

ECMI NGO Network Newsletter

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

This is Newsletter of the ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of the Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia. This Network is a result of a joint initiative between the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), in Flensburg, Germany and members of this Network. This Network will enhance the co-operation 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.

News from the Network

December 04

ECMI Regional Office Skopje

Visit by Mr. Sven Öhlund - Swedish International

Development Cooperation Agency

On behalf of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Mr. Sven Öhlund arrived to ECMI Regional Office Skopje on 4 December for a weeklong evaluation process to assess the yearly performance of ECMI NGO Network. The evaluation will continue with visits of the Regional Centres Shtip, Kumanovo, Gostivar and Tetovo as well as attendance on the ECMI General Assembly.



At the initial meeting with the ECMI Regional Office Team in Skopje, Mr. Öhlund was introduced through the presentations to the work of ECMI Macedonia Team. Hence, Eben Friedman, ECMI Research Associate and Robert Rustem, Research Assistant outlined the results of the project "Toward Regional Guidelines for the Integration of Roms in the Republic of Macedonia".

Subsequent to their presentation, Sunoor Verma, Regional Representative gave a short introduction on ECMI NGO Network and presented the ECMI Team to the SIDA evaluator. The meeting continued with the presentations of Elizabeta Markovska, ECMI Program Manager, Verica Grdanovska, ECMI Web Content Manager, Gordana Cvetkovska, ECMI Office Manager and Vinko Jukic, ECMI Finance Manager. The following discussion fully contributed to the presentation of the ECMI Network for the improvement of interethnic relations.

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December 09

ECMI NGO Network

ECMI NGO Network Coordinating Body Meeting



The last meeting of the Coordinative Body 2003 was held at the premises of the Regional Office Skopje. The main discussion was over the amendments to the Memorandum of Cooperation that were proposed for adoption on the General Assembly.

Also, the reports for the performance of the Regional Centres during 2003 and development of the Intra-networks, that are ought to be presented on the General Assembly, were discussed.

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December 10

ECMI NGO Network

3rd General Assembly

ECMI NGO Network for the Improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia marked its 3rd anniversary at the Hotel "Holiday Inn".



Representatives of all Network member NGOs participated at the annual General Assembly. They presented the work of each Regional Centre and representatives informed each other about new developments in the Network, such as the establishment of intra-networks. Moreover, members gathered to this major event to adopt new amendments to the founding document of the Network called the Memorandum of Cooperation. The 12 members Coordinative Body, 6 representing each Regional Centre and 6 representing all ethnic communities in Macedonia, were elected.

In the afternoon, members celebrated the successful completion of this major event with a standing cocktail party, where they were joined by representatives of the international community, local government members, representatives of domestic and international NGOs as well as the business sector.

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December 12

ECMI Regional Office Skopje

"Minorities in Democracy" - International Conference in Cooperation with Conrad Adenauer Foundation



On 12 & 13 December 2003, ECMI and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation co-hosted a two-day conference at the South East European University in Tetovo on the topic of "Minorities in Democracy". Conference participants included domestic and foreign experts on minorities issues, representatives of international organizations, various embassies, the media, political parties, governmental and non-governmental sectors in Macedonia, as well as by students of SEE University. Conference panels addressed minority in Macedonia, minority protection in South-Eastern Europe and minorities in developed democracies at large.

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December 28

ECMI NGO Network

Seminar of the ECMI Intra-network on Education

Seminar for Intranetworking as part of the Educational Intra-network program was held at the Hotel "Riviera" Ohrid from 26 to 29 December.

Several issues were on the agenda as Intranetworking, Vision and Structure of the Educational Intra network, the Action Plan as well as outlining the Mission statement, the aims and the main activities.



Mr. Azis Polozhani – Minister for Education and Science, was informal guest at the seminar. He was introduced to the mission of the Educational Intra Network, its member organizations, the working materials and the conclusions from the previous meetings. On the other hand Mr. Plozani introduced the participants' whit the imminent reforms in the educational sector.

In his view, the main role of the Educational Intra Network will be in raising the parents consciousness for the importance of an appropriate educational system for their children as well as for gathering and processing information that are coming directly from the field.

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Activities of the ECMI NGO Regional Resource Centres

December 09

ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre Tetovo

Meeting with the representatives from the European Council, Strasburg

Representatives of the European Council's Advisory Comity for European Convention for Protection of the National Minorities met the ECMI Working group for Minority Issues. The meeting, which was held at the premises of the Regional Centre Tetovo, was aimed to expound the preliminary findings by the Working Group concerning the situation of the minorities in the Republic of Macedonia. The dynamic discussion that followed the presentation was concluded with decision all further analyses and results, to which the Working Group will come, to be send as an alternative report to the European Council until March 2004. This alternative report will be taken into consideration by the European Council while preparing the manuscript with recommendations for Republic of Macedonia, expected on May 2004.

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December 29

ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre Bitola

New Year's Eve Cocktail Party

At the premises of the Regional Centre Bitola a Cock-

tail Party was organized for the NGO members of the Centre, other local NGOs, partners from the local authorities and the business sector. This occasion was also used for Fundraising for the Educational Fund for Roma children established by the NGO Felix Group.



To support the Fundraising, a small stand was set where candles and greetings prepared by Felix activists were sold.

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December 30

ECMI NGO Network

Ongoing Projects from the ECMI Project Pot

The following projects are ongoing, divided by ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centres:

ECMI Regional NGO Centre Bitola

"Youth and alcohol"

ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre Shtip

"Education save your life"

ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre Skopje

"Training for Project Proposal Development"



ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre Tetovo

“Confidence building”

Summary of the projects can be downloaded from
www.ecmingonet.org.mk

December 30

Projects in the Pre-implementation Preparatory Phase from ECMI Project Pot

The following projects have status of pre-implementation preparatory phase divided by ECMI Regional Centres:

ECMI Regional NGO Centre Kumanovo

“Youth and NGOs”

“Who not”

“Mosaic”

ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre Tetovo

“Stop the drug”

“Way to the common life“

“Community dialog and capacity building”

ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre Gostivar

“Water for Gostivar”

“Family Violence? Yes It Exists”

Summary of the projects can be downloaded from
www.ecmingonet.org.mk

News from the Network Members

December 05

ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre Tetovo

Press Conference

At the premises of the Regional Centre Tetovo a Press Conference was held to present the Project “Let’s do something more”. This is a joint project of the Regional Centre Tetovo members which includes holding four Open Forums. The covered issues are education, development, integration into the EU and anticorruption. The aim of the Project is to foster dialog between the citizens and NGOs and generating solutions to common problems of the citizens.

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December 15

ECMI Regional NGO Resource Centre Tetovo

Open Forum “To Restore the Confidence”

At the village Shipkovic, Tetovo area, an Open Forum was held as part of the Project “To Restore the Confidence”. The project is implemented by the Forum of the Albanian Woman in cooperation with NGO Handicap, NGO Multikultura and NGO “Happy Life”, all members of the ECMI Network. Participants at the Open Forum were women from this village populated mostly by Albanians. They showed great interest in the issue emphasizing the need to restore confidence between the two major



ethnic groups, especially in areas most affected in the 2001 crises.

At the end of the Forum the organizers, mostly Macedonians, were invited to visit one of the houses where they were introduced with the Albanian customs and traditional dish.

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We hope that you have enjoyed this issue of the ECMI NGO Network Newsletter.

If you have any comments or suggestions for improvement of this newsletter, please contact Verica Grdanoska at:

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