From 19 to 24 November 2005, ECMI and the Cambridge University Carnegie Project on Resolving Self-Determination Disputes Using Complex Power-Sharing organized a Seminar on the Settlement of Ethno-territorial Conflicts. This seminar brought together International experts with representatives of the governments of Moldova, Georgia, and Gagauzia. The high level of representation was reflected in the fact that the Moldovan Minister for Reintegration, the Georgian State Minister for Conflict Resolution Issues, and the Speaker of the Gagauzian Legislative Assembly led respective national and regional autonomy delegations. The seminar was divided into two parts. The first part was devoted to the discussion of major problems regarding the settlement of the conflicts in Transdniestria and South Ossetia. The second part of the seminar examined prospects of improving the functioning of the autonomy arrangement in the Gagauzian region of Moldova.

The governments of Moldova and Georgia have recently put forward or supported innovative proposals for the settlement of the conflicts in Transdniestria and South Ossetia. While these two conflict situations are different in many respects, a number of common issues arise that need to be addressed in both cases. The first part of the seminar focused on issues of asymmetrical autonomy designs, assignment of competencies, international involvement in the negotiation process and other related topics. The seminar provided a good opportunity for members of the two national delegations to exchange experiences and to draw on the knowledge of International experts who have studied or advised on other instances of ethno-territorial conflict settlement around the world.

The first part of the seminar also highlighted the importance of maintaining a dialogue between two countries that face similar challenges to their territorial integrity and that are willing to address these challenges through granting substantial autonomy provisions to the regions in question. ECMI plans to continue to work on bringing together international expertise.
and sustaining a dialogue between the two national governments on conflict resolution strategies. Participation in the Cambridge University Carnegie Project on Resolving Self-Determination Disputes Using Complex Power-Sharing allows ECMI to utilize the substantial intellectual resources available in this Cambridge University-based international expert network in order to advance policy makers’ thinking about institutions and practices designed to enhance capacities for the accommodation of ethno-political diversity.

During the second part of the seminar the members of the Moldovan and Gagauzian delegations explored together with international experts the problems related to the functioning of the Gagauzian autonomy arrangement. A number of key issues were identified which require further consultations between the national and regional authorities. These issues include the distribution of competences between the centre, the autonomous entity and the local authorities; taxation, budgetary allocation and financing of autonomy; representation of Gagauzia in the state as a whole; and exercise of state-wide competences within Gagauzia. International experts helped to provide a comparative perspective on how these issues are addressed in other autonomous regions and on how these other regions’ experiences can be related to the case of Gagauzian autonomy.

The Moldovan and Gagauzian delegations expressed their interest in advancing a dialogue aimed at solving problems that impede the effective functioning of Gagauzian autonomy and welcomed the continuance of ECMI’s assistance in this process.

ECMI gives warm thanks to the Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the German Foreign Ministry for their generous grants which supported the organization of this seminar.

Romani Expert Groups for Romani Integration in Macedonia

EBEN FRIEDMAN

The first year of this Sida-funded ECMI project culminated on 28 September 2005 with the public presentation of the volume containing the six research reports generated by the four Expert Groups from the projects which they designed and implemented with ECMI facilitation. Available for download from ECMI’s Romani programme website at www.ecmirom.org in English- and Macedonian-language versions under the title Roms on Integration: Analyses and Recommendations, the volume contains the following reports:

- Parents and teachers on the education of Romani children
- Why do Romani children leave school?
- Romani students’ opinion about their treatment in higher education
- Human rights awareness of the Romani population in the Republic of Macedonia
- Roms and their motivation for employment
- Vaccination and habits that influence the health of the Romani population

The second year of this project will see a continuation of activities to build the capacity of the Expert Groups, which will also take an increasingly active role in project management.

Supporting Local Romani Coordinators in Serbia and Montenegro

The last several years have seen significant advancements within Serbia and Montenegro in research and policy concerning Roms. Significant though they are, however, these advancements can only be considered an initial step in the right direction, with Serbia’s Draft Strategy for the Integration and Empowerment of the Roma itself calling for additional assessment studies. Conducting such a study with Sida support in late 2004, ECMI generated a set of guidelines for work with Roms in Serbia and Montenegro.

Drawing on its prior assessment, in December 2005 ECMI launched an initiative to increase and improve contacts between Romani communities and local authorities in thirteen municipalities in the Republic of Serbia. Generously financed by Sida and implemented in close coordination with the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of Serbia and Montenegro, the project consists primarily in capacity-building activities aimed at local Romani coordinators and their relevant (non-Romani) counterparts in local government.
ECMI co-sponsors lecture series with University of Flensburg

WILLIAM MCKINNEY

The European Centre for Minority Issues co-sponsored a lecture series entitled “A Differentiated View of Minorities” with the University of Flensburg from 11 November 2005 to 6 February 2006.

In her lecture “Council of Europe Conventions – International Standards for European Minorities”, Tove Malloy provided background information as well as details on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM). Tom Trier in his lecture “Minorities in the Enlarged Europe” gave a detailed view of the situation of minorities and minority rights in Georgia. ECMI Director Marc Weller gave in his lecture “Minorities in Political Life” an overview of the many aspects of the political participation of minorities. Brief summaries follow.

Tove Malloy discussed the 2 main conventions adopted by the Council of Europe which have direct bearing on minorities, namely:

• The European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, also known as the Human Rights Convention; and
• The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, also known as the Framework Convention (FCNM).

Ms. Malloy also briefly discussed three other documents related to minority protection, namely:

• The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, also known as the Language Charter;
• the European Charter of Local Self-Government, and
• the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation.

All of these instruments have bearing on the lives of members of national minorities. The emerging attention in the European Union to minority protection and the relationship between the Council of Europe and the EU in terms of minority rights were also discussed.

With regards to an evaluation of the FCNM, experts agree that it is destined to carry much of the burden of putting into effect minority rights in Europe in the foreseeable future. The work of the Advisory Committee (AC) has proven over the years to be efficient in addressing structural problems related to minority issues. Although the FCNM does not include a definition of minority, it is in this context a mitigating factor that the AC has indeed begun to expand the circle of minorities it considers eligible under the FCNM by also discussing the rights of immigrant groups with governments. In this sense, the AC follows the practice of the UN Human Rights Committee and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

Tom Trier in his lecture focused on the situation in Georgia. Since independence 15 years ago, the development that has taken place in Georgia has tended to be concentrated on the capital Tbilisi and in other larger cities in the country. In contrast, rural areas have been left to subside into extreme poverty. Some minority groups reside compactly in rural regions, and are therefore largely affected by poverty. There is a large population of Armenians, almost 200,000, in the southern region of Samtskhe-Javakheti, bordering Armenia, as well as a large population of Azeris in the Kvemo Kartli region, some 400,000 in the south east on the borders with Azerbaijan and Armenia. There is a tendency that social discontent is understood as ethnic discrimination among the minority populations, although the poverty of the rural districts equally affects the Georgian ethnic minority population. These two regions have remained isolated from Georgia proper since independence, prompting fears that unless sensitive integration policies are pursued, there remains the latent threat of conflict. The government has yet to devise policy regarding minority rights and issues even though some one fifth of the country in population terms is made up of ethnic minorities.

It is therefore a key component for the effective development of Georgia how minorities and regions of the country become integrated into the central state structures. This concerns not only the economic development but also civil integration. There is a momentum in Georgia to facilitate change and improvement, and this is what ECMI is trying to do presently in Georgia and other EU accession countries as well.

ECMI Director Marc Weller elaborated in his lecture on the fact that full and effective participation is a foundational requirement of the genuinely democratic state, requiring a complex, multi-layered institutional design. When considering in greater detail the practice of States in relation to full and effective participation, it is convenient to address this issue under three main headings:

1. State construction: Members of all segments of a population, whatever their distinctive ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics, must be able fully and equally to participate in the definition of the economic, social and political system of the State and in the democratic process.

2. Executive representation: Members of all segments of the population must, in principle, be able to exercise public functions at all levels that sustain the State and they must occupy such functions in adequate numbers in actual fact. There must be no discrimination in this respect.

3. Equal chances: Members of all segments of the population, including national minorities must be able to enjoy the full range of the cultural, social, and economic benefits that flow from life within the State. There must be no discrimination in terms of life-chances both by public and by private agencies. Indeed, the equal, full and effective enjoyment of all benefits of participation in society may require special measures on behalf of non-dominant groups, including in particular members of national minorities.

Effective political participation of members of minorities can be facilitated in a number of ways. These relate to the constitutional design of the State, electoral representation and the establishment of institutions and practices to ensure minority input.
ECMI Provides Training on Minority Issues to European Agency for Reconstruction

DENIKA BLACKLOCK

On November 16 — 19, 2005, ECMI held its first ever training on mainstreaming minority issues into development programming in South East Europe. In response to a request by the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) in Thessaloniki, Greece, ECMI staff for South East Europe and the Legal Department prepared a practical guide to minority issues mainstreaming, and developed a two-day training programme which focused on the political and legal situation of minorities in South East Europe, as well as the following sessions devoted to mainstreaming minority issues into the project cycle: developing minority issues indicators and mainstreaming minority issues into Terms of Reference (ToR).

Presentations were made and working group sessions facilitated by ECMI Senior Non-Resident Resident Research Associate Florian Bieber (Belgrade), ECMI Deputy Director Ewa Chylinski, Erica Lencses (Hungarian Ministry for Social Affairs, Department for EU Accession), with support from ECMI Programme Officer Denika Blacklock.

The trainings were attended by staff of EAR offices in Belgrade, Pristina, Podgorica and Skopje, as well as senior management from Brussels and Thessaloniki. The training was opened by Dr. Louis Charpentier (EAR Thessaloniki), who discussed the multiple training programmes on EAR’s three cross-cutting issues: gender, minority and environmental issues. The minority mainstreaming training session was the second in the series, following training provided in early 2005 on gender issues in South East Europe. The training programme was well received by the participants, particularly sections on minority issues in EAR priority areas, and in developing ToRs. Participants were also proactive in addressing other topics which they dealt with in their day-to-day work, particularly the lack of reliable statistical information on minorities, as well as the legal framework in which EAR implements its projects.

For ECMI, the training was useful as an opportunity to disseminate its expertise on wider minority issues — in particular access to justice, political representation, social attitudes, decentralization and local government, both nationally and in response to EU accession requirements. ECMI also addressed the following issues within the scope of EAR’s mandate — minority issues in environment, infrastructure, health and energy. Intensive discussions were held on viable options for EAR to mainstream minority issues in these areas into development programmes in the future. One of the primary concerns was the practicality of including minority issues in all projects. It was discussed that in some cases, it is not a matter of having a specific minority component but simply recognizing how projects can affect minority communities, and what the positive and negative repercussions of EAR actions may be.

In view of the receptiveness of the participants to the method of the training, and the quality and type of information provided, ECMI and EAR have agreed to future cooperation on the issue of minorities in development programmes.

Enhancing Minority Governance in Bulgaria

The European Centre for Minority Issues — Bulgaria began implementation of the project on Enhancing Minority Governance in Bulgaria in October 2004. The aim of the project was to offer improvements in the approach to minority policy measures in Bulgaria. Consequently, ECMI-Bulgaria held two seminars: one devoted to Methodology for Monitoring and Evaluation, and one to Creating the Conditions for Effective Participation of Minorities in public life in Bulgaria. In addition, three working groups were formed, bringing together experts from seven key ministries, regional and local authorities, leading minority experts, and representatives of key non-governmental organizations.

The working groups discussed and evaluated the actual state of governmental policies and practice towards minorities, as well as the need for improved policies in the following priority areas: education, health-care, housing, social support and employment, economic opportunities and political participation. The results of this activity, and the Good Practice Guidelines, were presented at a national conference on 27 September 2005.

This conference was attended by representatives of the newly elected Parliament, deputy-ministers, senior ministerial officials, minority experts, representatives of non-governmental organizations, and representatives of the national media. The final report on Enhancing Minority Governance in Bulgaria, and the Good Practice Guidelines, will soon be published on the ECMI website. The Bulgarian President, key members of government, as well as a range of minority non-governmental organizations, have expressed support for the recommendations, and to the Good Practice Guidelines.

— Magdalena Kuneva
ECMI supports the creation of a Council of National Minorities in Georgia

TOM TRIER

Since the Rose Revolution in November 2003, which brought a new reform-oriented leadership to power in Georgia, ECMI has promoted the idea of creating a permanent council for consultation and collaboration between the central Georgian authorities and representatives of national minorities in the country. Experiences from similar councils established by ECMI in South Eastern Europe shows that relations between central authorities and national minorities can be greatly enhanced if permanent dialogue can take place within an institutionalized framework. Recently, the efforts in Georgia resulted in the establishment of a Council of National Minorities under the auspices of Georgia’s Public Defender and on 16 December, an inaugurate event took place at Mariott Courtyard Hotel in Tbilisi to officially launch the Minority Council.

More than 250 people attended the event, including representatives of over 50 minority organizations and communities representing Armenians, Azeris, Russians, Ukrainians, Kurds, Yeshids, Ossetians, Greeks, Assyrians, Chechens, Jews, Germans, Czechs, Poles, and others as well as the movement “Multinational Georgia” and the historically positive experience of the movement “Multinational Georgia” in recent Georgian history have shown that the protection of human and national minority rights is essential to stability, democracy and peace; the protection of human and national minority rights is essential to stability, democracy and peace; the protection of human and national minority rights is essential to stability, democracy and peace; the protection of human and national minority rights is essential to stability, democracy and peace; the protection of human and national minority rights is essential to stability, democracy and peace; the protection of human and national minority rights is essential to stability, democracy and peace; 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The Council of National Minorities under the auspices of the Public Defender of Georgia

DECLARATION

I. The Public Defender of Georgia and the European Centre for Minority Issues, along with representatives of national minority communities, organizations and associations dedicated to the promotion of national minority rights on this Sixteenth day of December, in the Year of Two Thousand and Five, solemnly declare the inauguration and establishment of the Council of National Minorities under the auspices of the Public Defender of Georgia.

II. As signatories to this Declaration, Members of the Council for National Minorities will:

- **Strive** for the development of harmonious co-existence between all ethnic and national groups living in Georgia, by active participation in the building of a free, democratic, equitable, just society and state;
- **Respect** that the ethical, cultural and linguistics diversity among people in Georgia is its human, historical, cultural and political wealth, and not a basis for division and confrontation;
- **Consider** that the difficulties and conflicts that have taken place in recent Georgian history have shown that the protection of national minorities is essential to stability, democracy and peace;
- **Recognize** that protection of human and national minority rights and social integration are both the wish of the citizens and government of Georgia and among the main preconditions for the fulfillment of international obligations undertaken by Georgia;
- **Take into consideration** the importance and potential of the ethnic minorities in Georgia from the point of view of peace, cooperation and development on the local, as well as regional and broad international arena.

- **Strive** to participate efficiently in the process of human rights protection and civic integration, as well as implement best European practices for the protection of national minority rights, tolerance, pluralism and civic integration;

- **Take into consideration** the historically positive experience of Georgia of tolerance and inter-ethnic co-existence and support the necessity of promoting development of dialogue and tolerance environment in Georgia;

- **Denounce** conflicts based on ethnic grounds, violation of the constitutional order, measures against human rights and territorial integrity, discrimination, chauvinism and xenophobia, articulation of ethnic propaganda and expressions of hatred that have taken place in the country’s modern history and state that will peacefully confront any of the similar actions by consolidation of power;

- **Consider** that a democratic and pluralistic society must respect ethnic, cultural, linguistic and other differences and promote creation of corresponding conditions for preservation and development of cultural diversity;

- **Confirm** that any view or theory assigning superiority or inferiority to one ethnic group is groundless and violates both moral and legal principles of civilized mankind and endangers peace, stability and unity of the country;

- **Be resolved to follow** the Constitution of Georgia, as well as international instruments on the protection of human and national minority rights and fundamental freedoms;

- **Respect** the principles, aims and provisions declared in the present Declaration and commit to fulfill them.

IV. (...) The Council is established in partnership between the Public Defender of Georgia and the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI). UNDP and the Government of Norway also contributed through support to the Tolerance Centre at the Public Defender’s Office.

This Declaration is drawn in one copy; the original is kept in the office of the Public Defender.

Tbilisi, 16 December 2005.
Conclusion of the High Level Initiative Project in Kosovo

DENIKA BLACKLOCK

Since 2003, ECMI Kosovo has been implementing the High Level Initiative in Kosovo, cooperating with the Prime Minister's Office to fulfill two aims: enhancing the quality of self-governance in general, and supporting the Prime Minister in achieving compliance with all standards for Kosovo, in particular those of relevance for all minority communities. The project was composed of two initiatives — the Accelerated Good Governance Initiative (AGGI) and the Prime Minister Initiative (PMI). The AGGI was comprised of ECMI support to five ministries in accelerating the development of legislation of importance to all communities, through the provision of local and international expertise. The process demonstrated that cooperation on issues of concern to all communities can and does take place in Kosovo, and that a legal framework is being established through local initiatives.

The PMI component supported the Prime Minister in adopting standards of good governance more generally. ECMI worked directly with the Prime Minister and his team to equip them with the necessary methodology for reviewing the performance of various ministries. Over the course of the project, ECMI assisted with the drafting of the Law on the Use of Languages, reporting on the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, and advised the Prime Minister's office on a number of further timely issues.

At the conclusion of the High Level Initiative in October 2005, ECMI Kosovo Programme Manager Adrian Zeqiri reflected on the project outcome. “The initiative helped the Kosovo government achieve standards and to enhance its protection of minorities.” ECMI also gained valuable experience in high-level assistance which has translated to other projects both in the region and throughout the wider Europe.

This project was funded by grants from the Danish and Norwegian Ministries of Foreign Affairs.

Network of Specialized Ombudspersons on Minorities in Europe

Conclusion of the project — December 2005

EWA CHYLINSKI

The Ombudsman Network initiative was established and has been managed by ECMI since 2003, providing its beneficiaries with skills and knowledge necessary to include minority issues in their daily work and information-sharing in this regard. The institutions involved were relatively ‘young’ compared with ombudsman institutions in Western Europe, or were currently undergoing creation of their mandates. One example of this is Macedonia, where the Ombudsman has been given the authority to deal with discrimination issues representing ethnic communities. As governments are called on to improve overall implementation of human and in particular minority rights, it is vital to have politically and financially independent Ombudsman institutions with comprehensive mandates.

Two major networks were established: South Caucasus with a workshop in Tbilisi, September 2004 and South Eastern Europe (SEE) with 2 workshops in Oct. 2004 and in Sept. 2005. The network established in SEE proved its sustainability by organizing regular workshops for staff of the Ombudsperson institutions from the region (Macedonia, Albania, Serbia and Montenegro (Montenegro, Vojvodina), Kosovo, Bosnia & Herzegovina in Ohrid, Macedonia in October 2004 and Vojvodina, Serbia and Montenegro, in October 2005. The last phase of the ECMI Network project was further training for Ombudsman institutions in South East Europe in September 2005, due to intensive processes of conflict transformation (Kosovo, Serbia & Montenegro) and ongoing negotiations on EU accession (Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia).

The location chosen was Sofia, Bulgaria in light of the election of the first Bulgarian Ombudsman in 2005. This was undertaken to ensure exposure of this institution and its mandate to the Bulgarian public. The Ombudsman Law, which had been discussed in Bulgaria for almost 6 years, was finally adopted in May 2005. Simultaneously, an Anti-Discrimination Commission was established. An internal set of rules has yet to be prepared to regulate the activity of the Ombudsman institution, and ECMI supported a publication in Bulgarian with the title “Bulgarian Ombudsman - Guide to Best Practices and National Legislation”.

The SEE final workshop resulted in an exceptional opportunity for the very young Bulgarian Ombudsman institution to exchange initial working experiences with Ombudspersons in other transition countries and to establish contacts with colleagues in the neighbouring states.

In general, the Ombudsman Network project has fostered greater understanding of the comprehensive mandate of the Ombudsman institution in relation to minorities by all beneficiaries: government officials, minority representatives and civil society at large.
**External Publications by ECMI Staff**

**Forthcoming**


- Farimah Daftary and Marc Weller, eds. *Forthcoming (2006/7) Co-governance in Diverse Societies: Political Participation of Minorities in EU Accession States*.


- Oleh Protsyk, “Moldova’s Dilemmas in Democratizing and Reintegrating Transnistria,” *Problems of Post-Communism*.


**Books and chapters of books published in 2005**


**Journal articles published in 2005**


New ECMI Publications

ECMI Report #57
Tom Trier and Eleonora Sambasile.
December 2005, 51 pp., appendix. (ISSN 1818-0531)
www.ecmi.de/download/Report_57.pdf

Special Report
European Centre for Minority Issues.
January 2005, 102 pp., appendix, includes bibliography. (ISBN 3-9810857-0-1)
www.ecmirom.org/publications.htm

ECMI Issue Brief #14
Malloy, Tove H.

Recent ECMI Reports, Working Papers and Briefs

October

5 October
Celebration of the German Re-unification at the German Embassy in Aabenraa, Denmark

19 - 24 October
ECMI Project and Human Rights Cycle Training in Romania

28 October
Seminar on "The Kurdish Issue and the EU", organised by EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris

November

3 November
Visit of MEPs Margrethe Auken (Denmark) and Angelika Beer (Germany) at ECMI

14 November
Lectures series in cooperation between ECMI and University of Flensburg “Minoritätten differenziert betrachtet!”, Dr. Tove Malloy (ECMI): “Conventions of the European Council — international standards for minorities in Europe”

15 November
ECMI Open Research Meeting — Presentation by Dr. Daniel Bourgeois, Canadian Institute for Research on Linguisitc Minorities at the University of Moncton, Canada, Flensburg

16 - 19 November
ECMI Training on Minority Issues Mainstreaming in European Agency for Reconstruction Training Development Co-operation (EAR), Thessaloniki (Greece)

23 November
Visit of MEP Jens-Peter Bonde (Denmark) at ECMI

19 - 24 November
“The Resolution of Self-Determination Conflicts”, Seminar organised by ECMI together with the Centre of International Studies, Cambridge

December

8 December
Meeting of Working Group on Minorities, Integration and Intercultural S

9 December
Visit of Dr. Henrik Becker-Christensen, Danish Consul General, Flensburg

12 December
Visit of Prof. Hanne Petersen (University of Copenhagen, Faculty of Law)

January

9 January
Coordination Meeting of the Minority Chair

10 January
Visit by Ms Françoise Kempf, from the Council of Europe, Secretariat of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

16 January
Visit by Mr Martin Kayenburg, President of the Land of Schleswig-Holstein

27 January
Proseminar — Students from the University in Kiel, Faculty of History

February

2 February
Visit by Prof. Hanne Petersen, University of Copenhagen and Dr. Karen Margrethe Pedersen, Institute for Border Region Research, Aabenraa