and was incorporated as an integral element of the Network's strategy into the MoC (see Sections I and VIII) and further enshrined in its Annex 3.

The Regional Centres will serve the local NGO community dedicated to the aims of improving interethnic tolerance, respect for differences and dialogue among all communities in the Republic of Macedonia. NGO membership in the Regional Centres, expected at about fifteen organizations on average, shall be broadly reflective of the ethnic composition of the local community. Membership in a Regional Centre implies membership in the national ECMI NGO Network according to the Criteria for Membership established by the Network in Annex 1 of the MoC.

These Regional Centres will also facilitate regular consultation between NGOs and local citizens in order to establish priority project areas. The Regional Centres will also provide a forum for dialogue between the local citizens and local government with the member NGOs. Thus, Regional Centres will organize consultative meetings on topics of local concern to be selected from the following:

- Health
- Education
- Culture

- Unemployment
- Ecology
- Democracy and civil society
- Infrastructure
- Women
- Children
- Youth

For each sector, three types of meetings will be held:

- (1) Focus group study meeting with local community representatives to identify local problem issues in the sector being discussed.
- (2) Meeting between the NGO members and the local government in which the views of the authorities will be sought on the problem.
- (3) Meeting between NGO members on designing an initiative addressing the issues raised in the first two meetings.

Through these Regional Centres, the ECMI NGO Network can also provide limited direct funding or seed funding for project initiatives that promise rapid and visible results for all communities in a given locality.

B. Activities

In addition to facilitating the generation of joint projects that will provide direct benefits to local communities, the Regional Centres will:

- Assist member NGOs in enhancing their capacity through training.
- Provide facilities for interethnic NGO cooperation
- Assist in the development of joint projects and endorse them in relation to donors.
- Assist in raising funding for projects.
- Support the delivery of projects.
- Ensure the viability, transparency and accountability of projects and evaluate outcomes.

- Raise the profile of interethnic NGO cooperation in the localities and at the national level.
- Represent interests common to all NGOs and essential to their successful functioning at the local level.

A detailed action plan will be developed for each Regional Centre.

Each Regional Centre will receive a small budget to rent a small office and purchase the necessary equipment and to cover minimum operating costs. The member NGOs of a Regional Centre will decide whether they wish to appoint one of their own staff/volunteers to manage the Regional Centre on a rotating basis or whether they want to engage an external part-time person.

C. Further Steps

ECMI is currently securing full funding for the follow-on project for the period 2002-2004 and has re-appointed Dr Sunoor Verma as ECMI Regional Representative in Skopje. ECMI is in the process of establishing its own branch office and project team in Skopje. The ECMI Skopje Office will also host the Skopje Regional Centre. Most of the Regional Centres are expected to open and be functional by end March 2002. Members of each Regional Centre have begun elaborating an activity plan for 2002 and are in the process of developing together with the ECMI RR a tailored training programme based on the training needs of member NGOs.

The ECMI RR is also actively following up on the interest in joint projects displayed by donors at the December 2001 launch through bilateral meetings in Skopje. Throughout 2002, the ECMI NGO Network will assist in fundraising for the joint projects, establish an NGO volunteer programme, establish a core team of potential trainers from within their own members who will first undergo NGO training modules, further develop the Network Code of Conduct, and last but not least, actively support the establishment and functioning of the Regional Centres.

The next meeting of the Network Coordinating Body is scheduled for May 2002 and the full annual assembly meeting of the Network will be held in September 2002.

VI. CONCLUSION

ECMI notes with great appreciation the degree of interest and engagement displayed by the NGOs and their efforts to work together to establish the Network and to generate project ideas. Indeed, the *ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia* began functioning informally already after the second meeting of the NGO Roundtable (Ohrid, 30 June - 2 July 2001). Participating NGOs met with one another and also sought meetings on a regular basis with the ECMI RR in order to discuss network issues, joint project ideas as well as training needs. The interaction between the NGOs and the ECMI RR also worked very well, as evidenced by the many meetings spontaneously requested by the NGOs.

These results are especially significant given the particularly tense atmosphere which has prevailed in Macedonia since the beginning of the conflict in February 2001. In fact, at the Ohrid meeting, the participants agreed that, because of the recent crisis, it was more important than ever for the NGO community to develop cooperation and to devise means of strengthening interethnic communication. Many Network members also felt that the NGO community should bear a certain responsibility for not having been able to prevent the crisis and for not reacting swiftly enough when the damage was being done. They therefore felt that this should motivate the sector to make a genuine effort at improving interethnic relations.

Another encouraging sign has been the spontaneous establishment of local networks. Thus, several NGO members have been engaged in establishing informal and formal networks of NGOs in their respective regions in Macedonia (e.g. in Kumanovo, Gostivar, Shuto Orizari and Bitola).

The ECMI NGO Network, its Memorandum of Cooperation and the Code of Conduct developed by Network members are being used as a model for other NGO Networks in Macedonia – the Alliance of NGOs working with Roma street children being a recent example.

Sustainability of the Network and the Regional Centres has been a leading issue for the initiators of this project from the start. We can be optimistic regarding this point based on the results achieved thus far. Indeed, as the process of establishing and running the Network has been member-driven, it has ensured the establishment of solid foundations for a sustainable Network of domestic NGOs. Further, as the needs of participating NGOs for additional training, e.g. on project management, proposal writing, fundraising, organizational sustainability, will be addressed, this ensures that the participating NGOs will have the capacity to generate joint interethnic projects. The assessment sheets filled out at the end of the Ohrid meeting of the NGO Roundtable indicated that the participating NGOs were satisfied with the serious and systematic approach of the initiative. Indeed, most shared the feeling that, despite having participated in numerous networks, this was the first time that they had been attended a meeting where network issues were discussed so thoroughly. They felt that, combined with the fact that they themselves had generated all the ideas, this would ensure the success and sustainability of the Network.

The process of generating a detailed document such as the MoC had also been appreciated by the members. This they felt would ensure a sense of belonging and ownership of the Network.

Another factor which will enhance the success of the ECMI NGO Network is the fact that membership is reflective of overall ethnic composition of country, including the smaller communities.

The coordination between the ECMI headquarters in Flensburg and the rest of the project team in Skopje worked well in 2001. Network members also expressed the opinion that visits to Macedonia by the Flensburg-based Project Leader during the crisis sent a strong message of dedication to the Network members. The attitude of the entire Macedonia project team has been (and will continue to be) pro-active and solution-oriented.

The following are a few of the "lessons" which can be drawn from the past year and which will be borne in mind while implementing the follow-on project in Macedonia:

- The admission of new NGO members, in addition to being based on recommendations, should continue to be complemented by a field assessment. This is important due to the specifics of the NGO sector not only in Macedonia but also in general, e.g. high turnovers, creation of splinter NGOs, evolution of NGOs into grant-making foundations, etc.
- Room should be left for programme flexibility, as project implementation in conditions of uncertainty may not be planned precisely.
- Projects which are dialogue- and interaction intensive by nature require the on-site presence and participation of personnel with experience in the region, knowledge of the sector, the local language(s) and a pro-active and inclusive approach. ECMI's availability to member NGOs will be enhanced by the establishment of an independent ECMI Skopje office and full project team in 2002.

ANNEX A

DECLARATION

**OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE NGO ROUNDTABLE
ON "INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS IN THE FYR OF MACEDONIA"
ORGANISED BY THE EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MINORITY ISSUES (ECMI)**

(European Centre for Minority Issues, Flensburg, Germany, 10-13 December 2000)

On 10-13 December 2000, the first meeting of the NGO Roundtable was held in Flensburg in a spirit of constructive co-operation.

All those present at that meeting (see List of Participants attached) expressed their unanimous support for the aims of the Stability Pact for South East Europe and their willingness to collaborate with one another in support of these aims.

Furthermore, the participants call upon the Participating States of the Stability Pact to consider the possibility of setting up effective channels of communication and appropriate mechanisms of consultation which will enable NGOs and civil society from South East Europe to have direct access to the Stability Pact and especially to Working Table 1 on Human Rights and Democratization.

The Macedonian NGOs present at the roundtable embraced the following principles and plan of action, to be developed further at a follow-on meeting:

1. The NGO community plays a crucial role in the retrenchment of democracy, human rights, social and economic development and justice in South Eastern Europe. The NGO Roundtable serves to assist NGOs to exercise that role in accordance with the principles of tolerance, mutual trust, effectiveness and transparency.
2. The NGO Roundtable will establish a structure to assist NGOs in generating projects formulated in line with these principles. Inter-ethnic cooperation towards these aims is particularly encouraged.
3. The ECMI Facilitators will, in close cooperation with a local project partner, establish an electronic network for consultation among member NGOs and a web-based resource centre for cooperative project development.
4. ECMI will also make provision for direct assistance to member NGOs in their drafting of project proposals through its own staff and through the establishment of links to funding agencies, including the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.
5. In addition to NGOs present at the first roundtable meeting, others will be invited to contribute to the follow-on process, to be arranged at the second meeting of the roundtable, to be held in the Republic of Macedonia in April 2001.

Flensburg, Germany
5 February 2001

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

of the First Meeting of the NGO Roundtable on "Inter-Ethnic Relations in the FYR of Macedonia"

(European Centre for Minority Issues, Flensburg, Germany, 10-13 December 2000)

MACEDONIAN NGO EXPERTS:

Kalin Babuscu	Project Officer, Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation (MCIC) (Skopje)
Sevda Deari	President, Organisation of Turkish Youth of Macedonia "RUMELI" (Skopje)
Zoran Dimov	Director, Roma International Center in Macedonia (Skopje)
Iskra Evrosimovska	International Center for Preventive Action and Conflict Resolution (ICPCR) (Skopje)
Marjan Josifoski	President, European Centre for Integration (ECI) – Macedonia (Skopje)
Nikolina Kenig	Acting Director, Ethnic Conflict Resolution Project, Faculty of Philosophy, Sts Cyril and Methodius University (Skopje)
Blerim Koljali	Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research, Sts. Cyril and Methodius University (Skopje)
Ilija Manasiev	Secretary General, Association of European Student Structures (AEGEE) - Skopje (Skopje)
Azdrijan Memedov	Organisation for Youth Initiatives "PONTI" (Skopje)
Ismet Muhic	Project Manager, Center for Multicultural Understanding and Cooperation (Skopje)
Olga Murdzeva-Skaric	President, Union of Women's Organisations of the Republic of Macedonia (Skopje)
Albert Musliu	Association for Democratic Initiatives (ADI) (Gostivar)
Mirjana Najčevska	Director, Center for Human Rights, Center for Refugees and Forced Migration Studies, Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research, Sts. Cyril and Methodius University; Macedonian Helsinki Committee (Skopje)
Mirjana Nikolovska	Union for Culture of the Vlach in Macedonia (Skopje)
Stanka Novaković	President, Association of the Women Serbs in the Republic of Macedonia (Skopje)
Elena Papacafa	President, Association of Vlach Women in Macedonia (Skopje)
Nadire Selman	President, Association of Roma Women (ESMA) (Skopje)
Sebihana Skenderovska	Project Manager, Roma Community Center "DROM" (Kumanovo)

Muhamed Toci	Member of the Presidency, Humanitarian and Charitable Association of Roma "Mesečina" (Gostivar)
Zaneta Trajkoska	Project Manager, Macedonian Press Center (Skopje)
Sunoor Verma	International Consultant on Project Management, Center for Refugees and Forced Migration Studies, Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research, Sts. Cyril and Methodius University (Skopje)
Zekir Zekiri	"MULTIKULTURA" (Tetovo)
<u>INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS:</u>	
Erik André Andersen	Project Coordinator, Balkan Human Rights Network, Danish Center for Human Rights (Copenhagen)
Tore Bøgh	Ambassador of Norway en Mission Spéciale (Oslo); ECMI Board Member
Anca Ciuca	Foundation for Democratic Change (Bucharest)
Farimah Daftary	ECMI Research Associate (Flensburg)
Panayote Elias Dimitras	Greek Helsinki Monitor, Minority Rights Group-Greece (Athens)
Hans-Peter Furrer	Director of Political Affairs, Council of Europe (Strasbourg); ECMI Board Member
Lars Funch Hansen	Project Coordinator, South East European Refugee Assistance Network (SEE-RAN), Danish Refugee Council (Copenhagen)
Jesper Højbjerg	Project Consultant for South Eastern Europe, Secretariat for Peace and Stability (FRESTA), Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Copenhagen)
Priit Järve	ECMI Senior Analyst (Flensburg)
Petra Kovács	Research Associate, Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative, Open Society Institute - Hungary (Budapest)
William McKinney	ECMI Electronic Services Librarian (Flensburg)
Boris Tsilevich	Member of the National Parliament of Latvia; Founder of the MINELRES Project on Minority Human Rights in Central and Eastern Europe (Riga)
Marc Weller	ECMI Director (Flensburg)

ANNEX B

MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION

"ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia"

I. Aim

This Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) is the result of a joint initiative between the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), in Flensburg, Germany, and the members of the *ECMI-NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia* [hereinafter "Network"]. The MoC describes the agreement of the undersigned parties for implementation and management of the Network.

This Network will enhance the cooperation of the member NGOs towards the development and improvement of interethnic tolerance, respect for differences and dialogue among all those living in the Republic of Macedonia. In particular, this NGO Network aims to strengthen the capacities of the participating NGOs to generate joint projects and other initiatives with a strong interethnic dimension and to implement such initiatives. These activities shall be carried out with a strong emphasis on local cooperation, making full use of ECMI Regional NGO Centres (hereafter "Regional Centres"). Through these Regional Centres, interethnic projects of direct relevance to local communities can be fostered according to the priorities established by them.

The representatives of the NGOs signatories to this MoC pledge their cooperation in its full implementation in accordance with the principles of tolerance, interethnic cooperation, transparency and accountability. ECMI which has initiated the creation of this Network will facilitate its operation, as detailed in the Section III, subject to Section VIII. ECMI will not in general be able to fund projects developed by the members of the Network but can make available support for attempts to raise funds for projects and other initiatives developed within the Network, subject to Annex 3.

II. Field of Work

Through the means of this Network, the capacity of participating NGOs to devise and implement interethnic projects will be enhanced. This includes training and other capacity enhancing measures. In addition, the credibility of participating NGOs will be strengthened by following the criteria for admission to membership (Annex 1) and a common Code of Conduct contained in Annex 2. Moreover, the Network will support the development of joint interethnic projects, their presentation to funders and their implementation in strict accordance with these criteria.

The Network will be supported by a web-based information resource. That resource will provide an opportunity for participating NGOs to exhibit their profile and detail their activities. In addition, the resource will contain vital information of relevance to member NGOs in terms of project drafting, funding opportunities and good practices in the delivery of projects.

The Network will also provide a means through which the strong contribution that NGOs can make to the development of civil society in the Republic of Macedonia can be highlighted. This includes joint lobbying for an environment in which NGOs dedicated to the principles of this Network can flourish and effectively deliver their mandates.

III. Action Plan

The non-governmental organizations which are members of the Network will engage in joint projects and other initiatives upon which they will agree in accordance with the common standards of transparency and quality of accomplishment adopted by the Network (Annex 2). The overall aim of such projects is to provide benefits to all citizens on a sustainable basis.

Initial activities at the national level (on local action, see Annex 3) will include:

1. Identification of further NGO members.
2. Establishment of a Coordinating Body.
3. Determination of criteria for sustainability and improved functioning of the Network.
4. Joint action to support initiatives of member NGOs
5. Discussions on concrete measures that can be taken to enhance a climate of cooperation, coexistence and tolerance in the NGO sector.
6. Holding of meetings for the elaboration of joint interethnic initiatives.
7. Facilitation of joint project proposals by groups of NGOs - members of the Network.
8. Joint presentation of the Network before potential international donors.
9. Joint electronic resources on the activities of the Network and the non-governmental organizations that are its members, best practices in project proposal drafting, project implementation as well as funding opportunities.
10. Training for NGO representatives on project development, project management and other topics of interest.

IV. Structure of the Network

The Network is a voluntary initiative of NGOs that have decided to collaborate according to common standards of quality towards the aims outlined above. As an informal initiative, the Network does not have legal personality, although this may be reviewed over time.

To sustain the activities of the Network, the following mechanisms will be put into place:

The Assembly

The Assembly of the Network consists of all signatories to the Network.

The Assembly admits new members of the Network in accordance with the criteria presented in Annex 1.

The Assembly of the Network holds a full network meeting at least once a year. At these meetings, the Coordinating Body is elected.

The Coordinating Body

The Assembly, from within its members, elects a Coordinating Body. The Coordinating Body is composed of twelve representatives of NGOs and one representative of ECMI.

When electing the members of the Coordinating Body, every effort should be made to reflect the multiethnic composition of the Network, and representation of the regions in which a Regional Centre is based.

The Coordinating Body elects its Chair.

The Coordinating Body is convened upon the request of the Chair or of at least 1/3 of the members of the Coordinating Body.

Tasks and Responsibilities of the Coordinating Body

The Coordinating Body takes on the principal responsibility for the implementation of the action plan of the Network. To this end it is responsible for:

- **Convening the Coordinating Body**, including scheduling meetings, regular contacts and education of the members of the Coordinating Body, distribution of the agenda, provision of materials and other additional tasks in accordance with the needs.
- **Convening the members of the Network**, including the selection and invitation of facilitators and participants, distribution of the agenda, accompanying materials and other additional tasks in accordance with the needs.
- **Devising a sustainability strategy for the Network.**
- **Joint lobbying for the benefit of the Network**
 - **External lobbying plan:** presentation of the Network before various structures, lobbying and advocacy.
 - **Internal lobbying plan:** includes promoting this initiative and developing association and collaboration, organizing discussions between internal members and assigning activities to all parties concerned.
 - **Maintaining regular contacts**, at least through one annual formal joint meeting, with the Executive Committees of the Regional Centres.

V. Monitoring the Results of the Initiative

The progress of network activity will be monitored by the Coordinating Body, the Assembly and the signatories, through the development and upgrading of the joint website and other informational materials related to this initiative and the Network. The Assembly will review the annual reports of the Regional Centres and an annual report presented by the Coordinating Body on national activities.

VI. Decision-Making Process

The Network or the Regional Centres do not direct the activities of member NGOs conducted outside of the authority of the Network. Instead, decisions obtaining from the bodies herein established relate to the functioning and activities of the Network, the Regional Centres and projects conducted under their aegis.

Decisions by the Assembly are made by simple majority of all members. A decision on the exclusion of a member accepted by the Assembly into membership is made by a two-thirds majority of all members on grounds of having manifestly failed to comply with the Code of Conduct for Member NGOs contained in Annex 2. In relation to a member that was admitted by a Regional Centre that has manifestly failed to comply with the Code of Conduct contained in Annex 2, exclusion may be decided by a two-thirds majority of all members of the Regional Centre concerned. That decision will take effect upon endorsement by the Coordinating Body by a two-thirds majority.

The Coordinating Body takes decisions by a majority of its members.

Decisions affecting funding issues and the role and functions of ECMI can only be effective with the consent of ECMI.

This paragraph is subject to Section VII.

VII. Conflict Resolution

Disputes relating to the operation of the Network shall be resolved through consultation in the Coordinating Body. If a recommendation of the Coordinating Body as to how to resolve a dispute is not accepted by one or more of the relevant parties, or if no recommendation can be agreed by simple majority vote, then a conciliation body composed of one member of the Coordinating Body, one member of ECMI and a third member nominated by those two jointly shall be made. The organization which does not follow the recommendation of the conciliation body shall be excluded from the Network by a simple majority vote of the Coordinating Body.

Disputes relating to joint projects conducted under the aegis of the Network or of the Regional Centres that cannot be resolved through consultation among the project partners, if necessary with the involvement of the ECMI Regional Representative, within a period of two months of notification of the dispute by either party to the Coordinating Body will also be resolved through the above mechanism.

VIII. Financing of the Network

For 2001, ECMI has obtained funding to facilitate the establishment and initial operation of the Network. The generous support of the Ministries for Foreign Affairs of Denmark and Norway is noted with appreciation in this context. It is expected that similar and possibly additional funding can be obtained to support Network activities for 2002. Planning in 2002 will be directed towards making the Network sustainable in the longer term. The Coordinating Body, in consultation with ECMI, will decide on a long-term strategy for sustainability.

The Network itself will generally not be able to fund joint projects, subject to Annex 3. However, the Network will assist in the presentation of joint projects to potential funders. These include local missions of donor countries, international organizations and foundations and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. ECMI as part of the Network will be available to assist in the monitoring of project implementation in relation to projects where funding was obtained as a result of such an effort conducted under the umbrella of the Network.

Through its Regional Centres, the Network may also be able to provide some direct funding for project initiatives that promise rapid and visible results for all communities in a given locality, as is outlined in Annex 3.

IX. Concluding Provisions

1. This Memorandum of Cooperation will be in force for two years and will be extended for periods of a further two years without the need for further action unless decided otherwise. ECMI's continued participation will require annual confirmation, however.
2. The terms of this Memorandum of Cooperation may be amended or augmented by a two-thirds majority of the full membership meeting, provided at least half attend. However, changes affecting the role or responsibility of ECMI shall only be effectuated with the approval of ECMI.
3. Any Member NGO of the Network can, at its own decision, resign from the Network. It shall communicate this decision in writing to the Coordinating Body and the decision shall become effective one month after receipt of the notice. If a Member NGO wishing to resign is engaged in a joint project that has been generated through the regional or national structures of the Network, it shall only be able to resign effective at the time of conclusion of the project, as stipulated in the project proposal. However, if all other Project Partners agree, the NGO wishing to leave can be released as stipulated in the first sentence of this paragraph.

MoC ANNEX 1

CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE "ECMI NGO NETWORK FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF INTERETHNIC RELATIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA"

1. Membership of the Network shall be broadly reflective of the ethnic composition of the Republic of Macedonia.
2. Member NGOs shall promote and initiate activities in areas of interest to all communities.
3. Member NGOs shall promote ideas for cooperation with different ethnic groups and communities and shall jointly engage in and contribute to the implementation of these ideas.
4. Member NGOs shall be open for cooperation with institutions that are interested in the promotion and improvement of the interethnic cooperation.
5. Member NGOs shall support the Network's lobbying efforts in order to achieve mutually agreed aims.
6. The Network will not be open to NGOs that have a political party background and goals.
7. Member NGOs shall be transparent in their work and accountable to their members and to donors.
8. Member NGOs shall be bound to the contents of the Memorandum of Cooperation.
9. New members shall be proposed by one NGO Member and seconded by another.
10. By signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation, an NGO formally becomes a member of the Network upon the decision of the Assembly/Regional Centre.
11. In case of non-compliance with the aforementioned criteria, the Network reserves the right to exclude the member after having conducted a full investigation.
12. All members have the obligation to act according to the decisions of the bodies of the Network.

MoC ANNEX 2

CODE OF CONDUCT

FOR MEMBER NGOS OF THE "ECMI NGO NETWORK FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF INTERETHNIC RELATIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA"

A. Values

As diverse as our activities are, we have common value systems. Based on the desire to advance and improve people's lives, combat poverty and inequality; on the commitment to enhance cooperation between member NGOs towards the development and improvement of interethnic relations among all those living in the Republic of Macedonia; and on the resolve to strengthen the capacities of the participating NGOs to generate joint projects and other initiatives with a strong interethnic dimension and to implement such initiatives, we are committed to the following fundamental values that underpin the mission and objectives of the MoC signatories. We therefore commit ourselves to:

- Being guided in our work by the general principles of tolerance, respect for differences and dialogue.
- Being responsive to the needs and welfare of the people of the Republic of Macedonia.
- Accountability and transparency.
- Participatory democracy.
- People-centred development.
- Respecting the rights, culture and dignity of all people.
- Ensuring the organization remains true to its mission and objectives.
- Promoting voluntarism, and active volunteer involvement at all levels.
- Mutual cooperation, collaboration and networking with other agencies around issues of mutual concern.
- Striving for excellence, including efficient and effective service provision at all levels.

B. Governance

The effectiveness of our work depends on each organization's governance structures. As professional organizations, we recognize the importance of establishing and maintaining able bodies that will govern the internal functioning of our individual organizations. Committed, experienced and responsible individuals are a critical ingredient for this. To this end we will:

- Ensure the organization has a clear vision, mission, objectives and policies, and adheres to them.
- Specify the frequency of governance structure meetings, quorums, and the role and powers of the governance structure.
- Develop a policy that prohibits direct or indirect conflict of interest by members of the governance structure, members, employees and volunteers. Ensure that members of the governance structure and staff excuse themselves from decisions where they have, or are perceived to have, a vested interest.

- In the case of an independent Board or Trust, adopt a policy that discourages members from submitting tenders to the organization or applying for staffing positions within the organization. This policy must stipulate that if they desire to do either, they must resign from the governance structure.
- Ensure that governance structure understands and is responsible for overall policy-making and accepts ultimate responsibility for governance of all aspects of the organization.
- Within financial constraints, ensure that the governance structure reflects the ethnic composition of Macedonian society and the various target constituencies that the NGO works with, with regard to both their composition and their geographic spread, and that both genders are equally represented.
- Ensure that a needs assessment is performed through direct contact with a representative number of beneficiaries prior to the project proposal development. Members will ensure that the entire process of project design and implementation is guided by the needs of the beneficiaries.

C. Standards of Cooperation between Member NGOs

General Standards

- Member NGOs will be open to cooperation with other NGOs in addressing the needs and desires of the community/beneficiaries being served by the NGO.
- Member NGOs will encourage and support the development of the NGO sector at their regional level as well as at the national level.
- Member NGOs will be open to transferring information and know-how on NGO sector functioning to new and up coming NGOs.
- Member NGOs will actively seek exchange of information with other NGOs in order to facilitate joint action and avoid duplication of efforts.
- Member NGOs will encourage the local NGO community to jointly pursue contacts and cooperation with the local government, the private sector and the media in order to further the effectiveness of the sector.

Standards of Cooperation between Member NGOs within a Regional Centre and within the national Network

- Member NGOs will work in the spirit of collaboration, mutual trust, tolerance and respect for differences.
- Member NGOs will ensure that there is regular exchange of information between them about their activities and initiatives.
- Member NGOs will ensure that their respective beneficiaries and network of associates are aware about the activities of the Regional Centres/National Network.
- Member NGOs will find ways of sharing and disseminating the knowledge acquired through the different training programmes in which they have been participating.
- Member NGOs will seek to find ways of resolving misunderstandings and conflicts between them through constructive discussion and problem analysis.
- In case of an inability to resolve a conflict between Member NGOs as outlined above, the procedure prescribed by the Memorandum of Cooperation will be followed.
- Member NGOs will seek to coordinate through the Regional Centres their efforts in lobbying for the cause of the beneficiaries with the local government and the private sector.

- Member NGOs will seek to coordinate through the national Network their efforts in lobbying for the cause of the beneficiaries with the national government and the private sector.

Standards of Cooperation between Joint Project Partners

- In forming project alliances, Member NGOs will be guided by the desire, ability and capacity of partners and not exclusively by the need to have an ethnically diverse team.
- Project alliances between Member NGOs will be made after discussing elaborately the aims, rationale and beneficiaries of the proposed project.
- The NGO proposing the project will be the lead NGO and be the focal point with the donor, local agencies and the media for that particular project.
- Upon agreeing to the aim and rationale of a project, the Project Partners will participate in the process of project design and in defining the role of their respective organizations. This will include duties and responsibilities of the respective Partners in design and implementation, as well as the financial implications of participation.
- When presenting a joint project proposal to funding agencies, the name of the lead NGO and its Project Partners will be visibly and clearly presented.
- In the project implementation phase the lead NGO will be accountable for the project.
- In the project implementation phase the more experienced NGOs within the respective project alliance will share and transfer know-how to the less experienced members, thus contributing to the overall NGO capacity enhancement strategy of the Network.
- In all information dissemination campaigns related to joint project names of all Project Partners will be mentioned.
- Member NGOs will make every effort to ensure that any misunderstanding or conflicts arising within a project alliance will be settled internally through constructive discussion and dialogue. In case of failure to do so, the procedure outlined in the Memorandum of Cooperation will be followed.
- Member NGOs will promote the idea of interethnic collaborative work by setting positive examples through the successful implementation of joint interethnic projects.
- Member NGOs will seek to draw the lessons from the implementation of a joint project by identifying problems and how they can be overcome as well as best practice. This information will be shared with Network members through the Network Website with the aim of making it a valuable resource for the entire NGO community.

D. Accountability

Our commitment to promote democracy is enshrined in a culture of participation and complete accountability within our organizations. Transparency in all the work we do is key. To this end we will:

- Develop mechanisms to enable all our stakeholders to be involved in planning programmes that directly affect them.
- Provide opportunities for regular evaluations and updating of programmes that include stakeholder and community input.

- Hold an Annual General Meeting with full, open and accurate disclosure of relevant information concerning goals, programmes, finances and governance. This will ensure accountability towards the beneficiaries and donors.
- Hold regular strategic planning sessions to which relevant stakeholders are invited to contribute.

E. Management and Human Resources

Human capacity and skilled leadership is a critical component of the effectiveness of our work. We shall endeavour to follow the best management practices appropriate to the organizations mission, operations and governance structure. To this end we will:

- Periodically reassess the organization's mission, objectives and operations, in the light of changing contexts and constituents' needs.
- Critically analyze our own practices and our organizational culture and implement those changes necessary to build a culture that encourages creativity, diversity, responsibility and respect that will recognize all cultural groups as equal partners in developing the organization.
- Develop clear, well-defined written policies and procedures to be followed, which relate to all employees, members and volunteers.
- Establish and maintain disciplinary and grievance procedures with clear lines of authority and accountability.
- Have clear and transparent procedures for employing new staff, and disengaging existing staff.
- Have clear staff development policies that seek to empower all staff and volunteers to increase their skills in order to enable them to move to greater levels of responsibility.
- Develop adequate and acceptable systems of assessing skills, experience and qualifications, levels of responsibility and performance, and remunerate on this basis.
- Encourage management to adopt interactive leadership styles and an "open door" policy to facilitate good communication between staff and themselves.

NGOs need to prioritize the development and maintenance of proper financial management strategies. Our finances shall be managed as to ensure appropriate use of funds and accountability to members and donors. To this end we will:

- Comply with generally accepted business accounting and auditing practices.
- Set up appropriate financial systems and ensure that we employ qualified persons to administer and manage these systems.
- Conduct annual audits for income and expenditure.
- Have clear policies on loans and staff advances.
- Set up mechanisms to ensure that our procedures for purchasing goods and services are free from vested interests of individuals in our organization and that they are cost effective.
- Prepare realistic project or organizational budgets, then monitor and adhere to them. In instances where it becomes necessary make changes, the appropriate consultations should be undertaken and any amendments recorded.
- Formally and publicly charge members for any attempt at fraud, theft or misappropriation.

- Wherever possible, ensure that the funding base of the organization is diversified.
- Keep fund-raising and administration costs to a minimum to ensure that maximum possible resources reach the beneficiaries.
- Ensure that funds provided are only used for the intended purpose and that the donor is consulted regarding the need for any changes in the activity plan and budget.
- Ensure that tenders and contracts called for encourage the participation of small and emerging businesses, in particular those owned by previously disadvantaged sectors of our society.
- Provide clear and transparent accounting to the broader membership and/or constituency of the organization.

F. Resources

We need systems to manage organizational assets in a sustainable and cost-effective manner. This is a vital tool towards the sector maintaining its original values of being effective and efficient in our work. To this end we will:

- Develop internal procedures and control mechanisms and implement these to ensure the proper use of the assets of the organization and to clearly separate organizational use from private use.
- Develop and implement mechanisms to monitor the use of staff time.
- Conduct periodic cost-benefit analyses of projects and review resource allocations in light of these.

MoC ANNEX 3

ECMI REGIONAL NGO CENTRES

A. Aims

Within the context of the *ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia*, there shall be established a number of *ECMI Regional NGO Centres* [hereinafter "Regional Centres"]. These Regional Centres shall serve the aim of improving interethnic tolerance, respect for differences and dialogue among all communities in the Republic of Macedonia. To this end they shall enhance the capacity of member NGOs subscribing to these aims, facilitate the development of joint interethnic projects on the basis of locally established priorities and support the implementation of such projects.

B. Membership and Access

The Regional Centres will serve the local NGO community dedicated to the above aims. The Regional Centres will also provide a forum for dialogue between the local citizens and local government with the member NGOs.

NGO membership in the Regional Centres shall be broadly reflective of the ethnic composition of the local community. While the number of members will vary from Centre to Centre, an average number of fifteen is expected to develop.

Membership in a Regional Centre implies membership in the national *ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia* [hereinafter "Network"]. Criteria for Membership have been established by the Network in Annex 1 of the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC). Until a Regional Centre has obtained a membership in excess of ten NGOs, including full representation of all ethnic communities in that region, decisions on membership in that Regional Centre shall be taken at the level of the Network after having heard the advice of the Regional Centre. Once a Regional Centre achieves a membership in excess of 10, and once the Network has confirmed that this membership is sufficiently representative, it shall itself decide on the admission of new members according to the criteria set out in Annex 1.

A decision to remove a member admitted by a Regional Centre shall be made by that Regional Centre according to a decision making process set out above according to criteria established in Annex 1, para. 11, subject to confirmation by the Network according to its procedures established for this purpose.

C. Links with Local Communities and Local Authorities

The NGOs cooperating through the *ECMI Regional NGO Centres* shall be responsive to the needs of the local communities. When the Regional Centres determine the priority areas for project development, they shall consult with community representatives about local needs and the best ways of meeting them. There shall be periodic consultations of this kind.

The Regional Centres shall seek cooperation of local administration, while maintaining full independence in the design and execution of their projects. To this end, there shall also be regular consultations.

D. Programmes and Activities

In addition to delivering projects that will provide direct benefits to local communities as a result of interethnic NGO cooperation, the Regional Centres will:

- Assist member NGOs in enhancing their capacity through training.
- Provide facilities for interethnic NGO cooperation.
- Assist in the development of joint projects and endorse them in relation to donors.
- Assist in raising funding for projects.
- Support the delivery of projects.
- Ensure viability, transparency and accountability of projects and evaluate outcomes.
- Raise the profile of NGO cooperation of this kind in the localities and at the national level.
- Represent interests common to all NGOs and essential to their successful functioning at the local level.

E. Functioning of the Regional Centres

All members conduct all of their activities in accordance with the standards of the national Network. The Regional Centres can take decisions pertinent to the above activities. Principal decisions relating to the activities of the Regional Centre shall be taken by a majority of all members in the Regional Centre, subject to the authority exercised by the Network.

Once a year, the Regional Centre will establish priorities for local NGO project development, after having consulted with local citizens' representatives and local authorities and in view of the success of the previous project cycle. The Regional Centres will accelerate support for projects corresponding to these priorities, although this does not preclude the endorsement of other projects.

In deciding to support the development and funding of projects, the Regional Centres will be guided by the following considerations:

- Capacity of the proposing NGOs and interethnic nature of the alliance of NGOs proposing the project.
- Viability and sustainability of the project.
- Correspondence of the project with the priority needs identified by the Regional Centre.
- Provisions for transparency and accountability in project delivery.

The Regional Centres will develop annual action plans in line with the priorities that have been determined, and will present an annual report on activities conducted by NGOs under its aegis.

The Regional Centres can recommend small projects for direct funding through ECMI. The Regional Centres can also recommend that ECMI make available seed funding for the full development of larger promising project proposals. The Regional Centres might also recommend partial funding from ECMI as a means of attracting more funding. Finally, the Regional Centre can recommend that the project be taken up by the Network infrastructure for lobbying for donor support.

The Regional Centres will also agree with the Network training priorities and a training programme.

The members of a Regional Centre will themselves establish how they will run that Centre. The Regional Centres will establish an Executive Committee responsible for maintaining the arrangements for their routine operations at the direction of the full membership of the Regional Centre. The Executive Committee will also represent the Regional Centre in contacts with the national Network and in contacts with other Regional Centres.

F. Infrastructure

The Regional Centres are associations of participating NGOs cooperating through an infrastructure provided by ECMI and with ECMI facilitation of their activities. ECMI will establish a small office for the Regional Centres, provide basic computing and communication facilities, etc. The daily operations

of the Regional Centres will lie with the local NGOs. ECMI will support these activities as outlined above, including training, through its Skopje office.

G. Relations with the National Network and Cooperation among Regional Centres

The Regional Centres will function within the overall context of the *ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia*. The Network will establish overall principles of operation and guidance that will also apply to the Regional Centres. The Network will coordinate training offerings, it will maintain a national web resource as a platform for participating NGOs to display their profile and activities and also to provide information on funding and other matters to participating NGOs, and it will assist in presenting project proposals emanating from the Regional Centres or the Network to funders.

The Regional Centres will also seek to coordinate their activities through direct contacts amongst themselves.

ANNEX C

"ECMI NGO NETWORK FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF INTERETHNIC RELATIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA"

I. LIST OF MEMBER NGOS (AS OF 17 DECEMBER 2001)

Six *ECMI Regional NGO Centres* will be established in the following cities: Skopje, Kumanovo, Tetovo, Gostivar, Bitola, Shtip. The membership of each Regional Centre is expected to develop to about fifteen NGOs. Membership in a Regional Centres implies membership in the national Network.

Amongst the 43 member NGOs, there is an equitable representation of all communities, including also the smaller groups.

Bitola

1. "FELIX" (Ms Dijana Gorgievska)
2. Cultural and Humanitarian Association of Turks "CHELEBIA" (Mr Muarem Sadik)
3. Association of Albanian Women (Ms Naide Hasanovska)
4. Youth Cultural Association (Ms Elizabeta Markovska)
5. Association for Open Communications (Mr Miroslav Stojanov)

Gostivar

1. Inter-Ethnic Project (IPG) (Ms Yllza Ademi)
2. Humanitarian and Charitable Association of Roma "MESECINA" (Mr Samet Skenderi)
3. Association for Education, Culture, Ecology and Humanity "MILLENNIUM" (Mr Senad Beqiri)
4. Permaculture and Peacebuilding Center (PPC) (Mr Pajtim Saiti)
5. Turkish Women's Organisation of Macedonia "MATUKAT" (Ms Sadika Aga)
6. Association for Development of Society (Mr Miralin Saliu)
7. Youth Ecological Center "REKANSKI BISER" (Mr Ermand Neziri)
8. Enterprise Supporting Agency (Mr Jetmir Shishko)
9. Citizens' Association for Humanitarian Work "DENICA" (Ms Aleksandra Popovska)
10. Association of Albanian Women (Ms Lazime Ejupi)

Kavadarci

1. Association of Roma from Tikvesh (Mr Raim Suljemanov)

Kumanovo

1. Roma Community Center "DROM" (Mr Ahmet Jasharevski)
2. "DAJA" Roma Women's Organisation (Ms Dilbera Kamberovska)

3. "ARKA" Forum for Roma Rights (Mr Feat Kamberovski)
4. Association of Women "BLESS" (Ms Anife Latifi)
5. MAIKA Inter-Ethnic NGO Network (Ms Lidija Ilievska)
6. Association of Vlachs "HALCA AL BROVA" (Mr Nako Nikolovski)
7. Association of Serbs in Macedonia - Kumanovo (Mr Dobrivoje Stosic)
8. Association of Turks (Mr Shenol Osmanov)

Ohrid

1. Turkish Women's Organisation of Macedonia "MATUKAT" (Ms Yildiz Ali)

Shtip

1. Association for Roma Rights Protection (ARRP) (Mr Shenaj Osmanov)
2. Active for Independent Initiative (Ms Verica Puzdrlieva)
3. Association for Progress, Education and Lobbying (PEL) (Ms Stojka Nakova)

Skopje

1. Association of Roma Women "ESMA" (Ms Gultena Bekir)
2. Association for Human Rights of Roma "AVUTNIPE" (Mr Dragan Stoshic)
3. Center for Culture and Constructive Action "NEVEN" (Ms Suncica Miljkovic)
4. Organization of Turkish Youth of Macedonia "RUMELI" (Ms Rejhan Muhamed)
5. Union for the Culture of Vlachs in Macedonia (Ms Mirjana Nikolovska)
6. Association for the Development of Media in the Turkish Language (Mr Erdem Ahmet)
7. Union of Albanian Women, "Chair" branch (Ms Gjuner Nebiu)
8. Organization of Roma Youth "ANGLUNIPE" (Ms Ramiza Sakip)
9. Albanian Youth Association of Macedonia "Fan S. Noli" (Mr Bujar Osmani)
10. Association of Polish People in Macedonia POLONIA (Ms Tereza Shaurek)

Tetovo

1. Humanitarian Association of Roma in Macedonia "SONCE" (Mr Nadir Redzepe)
2. Multiethnic Organization Center for Association, Development and Tolerance "MOCART" (Mr Zoran Tasevski)
3. Centre for Balkan Cooperation "LOJA" (Mr Bujar Luma)
4. "MULTIKULTURA" (Ms Ariana Sulejmani)
5. Centre for Democratic Development (Mr Zekir Zekiri)

II. COMPOSITION OF THE NETWORK COORDINATING BODY (ELECTED 17 DECEMBER 2001)

1. Ms Yllza ADEMI, Inter-Ethnic Project – Gostivar (IEP)
2. Mr Senat BEQUIRI, Association for Education, Culture, Ecology and Humanity "MILENIUM" (Vrapciste)
3. Ms Dijana GEORGIEVSKA, Group "FELIX" (Bitola)
4. Mr. Feat KAMBEROVSKI, ARKA Forum for Roma Rights (Kumanovo) ©
5. Ms Elizabeta MARKOVSKA, Youth Cultural Association (Bitola) ©
6. Ms Suncica MILJKOVIC, Centre for Culture and Constructive Action "Neven" (Skopje)
7. Ms Mirijana NIKOLOVSKA, Union for the Culture of Vlachs in Macedonia (Skopje)
8. Mr Shenaj OSMANOV, Association for the Roma Rights Protection (ARRP) (Shtip) ©
9. Mr Nadir REDZEPI, Association "Sonce" (Tetovo) ©
10. Mr Pajtim SAITI, Permaculture and Peacebuilding Center (PPC) (Gostivar) ©
11. Mr Samet SKENDERI, Humanitarian and Charitable Association of Roma "MESECINA" (Gostivar) (*Chairman*)
12. Mr Dragan STOSHIC, Association for Human Rights of Roma "AVUTNIPE" (Skopje) ©
13. Mr Sunoor VERMA, ECMI Regional Representative in Skopje

© Indicates Contact Point for the Regional Centre

ANNEX D

CONTACT INFORMATION OF NETWORK MEMBER NGOS

(as of 11 February 2002)

Detailed information on these organizations and their activities may be found on the web site of the ECMI NGO Network in three languages (English, Macedonian, and Albanian) at: www.ecmingonet.org.mk.

ECMI Regional Representative in Skopje

Dr Sunoor Verma
c/o ECMI Branch Office Skopje
Street Dresdenska #9
MK-1000 Skopje
Tel: (389-2) 391 451, 391 452
Fax: (389-2) 391 453
e-mail: ecmimkd@ecmingonet.org.mk

Active for Independent Initiative (AII) (Shtip)

(Contact: Verica Puzdrlieva)
Braka Miladinovi 6, 2000 Shtip
Tel/Fax: ++ 389 32 391 991, P.O. Box 5
e-mail: anistip@hotmail.com

Albanian Youth Association of Macedonia "Fan S. Noli" (Skopje)

(Contact: Bujar Osmani)
Drimkol 25, 1000 Skopje
mobile: ++ 389 70 520 161
e-mail: bosmed@yahoo.com

"ARKA" Forum for Roma Rights (Kumanovo)

(Contact: Feat Kamberovski)
11 Oktomvri 17/1-1, 1300 Kumanovo
Tel: ++ 389 31 21 362, Fax: ++ 389 31 21 362, mobile: 389 70 242 081
e-mail: arka_ku@yahoo.com
<http://www.arka.org.mk>

Association of Albanian Women (Gostivar)

(Contact: Lazime Ejupi)
Ivo Lola Ribar br. 144, 1230 Gostivar
Tel: ++389 42 215 312

Association for the Development of Society (Negotino-Poloshko/Gostivar)

(Contact: Miralin Saliu)
Zivko Brajkovski bb, 1235 Negotino-poloshko
mobile: ++ 389 70 501 972, Fax: ++ 389 42 331 548
e-mail: negotina@hotmail.com

Association for the Development of Media in the Turkish Language (Skopje)

(Contact: Erdem Ahmet)
Vukovarska 7 2/20, 1000 Skopje
mobile: ++ 389 70 349 340
e-mail: turkmed@freemail.com.mk

Association for Education, Culture, Ecology and Humanity "MILLENNIUM" (Gostivar)

(Contact: Senat Bequiri)
Stara Carshija bb, 1238 Vrapciste-Gostivar
Tel/Fax: ++ 389 42 332 326, mobile: ++389 70 215 342
e-mail: mngo@post.com
<http://www.ekolmill.s5.com>

Association for Human Rights of Roma "AVUTNIPE" (Skopje)

(Contact: Dragan Stoshic)
Slan Dol 25, 1000 Skopje
Tel: ++ 389 2 653 220, Fax: ++ ++ 389 2 653 220,
e-mail: avutnipe@unet.com.mk

Association for Open Communications (Bitola)

(Contact: Miroslav Stojanov)
Sudska 15 , 7000 Bitola
Tel. ++ 389 47 231 938, mobile ++ 389 70 339 183
e-mail: cangal@mail.com.mk

Association for Progress, Education and Lobbing (PEL) (Shtip)

(Contact: Stojka Nakova)
Hristijan Karposh 43, 2000 Shtip
mobile: ++ 389 70 264 238, Fax: ++ 389 32 381 301
e-mail: nel@winning.com

Association of Albanian Women (Bitola)

(Contact: Naide Hasanovska)
Ohridska 243, 7000 Bitola
Tel/Fax: ++ 389 47 227 091

Association of Roma from Tikvesh (Kavadarci)

(Contact: Raim Suljemanov)
Starsho Pindzur 71/6, Kavadarci
Tel: ++ 389 43 418 058, Fax:++ 389 43 418 058, mobile: ++389 70 550 765
e-mail: ztraim@hotmail.com, ztraim@welcom.org.mk

Association of Serbs in Macedonia – Kumanovo (Kumanovo)

(Contact: Dobrivoje Stoshic)
Done Bozinov 24, 1300 Kumanovo
Tel: ++ 389 31 412 357, 414 517
e-mail: uszm2001@yahoo.com

Association of Turks (Kumanovo)

(Contact: Shenol Osmanov)

Bosanska 1a

1300 Kumanovo

Tel: ++ 389 31 420 761, mobile: ++389 70 258 609

e-mail: osenol2001@yahoo.com

Association of Polish People in Macedonia POLONIA (Skopje)

(Contact: Tereza Shaurek)

Vostanicka 130, 1000 Skopje

Tel: ++ 389 2 736 227

Association of Roma Rights Protection (ARRP) (Shtip)

(Contact: Shenaj Osmanov)

Borko Talev 48, 2000 Stip

Tel/Fax: ++ 389 32 391 517, mobile: ++ 389 70 264 219

e-mail: arrp@freemail.com.mk

Association of Roma Women "ESMA" (Skopje)

(Contact: Gultena Bekir)

1213 No. 30, 1000 Skopje

Tel: ++ 389 2 652 202, Fax:++ 389 2 652 202,

e-mail: esma@mt.net.mk

Association of Vlachs "HALCA AL BROVA" (Kumanovo)

(Contact: Nako Nikolovski)

Oktomvriska Revolucija 13/3/10, 1300 Kumanovo

Tel: ++ 389 31 426 816,

e-mail: halcaalb@freemail.com.mk

Association of Women "BLESS" (Kumanovo)

(Contact: Anife Latifi)

Kiro Antevski 38, 1300 Kumanovo

Tel: ++ 389 31 20 859

e-mail: bless_ku@hotmail.com

Centre for Balkan Cooperation "LOJA" (Tetovo)

(Contact: Bujar Luma)

Ohridska 12, 1200 Tetovo

Tel. ++ 389 44 350 570, mobile: ++389 70 360 970

E-mail: cbcloja@yahoo.com

Center for Culture and Constructive Action - "NEVEN" (Skopje)

(Contact: Suncica Miljkovic)

Bul. Jane Sandanski 12/1/2, 1000 Skopje

Tel/Fax: ++ 389 2 465 521, mobile: ++ 389 70 252 009

e-mail: veneta@mt.net.mk

Center for Democratic Development (Tetovo)

(Contact: Zekir Zekiri)
Ul. JNA 36, 1200 Tetovo
mobile: ++ 389 70 240 545, Tel: ++ 389 44 27 475
e-mail: centerdd@hotmail.com

Citizens' Association for Humanitarian Work "DENICA" (Gostivar)

(Contact: Aleksandra Popovska)
Goce Delchev 86, 1230 Gostivar
Tel: ++ 389 42 218 066, mobile: ++ 389 70 578 422
e-mail: aleksandragv@hotmail.com

Cultural and Humanitarian Association of Turks "CHELEBIA" (Bitola)

(Contact: Muarem Sadik)
Borka Talev 17 a, 7000 Bitola
Tel: ++ 389 47 39 630, mobile: 389 70 562 510
e-mail: sadikmuarem@hotmail.com

"DAJA" Roma Women's Organisation

(Contact: Dilbera Kamberovska)
Ivo Lola Ribar 46, 1300 Kumanovo
Tel: ++ 389 31 423 654, 413 662, Fax: ++ 389 31 413 662, 23 554,
mobile: ++389 70 248 995
e-mail: daja@mt.net.mk

Enterprise Supporting Agency (Gostivar)

(Contact: Jetmir Shishko)
Braka Ginovski 6, 1230 Gostivar
Tel: ++ 389 42 221 080, Fax: 389 42 216 458, mobile: ++389 70 341 900
e-mail: esagv@mt.net.mk

FELIX Group (Bitola)

(Contact: Dijana Georgievksa)
Josif Hristovski 4/4, 7000 Bitola
Tel: ++ 389 47 222 874, Fax: ++ 389 47 226 851, mobile ++ 389 70 207 302
e-mail: didi@sonet.com.mk

Humanitarian Association of Roma in Macedonia "SONCE" (Tetovo)

(Contact: Nadir Rezhepi)
Blagoja Toska 170, 1200 Tetovo
Tel/Fax: ++ 389 44 337 123, mobile: ++389 70 522 091
e-mail: khamnrrp@sonet.com.mk

Humanitarian and Charitable Association of Roma "MESECINA" (Gostivar)

(Contact: Samet Skenderi)
Zivko Brajkovski bb, 1230 Gostivar
Tel: ++ 389 42 215 442, 222 271, Fax: ++ 389 42 222 272,
mobile: ++ 389 70 251 222
e-mail: mesecina@mt.net.mk

Inter-Ethnic Project (IPG) (Gostivar)

(Contact: Yllza Ademi)

Braka Ginovski 6, P.O. Box 150, 1230 Gostivar

Tel: ++ 389 42 221 970, Fax:++ 389 42 221 971, mobile ++ 389 70 345 171

e-mail: yllza@ipg.com.mk, ipgoffice@com.mk

MAJKA / Inter-Ethnic NGO Network (Kumanovo)

(Contact: Lidija Ilievska)

Zeleznicka stanica 136, 1300 Kumanovo

mobile: ++ 389 70 313 078, Fax:++ 389 31 422 525,

e-mail: vavku@freemail.org.mk, lidija63@freemail.com.mk

**Multiethnic Organization Centre for Association, Development and Tolerance
"MOCART" (Tetovo)**

(Contact: Zoran Tasevski)

Marshal Tito 122/10, 1200 Tetovo

Tel: ++ 389 44 335 430, mobile: ++ 389 70 501 883

e-mail: mocart_mk@yahoo.com

MULTIKULTURA (Tetovo)

(Contact: Ariana Sulejmani)

JNA bb, 1200 Tetovo

Tel/Fax: ++ 389 44 335 448 Mob. +389 70 579 353

e-mail: ariana@multikultura.org.mk

Organization of Roma Youth "ANGLUNIFE" (Skopje)

(Contact: Ramiza Sakip)

Gorgi Pop Hristov 3-2/1, 1000 Skopje

mobile: ++ 389 70 267 584, Tel: +389 02 642 530

e-mail: ramizas@yahoo.com

Organization of Turkish Youth of Macedonia "RUMELI" (Skopje)

(Contact: Rejhan Muhamed)

Vukovarska 7 2/20, 1000 Skopje

Tel. ++ 389 2 612 375, 630 840

e-mail: rejhanmuhamed@yahoo.com, mtgo_rumeli@yahoo.com

Permaculture and Peacebuilding Center (PPC) (Gostivar)

(Contact: Pajtim Saiti)

JNA 93, 1230 Gostivar

Tel/Fax: ++ 389 42 214 603, mobile: ++ 389 70 266 639

e-mail: pajtim@ppc.org.mk

<http://www.ppc.org.mk>

Roma Community Center "DROM" (Kumanovo)

(Contact: Ahmet Jasharevski)

Done Bozinov 11/5, 1300 Kumanovo

Tel/Fax: ++ 389 31 427 558; ++389 31 20 081

e-mail: drom@soros.org.mk

Turkish Women's Organisation of Macedonia "MATUKAT" (Gostivar)

(Contact: Sadika Aga)

Pavle Avramovski bb, 1230 Gostivar

Tel: ++ 389 42 242 300, Fax:++ 389 42 212 273, 215 018

e-mail: matukat@hotmail.com

Turkish Women's Organisation of Macedonia "MATUKAT" (Ohrid)

(Contact: Yildiz Ali)

Dame Gruev 138, 6000 Ohrid

Tel. ++ 389 96 32 681

e-mail: matukat@hotmail.com

Union for the Culture of Vlachs in Macedonia (Skopje)

(Contact: Mirjana Nikolovska)

Anton Popov 172/2-11, 1000 Skopje

mobile: ++ 389 70 540 876

e-mail: mirjananikolovska@hotmail.com

Union of Albanian Women – "Chair" Branch (Skopje)

(Contact: Gjuner Nebiu)

Pavle Ilic 15/1-10, 1000 Skopje

Tel: ++ 389 2 630 128, mobile ++ 389 70 536 477

e-mail: g.nebiu@yahoo.com

Youth Cultural Association (Bitola)

(Contact: Elizabeta Markovska)

Marshal Tito 61a, 7000 Bitola

Tel: ++ 389 47 233 020, mobile ++ 389 70 610 975

e-mail: emarkovska@yahoo.com

Youth Ecological Center "REKANSKI BISER" (Gostivar)

(Contact: Ermon Neziri)

John Kenedi 25/4/31

1254 Rostushe

Fax: ++ 389 42 470 170, mobile ++ 389 70 567 019

e-mail: almedina_m@hotmail.com; ermonn@hotmail.com

ANNEX E

LIST OF JOINT NGO PROJECT PROPOSALS¹

- Project #1:** *Let's Get Acquainted and Respect One Another*
- Lead NGO Union for the Culture of Vlachs in Macedonia, Skopje
(Contact: Mr Dimo Dimchev)
- Project #2:** *Multiethnic Youth Center - Gostivar*
- Lead NGO Permaculture and Peacebuilding Center, Gostivar
(Contact: Mr Pajtim Saiti)
- Project #3:** *Redesign and Renovation of School Yards*
- Lead NGO Permaculture and Peacebuilding Center, Gostivar
(Contact: Mr Pajtim Saiti)
- Project #4:** *Open Amphitheatre*
- Lead NGO Permaculture and Peacebuilding Center, Gostivar
(Contact: Mr Jetmir Osmani)
- Project #5:** *Improving Multiethnic Cooperation and Dialogue through the Consolidation of the NGO Sector in Gostivar*
- Lead NGO Humanitarian and Charitable Association of Roma "MESECINA",
Gostivar (Contact: Mr Samet Skenderi)
- Project #6:** *Multiethnic Radio - Kumanovo*
- Lead NGO Roma Rights Forum "ARKA", Kumanovo
(Contact: Mr Feat Kamberovski)
- Project #7:** *From Words to Action - Notebook Year 2000*
- Lead NGO FELIX Group, Bitola
(Contact: Ms Dijana Georgievska)
- Project #8:** *Understand to be Understood*
- Lead NGO Centre for Constructive Action and Culture "Neven", Skopje
(Contact: Ms Suncica Miljkovic)
- Project #9:** *Census Campaign*
- Lead NGO Association for Human Rights of Roma "AVUTNIPE", Skopje
(Contact: Mr Severdzan Sulejman)

¹ For more information on these projects and complete project proposals, please contact the lead NGO or the ECMI Regional Representative in Skopje.