

KOSOVO/A CIVIL SOCIETY PROJECT

**KOSOVO/A STANDING TECHNICAL
WORKING GROUP**

**TRAINING WORKSHOP AND
STUDY VISIT – COUNCIL OF EUROPE**

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STRASBOURG, 18-21 NOVEMBER 2002

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I. Introduction

A joint study visit and training workshop was organized by the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) in collaboration with the Directorate General of Political Affairs at the Council of Europe (CoE). This workshop took place at the CoE headquarters in Strasbourg between 18 and 21 November 2002, and brought together approximately forty local experts from Kosovo and sixteen officials of the CoE. The general aim of the study visit/training workshop was to increase awareness of different dimensions of the CoE's work on standard setting and technical assistance in Europe, within the framework of building democratic and inclusive institutions. Special attention was paid in the training sessions of the workshop to raising awareness of international standards on minority and human rights legislation and protection, but provision was also made to cover other aspects of democracy building that were of particular interest to the project participants, such as evolving standards and good practice in local governance, social cohesion and education. The workshop further provided a forum for the participants to discuss the applicability of these standards to the Western Balkans, and to the future development of Kosovo in particular.

II. Project Objectives

The combined training workshop and study visit forms one component of a larger civil society support and capacity building project initiated by ECMI in September 2000. Recognizing at the time that despite ongoing interethnic tensions and cross-party suspicion in Kosovo, there nevertheless existed a number of individuals and organizations that were willing to work together, ECMI launched an initiative to support constructive efforts towards reconciliation and reform that were emerging at the local level. This initiative became known as the ECMI Kosovo/a Civil Society Project.

To support these aims, ECMI sought to involve relevant local and international actors in Kosovo at an early stage, undertaking a series of preparatory field trips to enlist their support and help identify concrete concerns. An ECMI Regional Office was

established at the beginning of 2001, and a permanent interethnic forum was then launched. This forum sought to empower local actors in promoting reform and stability through focusing debate on issues of practical concern to all communities, and took the name of the Standing Technical Working Group (STWG). The STWG set out to bring together younger representatives of political parties, minority groups, specialist NGOs and independent experts to address 'technical' issues of public policy reform in Kosovo, with a view to supporting the evolution of practices of good governance. These issues are addressed at regular meetings of the STWG and purposefully take place in Kosovo so as to reinforce a sense of normality to inter- and intra-ethnic dialogue. By addressing issues of a technical nature, the Group also aims to focus political attention on issues of immediate concern to their constituents, and help demonstrate to the wider public that effective dialogue and cooperation can deliver tangible results.

Through regular plenary sessions, the STWG provides a space for political dialogue in Kosovo, independent of the formal structures and constraints of government (both at the international and local levels). It also provides a forum where the immediate concerns of all communities can be addressed through reasoned dialogue across both party and ethnic lines. In so doing, the STWG aims to enhance the capacity of younger political leaders and influential members of civil society to address their concerns in a democratic manner, while also raising their expertise in public policy development to enable them to engage their political representatives in critical debate on an equal footing. Through the inclusion of minority groups and the NGO community in this process – some of whom are normally excluded from the mainstream political and social structures – the STWG further seeks to broaden participation and increase transparency in the political process while also diversifying the sources of information available to society.

In response to the changed political environment in Kosovo, and especially in light of the establishment of the Kosovo Assembly, the STWG sought to enhance its aims and activities in 2002. Under the guidance of the STWG, four Expert Committees were established to prepare concrete recommendations for policy initiatives in four areas considered of particular concern to Kosovo society. These were (1) equal access to justice, (2) provision of health and social services (3) access to economic

opportunities, and (4) education. The Expert Committees were tasked to monitor public policy developments in their area of expertise and formulate concrete proposals on public policy reform that could be debated with, and communicated to, international and local authorities. In this way, a mechanism was created which not only improved the effectiveness of the STWG to address emerging needs but also to increase the accountability, transparency, and responsiveness of UNMIK and the Kosovo Assembly to local constituents.

The STWG and its constituent Expert Committees are now a unique institution in Kosovo. There exists no other standing civic forum where public policy is evaluated and debated and where recommendations for alternative policies are devised. In a region that has little experience with democratic governance, including the participation of civil society actors in the policy-making process, the need for such a forum is great. The lack of democratic tradition has also meant a lack of accountability and transparency on the part of public authorities, including UN authorities, which the activities of the STWG help to redress. Few if any local voluntary organizations, moreover, have achieved the degree of ethnic and political diversity of the STWG, which, in a society as polarized as Kosovo, is a significant achievement.

III. Activities Undertaken

To improve the effectiveness of the STWG and its Expert Committees, the ECMI Kosovo/a Civil Society Project also provides support through the occasional organization of training courses. These training courses and study visits are normally conducted abroad in order to provide the participants with the opportunity to have access to international expertise and facilities not usually found in Kosovo. In addition, they serve to assist the Group in consolidating a common identity and in fostering relations in a neutral environment, which would otherwise be difficult given the continuing level of inter- and intra-ethnic suspicion in the territory. Through their activities and activities over the year, the Group identifies gaps in its knowledge and training needs. On the back of this, training programmes are jointly developed that

specifically seek to enhance the members' knowledge base on issues that will enable them to address their concerns more effectively at the local level.

The combined training workshop and study visit forms part of this ongoing training and capacity-building element of the project. From the outset of their activities in 2001, the Group has repeatedly expressed its desire to find out more about the nature and functions of the European institutions, in order to give them a more realistic sense of the efforts required to bring about a lasting peace and establish stable political structures. In addition, through their activities and deliberations, the members of the Group have recognized the urgent need to learn about existing as well as developing European standards across a number of policy areas. In this way, it was hoped that the project participants would gain a better understanding of widely accepted norms and values on which to develop informed and equitable policies and ultimately provide a framework for overcoming mutual suspicions through realizing mutual benefits.

In response to these recommendations, ECMI took up contact with the Council of Europe to assist in organizing a joint study visit and training workshop, with a view to familiarizing the participants with the Council's work and providing first-hand knowledge of European standard setting, good practices of governance and existing legislation on safeguarding minority-majority relations. A training programme was then developed in collaboration with the project participants. It was decided that the overall aim of the workshop should serve to raise knowledge of common European standards amongst the participants in order to assist civil society representatives in formulating coherent policy frameworks. It was also recommended that the workshop should seek to provide the participants with knowledge on the range of practical instruments and technical assistance that was available to them in order to strengthen democratic institutions, making them fully representative, transparent and accessible to all communities.

As a result, a training programme was designed which aimed to be sensitive to the needs and competences of the project participants, yet remained both instructive and comprehensive. The training workshop and study visit was to take place over three days, and activities were therefore broken down according to the needs and expertise of the participants – political and legal aspects; human and minority rights; health and

education; NGOs and civil society building. Each session was opened by a short introductory presentation by an official of the CoE or an expert trainer, and was followed by a round of questions and answers. Opportunity was also provided for the participants to make contact and informally liaise with other people involved with the implementation of these standards, including governmental representatives and CoE officials, during coffee breaks and meals. So that the training programme would not prove too intensive, provision was also made for the participants to undertake visits to the European Court of Human Rights and the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, as well as a tour of the Palais de l'Europe.

The training programme itself provided for high-level seminars by acknowledged experts across all competences of the Council of Europe's work, including training on human and minority rights instruments and mechanisms, in-depth consideration of the European Convention on Human Rights, and the Framework Convention and its monitoring mechanisms. To provide an overarching theme to the training package, it was decided that it would be beneficial to adopt a framework which examined good practices in minority-majority relations as a whole. As a consequence, the training programme took as its starting point an investigation of existing instruments of good governance and democratic institution building. The first days' seminars were therefore devoted to addressing how European standards with respect to enhancing access to, influence over, and communication with democratic institutions could be widely recognized and applied in practice. Provision was, however, also made for training sessions that were attuned to the particular needs and interests of the participants. In this way, in addition to the investigation of legal and political norms and standards in the first two days' activities, the final day's sessions sought to address standards pertaining to health care, social services and the equitable provision and access to educational opportunities. A final session was then foreseen to focus on the development of NGO advocacy and networking strategies to contribute to effective means of monitoring civil society development and compliance with international standards, as well as sharing good practice. (A full programme of the study visit and training workshop is appended to this Report.)

In selecting participants, ECMI aimed to ensure that the group was fully reflective of Kosovo society, a third of the group was therefore drawn from representatives of

minority communities. The group was also selected to provide a good balance in terms of gender representation. All participants were chosen by virtue of their leading positions as civil society representatives or the particular promise they had shown in their role as young politicians and officials who were committed to the promotion of human and minority rights. It was also foreseen that the choice of participants would include representatives who were in a position to act as ‘multipliers’, thus transferring the knowledge they had gained during the training workshops to their own organizations (‘training of trainers’). In fact, as the members possess various expertise within the project, and particularly within Kosovo society, they were specifically invited to pass on their experience to other project participants and constituents, as well as to propose further initiatives for follow-on activities. (A full list of participants is appended below.)

IV. Success of the Activities

Throughout the three days of the training programme and particularly in the informal settings of the leisure activities and breaks, the participants praised ECMI for its initiative in organizing such an event. The organizers were also thanked for the professionalism they had shown in organizing the trip at short notice and with a large number of participants. The content of the programme was also considered highly relevant to the participants’ needs and useful to their future activities. This enthusiasm was also shared by the trainers and speakers who enjoyed the opportunity to come face-to-face with Kosovo citizens and to discuss the applicability of their work to the conditions prevalent in Kosovo. As the aim of the training sessions had been to provide a general and broad overview of the CoE’s activities in various policy areas, it was however regretted that more time could not be spent discussing certain issue areas in more depth. With this in mind, many of the trainers and speakers expressed an interest in continuing the debate at a future date and, besides offering literature and information on their activities, also provided members of the group with their own and additional contact details so that dialogue could be taken up on a personal level.

Despite the demanding schedule of the training programme, attendance throughout the three days remained very high. No less than 90 per cent of the group attended all sessions and the concluding questions and answers sessions often lasted longer than the time allotted. Most of the participants appreciated the opportunity they had been given to speak with experts in their field and to learn more about existing and evolving standards across broad areas of policymaking.

The level of engagement of both the participants and the speakers remained high, even in the closing sessions, and attests to the commitment and sincerity that was evident on both sides to finding practical solutions to the concerns prevalent in Kosovo. The training seminars were also successful at engaging the attention and involvement of non-specialists. It became apparent in the questions and answers sessions that many of the participants were well versed in a wide variety of public policy areas not necessarily within the remit of their field of expertise, and able to pose quite trenchant and technical questions. Given that the level of informed participation was spread equally among the members of the group, it seems likely that the STWG meetings have therefore gone a long way in raising the level of awareness across a broad range of policy areas.

The event can also be regarded as going some way towards fostering better inter- and intra-ethnic relations. This was particularly evident on the final day of the training programme, when it was announced that one of the participant's children had been 'beaten to death' in an ethnically-motivated attack the previous evening. Although, it later emerged that this information had proved false, the participants nevertheless took the opportunity to break with the workshop proceedings to discuss the matter in detail. In contrast to other sessions, this spontaneous discussion was not facilitated by any external party and yet the participants nevertheless engaged in a constructive and sympathetic discussion with each other on the issue of ethnic-related intimidation, which culminated in a pledge to take collective action. Although this was position was not shared by all members of the group, this kind of discussion would have proved unthinkable only a year previously. Relations between Kosovar Albanians and other ethnic groups, and to a larger extent with Kosovar Serbs, nevertheless remain cool and while some informal mixing did take place amongst the participants, ethnic groups largely stuck together. On the other hand, the changed environment and

extended time the participants spent in each other's company increased the opportunity for interaction and dialogue, and went some way to undermining the willingness of more conformist members of the group to adopt an official position.

V. Practical Problems Encountered

While the content and organization of the training programme proved a success on many levels, the timing of the event nevertheless proved less judicious. Owing to a crowded agenda of events at both ECMI and the CoE towards the end of 2002, the slot that was eventually chosen for the training programme to take place coincided with the monthly plenary session of the European Parliament. While this would normally have proved a lucky coincidence, opening up the further opportunity for the participants of observing two European institutions in operation, the fact that this particular session was devoted to the question of future European enlargement meant that more delegates had made their way to Strasbourg than was normally the case. This made obtaining accommodation for a group of 40 Kosovars, plus trainers and interpreters, extremely difficult. While every opportunity had been made to keep the group as close together as possible, and as near to the training venue as possible, ultimately the participants had to be divided between five separate hotels dispersed throughout the city, two of which were in outlying areas. This not only entailed that some participants would be unable to have the same opportunities as others with respect to leisure activities, but also made transport to and from the CoE problematic.

Given this situation and the complexity of the public transport system within Strasbourg – particularly in light of the fact that few of the participants speak either French or German – the organizers decided to organize additional transport at short notice. A coach was therefore hired to pick up the participants from their dispersed locations and transport them collectively to and from the training venue. While this meant that the training event would be more effective in terms of ensuring maximum participation of the group members, it nevertheless entailed that the cost of the training event was significantly raised and had not been foreseen when setting the training budget.

Logistical problems also arise as a consequence of operating in an environment such as Kosovo, where communication often depends on the daily functioning of utilities and the intermittent electricity supply. This impedes effective coordination. As a result, much organization has to remain ad hoc and is prone to occasional cross-communication. While this was not the case with respect to the organizers, it was however only discovered late in the day that the tour operator had booked the group's travel tickets to Salzburg rather than Strasbourg. Once discovered, it was fairly easy to arrange alternative transport to Frankfurt by plane, and then by coach to Strasbourg, but this had the knock-on effect of losing one day's activities which had been specifically set aside for leisure and an organized tour of Strasbourg.

While it must be acknowledged that the agenda of the training programme was intense, this was also unfortunate inasmuch as the organizers had specifically taken into account previous recommendations that more time be set aside for informal activities. However, in the desire to strike a balance between maximizing the impact of the training event and providing the participants with the rare opportunity of access to the facilities and sights of a modern city, the organizers arranged to foreshorten the final training sessions of each day by omitting the scheduled coffee break. It was further arranged that the coach would then pick up the participants earlier in the day and take them to the city centre to make up for the lost time.

VI. Evaluation

Evaluation and monitoring of this training workshop was effected in several ways. In preparation for the event, the participants played an active role in identifying their needs, designing the programme and finalizing the workshop agenda. In this way, the interests of the target beneficiaries could be directly accommodated and ownership of the study visit was ensured from the outset. Two members of ECMI staff also accompanied the group throughout the duration of the visit and were present all through the training sessions. As these members of staff are well known to the project participants and have developed a high-degree of trust with them over time, the participants felt free to communicate their immediate reactions to the workshop activities and highlight any dissatisfaction or concerns that arose. ECMI staff also

interacted informally with the participants during leisure activities, including coffee breaks and meals, and were therefore able to gauge the level of satisfaction of the participants throughout.

Formal evaluation of the workshop activities was had through an external evaluator who has extensive experience of interethnic and intra-ethnic relations in Kosovo, having worked there as Director of Community Affairs for the United Nations Interim Administration. Through her activities in Kosovo, she is also well known to some of the participants and is familiar with the work of ECMI. In addition, ECMI circulated a questionnaire in conclusion to the workshop activities. The results of which are set out below.

VII. Project Outlook and Possible Spin-Offs

It is always difficult to evaluate the short-term effectiveness of a single project that is seeking to contribute to developmental processes as complex and gradual as those associated with democratization. Yet in the 18 months that the project has been fully running, the organizers have witnessed very palpable achievements in the level of discussion among the participants, which, in light of their standing in Kosovo society could very well have positive knock-on effects on the parties and communities that they represent. Not only is discussion informed but it is also focused on concrete issues and is not ethnically or politically overcharged. In other respects the initiative is already having evident effects beyond the Group itself.

This can be attested to by the level of interest that is growing in the activities of the STWG. Not only have more local actors expressed an interest and willingness to collaborate, but the members of the Expert Committees are now also being sought out for consultation on matters of donor strategy and policy development. In 2002, direct consultative meetings have been arranged with such international organizations as UNESCO, IHSD and IDEA. Interest has also grown within the ranks of the international implementation agencies, the international missions in Kosovo and the donor community. The meetings of the STWG now receive considerable local media coverage. All three local television stations as well as the chief newspapers of

Kosovo, *Koha Ditore* and *Zeri*, regularly cover the activities and outputs of the STWG and Expert Committees. Such coverage is, of course, critical to the development of informed public opinion. There has also been very positive feedback from the Members of the Assembly. This is encouraging insofar as their interest in the policy recommendations of the Expert Committee suggests that the STWG may in future be able to serve as a focus group and source of expertise which at least some elected officials appear to be lacking.

At the conclusion to the year's activities in December, the feedback of the STWG demonstrates that the ECMI Kosovo/a Civil Society Project is clearly fulfilling its aims as set out above or, with respect to increasing transparency and accountability of local institutions, has the potential to do so. In view of the standing of its members and the legitimacy that the STWG as a whole, it is also well positioned to serve as a vehicle for increased dialogue between the public and local government (at the Assembly and municipality levels) as well as between the public and international bodies.

Continuation and further development of the project is therefore warranted and ECMI is seeking to build on this success in 2003. One way of doing this will be to consolidate and strengthen the activities of the Expert Committees, with a view to gradually devolving greater responsibility and ownership of the project process to their members. To increase impact and visibility of the STWG's work, as well as to provoke more open and transparent discussion about policy reform, future plenary sessions will also be opened up to the public and take on the role of a Citizens' Forum. This development has only now been made possible due to the improved security situation in Kosovo, and the organizers will be looking to make use of these positive developments by holding some meetings outside Pristina. Through the mechanism of the Expert Committees, further constructive collaboration will also be sought with the evolving structures of governance (at Assembly, ministerial and Committee level), and the establishment of formal channels of liaison will be institutionalised. ECMI is also actively exploring ways of further developing the expertise and capacity of the project participants. This is chiefly being done through training opportunities and study visits both inside and outside Kosovo, but also by developing networks of expertise both at the local and regional level.

In the long-term, however, the organizers are looking to put in place a strategy for gradual transfer of project ownership to local actors. As indicated, this will be effected through further increasing local ownership of the project design and implementation, as well as implementing a conscious policy of networking and strategic alliances. A strategy has already been initiated to identify a local institution that will be able to coordinate the umbrella role necessary for the functioning of the Expert Committees. Discussions about the future direction of the project was also initiated by the organizers at the closing session of the STWG's activities in December. The ECMI Regional Office will continue to monitor opinion on this matter over the coming year and develop the project accordingly.

Given the continued need for an active and indigenous civil society forum in Kosovo, it is hoped that this will take place while preserving most of the elements that have so far contributed to the success of the STWG. Indigenous civil society initiatives in Kosovo are still at an early stage, but have the potential to play a key role in building popular support for reforms, and creating a vibrant and participatory policy process. They also serve as a much-needed channel for informing the general public about policy objectives and reforms, as well as advocating on behalf of different sectional interests to ensure that their needs are considered. In this way, there is a great need in Kosovo for further supporting similar citizen support initiatives and public policy think tanks.

In the medium-term, the training workshop and study visit has already generated a number of spin-offs and follow-on activities. At the request of the CoE, more focused follow-on training sessions on specific policy issues are being planned for the middle of 2003. The CoE has also approached ECMI to collaborate on developing a Schools of Politics project in Kosovo, similar to those already established in Russia and Bulgaria, with the aim of developing the capacity of the younger politicians in the group to analyse political developments as well as to give them greater recourse to external ideas and trends of thought. A number of participants have also already taken up contact with representatives of the CoE, especially in the areas of local governance, social cohesion and health, and some of the NGO participants are considering developing smaller follow-on projects under the CoE's confidence-

building measures programme. ECMI will continue to support the project participants in these ventures.

VIII. Recommendations

The training programme made it clear that there is a high level of interest among local civil society activists and politicians in Kosovo to find out more about the nature and workings of the European institutions. There is also a strong commitment to pursuing aspirations towards integration with the rest of Europe, including, even, closer cooperation with countries in the Western Balkans. Throughout the three days of the training course, the participants displayed a genuine desire to engage with international officials in finding practical solutions to the problems affecting Kosovo, and to work towards bettering their knowledge of universal standards across a wide variety of public policy areas, which they could then apply to improve the day-to-day situation of their constituents in Kosovo. This general enthusiasm is an important resource to draw on in future projects, and efforts should be made in the medium-term to avoid disappointing existing hopes and frustrating the considerable local efforts that are being made on the ground. One way of achieving this would be to support similar events that bring about closer cooperation between local activists and policymakers and experts from the European institutions, the European Union as much as the Council of Europe. In this way, both sides will be in a better position to develop clearer understanding of their respective agendas, perceptions and priorities, and formulate international policy accordingly.

This enthusiasm is, however, not always matched by a full understanding of the policy agendas and roles of the international actors. In the project activities generally, and as was in evidence at the training workshop in Strasbourg, there is a general tendency for even well-informed participants to make little distinction between the organizations that make up the so-called ‘international community’, never mind their varying mandates and policy preferences towards the Western Balkans, and Kosovo as a whole. Clearly, this is not a situation that arises from deliberate ignorance, but rather from a lack of opportunities to become more familiar with these issues and organizations. In addition, there seems to be a somewhat romanticized picture of the

process of European integration and little appreciation of the costs for areas like Kosovo of implementing European standards in full. A final issue relates to a widespread misinterpretation of the role of the CoE in Kosovo, there seemed to be an almost universal belief among the participants that the CoE was able to effect policy change with regard to resolving questions as divergent as eventual adoption of the Criminal Code to pursuing resolution of Kosovo's final status.

While ECMI has already taken steps to undertake additional follow-on activities with the CoE, there is sufficient need in Kosovo to support other focused training sessions in which topics only cursorily addressed in this training workshops, such as local governance and judicial reform are addressed in greater detail. There is also a need to organize further fact-finding and study visits to European institutions in order to enable political and civil society leaders in Kosovo to develop a realistic picture of their opportunity structures for regional development within the perspective of European integration, and to hone existing, as well as acquire further skills, to enable them to formulate and implement credible policies to realize their objectives.

Acknowledgements

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APPENDIX

A. List of Participants

Members of the Standing Technical Working Group

	Name	Organization
1	Ilir Salihu	Democratic League of Kosova (LDK) and the Kosova Trust Agency (KTA)
2	Besnik Osmani	Central Fiscal Authority, Ministry of Economics and Finance
3	Fedzat Sagdati	Human Rights Promotion and Training Officer, OSCE
4	Ymer Shatri	HANDIKOS
5	Myrvete Pantina	Assistant Professor in Macro-economics, Faculty of Economics, University of Pristina
6	Adem Limani	Alliance for the Future of Kosova (AAK) (OKU Pristina)
7	Izet Sadiku	Democratic League of Kosova (LDK)
8	Idriz Mumxhi	Turkish Democratic Party of Kosovo (KDTP)
9	Ardian Jashari	Economic Development Agency (EDA)
10	Mejreme Berisha	Alliance for the Future of Kosova (AAK)
11	Shkëndije Geci	Human Rights Officer, OMiK
12	Haxhi Thaqi	Human Rights Promotion and Training Officer, OSCE
13	Alberta Troni	Faculty of Art, University of Prishtina
14	Enesa Kadic	Head of Division for Education, Communities and Gender, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
15	Radica Berisha	Ministry of Education, General Planning
16	Hysni Bajrami	Local Administration Department (PDK)
17	Xhangyle Ilijazi	Regional Legal Office, UNMiK HQ, Gjilan
18	Nexhmedin Sejdiu	Legal Advisor, TMK – TRADOK, Pristina
19	Blerim Buriani	Political Advisor, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
20	Valon Murati	Logical Solution Group, Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK)
21	Mehmet Ceman	Bosniac party for Democratic Action in Kosova (BSDAK)
22	Serafetin Omer	Turkish Democratic Party of Kosovo (KDTP)
23	Diamant Kastrati	Human Rights Officer, OMiK
24	Arbnor Pula	Executive Director, Forum for Democratic Initiatives (FDI), Gjakovë
25	Petar Jeknic	Radio France International, Future Magaj, Mitrovica

26	Dragan Velic	Serbian National Council, SHVKIM, Gracanica
27	Boban Ničić	Local Communities Officer, Lipljan
28	Fahri Beqa	Youth Centre Coordinator
29	Gani Toska	Roma Citizens Initiative of Kosovo (IQRK)
30	Suzana Arni	Kosovo Civil Society Foundation (KCSF)
31	Ali Bajgora	Executive Director, Professional Center for Human Rights and Legal Issues
32	Fisnik Halimi	Deputy Director, Kosova Action for Civic Initiatives, KACI, Prishtina
33	Gafurr Podvorica	Liberal Party of Kosova (PLK)
34	Fakir Spahiu	Member of the Presidency of the AAK
35	Gjyljeta Mushkolaj	Kosovar Institute for NGO Law
36	Remzije Istrefi	Human Rights Training Officer, OMiK
37	Teuta Beselica	UNHCR, Pristina
38	Ruzhdi Hamza	Central Fiscal Authority, PDK

Presenters and Trainers

	Name	Organization
1	Francois Friederich,	Directorate General of Political Affairs
2	Marc Scheuer	Director of Political Advice and Cooperation
3	Tatyana Mychelova	Venice Commission, Directorate General of Legal Affairs.
4	Gael Martin-Micallfer	Venice Commission, Directorate General of Legal Affairs
5	Humbert de Biolley	Directorate General of Legal Affairs
6	Daniil Khochabo	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe
7	Alessandro Mancini	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe
8	Professor Eva Smith-Asmussen	Professor of Law, University of Member of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention
9	Olga Chernishov	European Court of Human Rights
10	Hernik Kristensen	Social Charter Secretariat
11	Karl Bopp	Directorate General of Social Cohesion
12	Christopher Lockett	Directorate General of Social Cohesion
13	Annika Persson	Directorate of Education and Higher Education
14	Vladimir Dronov	Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly
15	Jutta Gutzkow	Division of NGOs and Civil Society
16	Klaus Schumann	Directorate General of Political Affairs

Interpreters

1	Senad Sabovic	OSCE
2	Mila Poledica	UNMIK, Language Department
3	Edon Vrenezi	AUBG
4	Visar Hoxha	OSCE

ECMI Staff

1	Graham Holliday	Research Associate, ECMI Flensburg
2	Donika Krasniqi	Office Manager, ECMI Regional Office, Pristina

External Evaluator

1	Dr Karin von Hippel	Centre for Defence Studies, King's College, University of London.
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B. Workshop Programme:

Sunday, 17 November 2002

Arrival in Strasbourg

Day One:

Monday, 18 November 2002

TIME	ACTIVITY
9.00	Arrival at the Palais de l'Europe Registration and distribution of identity badges
9.30	Welcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Structure of the Programme <i>Francois Friederich, Directorate General of Political Affairs</i>
9.45	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of the Council of Europe mandates and activities <i>Marc Scheuer, Director of Political Advice and Cooperation</i>
11.00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building Democratic Institutions: <i>Tatyana Mychelova, Venice Commission, Directorate General of Legal Affairs.</i>• Elections and good practice in electoral matters: <i>Gael Martin-Micallfer, Venice Commission, Directorate General of Legal Affairs.</i>
13.00	<i>Lunch</i>
15.00	Guided tour of the Palais de l'Europe
15.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legal cooperation and judicial reforms in democracies in transition <i>Humbert de Biolley, Directorate General of Legal Affairs</i>
16.30	<i>Coffee break</i>
17.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Q & A session

Day Two:*Tuesday, 19 November 2002*

TIME	ACTIVITY
9.00	European Standards on Local Governance: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Role of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities• The Congress and Kosovo <i>Daniil Khochabo and Alessandro Mancini, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe</i>
10.45	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11.00	Training Session: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• European Convention on Human Rights• Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities <i>Professor Eva Smith-Asmussen, Member of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention</i>
13.00	<i>Lunch</i>
14.30	Visit to the European Court of Human Rights: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tour of the Court followed by a presentation of the role and functioning of the Court <i>Olga Chernishova, European Court of Human Rights</i>
16.30	<i>Close</i>

Day Three:

Wednesday, 20 November 2002

TIME	ACTIVITY
9.00	Directorate General II of Human Rights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Social Charter <i>Hernik Kristensen, Social Charter Secretariat</i> • Questions & Answers
9.45	Directorate General III: Social Cohesion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Health and Ethics – Recommendation on Health Policy, <i>Karl Bopp, Directorate General of Social Cohesion</i> ○ Case Study: the Pompidou Group – exchanging knowledge and experience of policymakers, professional groups and researchers on drug-related issues <i>Christopher Luckett, Directorate General of Social Cohesion</i> • Questions & Answers
11.00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11.30	Directorate General IV: Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education: The Bologna & Lisbon Convention <i>Sjur Bergan, Directorate of Education and Higher Education.</i> ○ Education for Democratic Citizenship <i>Michael Ingledow, Directorate of Youth and Sport</i> ○ The European Youth Centres <i>Michael Ingledow, Directorate of Youth and Sport</i> • Questions & Answers
13.00	<i>Lunch</i>
15.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parliamentary Assembly: <i>Vladimir Dronov, Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly.</i>
16.00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
16.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council of Europe and NGOs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Institutionalized cooperation with international NGOs ○ Cooperation programmes with and for civil society: <i>Jutta Gutzkow, Division of NGOs and Civil Society</i>
17.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusions <i>Klaus Schumann, Directorate General of Political Affairs</i>
20.30	Farewell dinner with Guest Speaker (François Friederich)

Day four:

Thursday, 21 November 2002

Participants depart for Kosovo/a

C. Workshop Evaluation Results:

Evaluation Questionnaire¹

1. *How do you rate the overall contents of the study visit and training workshop: very good, satisfactory, poor?*
 - Very Good (x 20); **Comment:** The timing for addressing these issues was right; **Comment:** Very good organization and very good content (x 15); **Comment:** Should be organized more often, very useful for minorities; **Comment:** We had an opportunity to meet people who have experience and knowledge in different fields and to benefit from the contacts we made (x 2);
 - Satisfactory (x 8); **Comment:** Introduction to CoE activities in the context of Kosovo was a very good idea (x 4); **Comment:** There were some shortcomings in the general organization; **Comment:** Some presenters could have been better prepared (x 2);
2. *How relevant was the workshop to increasing your knowledge of European standards and technical assistance: very relevant, relevant, not relevant?*
 - Very Relevant (x 21); **Comment:** Information on the functioning of the CoE was very useful (x 5); **Comment:** Useful in providing concrete information to link with the theoretical knowledge we had on this matters (x 4); **Comment:** A good opportunity to develop direct contacts with high CoE officials; **Comment:** Relevant and up-to-date information for members of the Group with respect to local governance (x 3); **Comment:** Useful information, some of our questions were, however, left without an answer; **Comment:** Relevant information with respect to European standards (x 6);
 - Relevant (x 9); **Comment:** We gained good information on the CoE, as well as possibilities of cooperation with this organization; **Comment:** Completed our knowledge circle on these matters (x 5); **Comment:** Capital relevance, given the fact that it directly addressed our need for better knowledge on European standards (x 2);
3. *Do you think that the workshop's objectives were met: fully met, partially met, not met?*
 - Fully (x 21); **Comment:** The essence of the CoE's existence and activities was made more comprehensible (x 10); **Comment:** Major goals were

¹ The total number of questionnaires returned by the participants was 30. The designation 'x 2 or x 3' refers to the number of participants who have given the same or similar answers. Note also, that as some participants did not answer all questions, the number of answers does not tally with the number of questions.

fulfilled, we now have a clearer picture of European standards and the CoE's influence in this respect (x 6);

- Partially (x 9); **Comment:** Some questions were left without any concrete answers (x 5);

4. *Which of the sessions covered in the workshop were most useful?*

- Venice Commission Session (x 4); Civil Society and NGOs Session;
- Congress on Local and Regional Authorities Session (x 5); European Social Charter Session (x 2);
- Introduction to the CoE as an organization (x 4); Meeting with Secretary-General of CoE;
- European Court of Human Rights (x 6);
- Education session (x 3);
- CoE work-related sessions (x 4);
- Human rights session (x 3);
- Decentralization and local governance session (x 4);
- Youth, education (x 3);
- Health and health system (x 3);
- Electoral standards session (x 2);

5. *Which topics were less useful?*

- European Court of Human Rights Session;
- NGO session (x 2);
- Youth, sport, and culture (x 2);

6. *Which topics would you have liked to have been included?*

- Relations to European Union; Stability Pact;
- More is needed on local governance;
- More on education;
- Final status and decentralization of Kosovo;
- Youth-related matters;
- Kosovo-related issues;
- CoE conflict resolution role and CoE role in South Eastern Europe in general (x 2);
- Economy (market economy) and ways of crediting by international credit/donor organizations (IMF);
- Integration processes in multiethnic societies, tolerance building;
- Privatization, economy, CoE and SE Europe economy (x 3);

7. *Do you think the workshop format was: very suitable, somewhat suitable, not suitable?*

- Very suitable (x 15); **Comment:** All subjects were relevant, the session on the European Court of Human Rights was too short;

- Somewhat suitable (x 10); **Comment:** The format was appropriate, except for the last day, which was too intense; **Comment:** More time should be allocated to more relevant issues; **Comment:** Smaller group work would have been more suited to some sessions (x 3); **Comment:** Programme was too intense, more time should have been left for Strasbourg sightseeing;
- Not suitable; **Comment:** The number of participants was too large;

8. *Do you think that the presentations/Questions and Answers sessions were: very good, satisfactory, poor?*

- Very Good (x 8); **Comment:** Some participants' questions missed the point of the study visit, some were fully focused on the situation in Kosovo rather than on what the CoE could offer to Kosovo; **Comment:** Participants should have been more focused on the information that was being provided to them (x 4);
- Satisfactory (x 19); **Comment:** There was too much repetition to the questions; the presentations were satisfactory, whereas the questions were bad (x 3); **Comment:** More time should have been provided for Questions and Answers; **Comment:** Answers could have been more precise and concrete (x 6); **Comment:** Certain presenters were not on top of their material;

9. *Please rate the presenters in terms of:*

		Very good	Satisfactory	Poor
(a)	Clarity of presentation	X		
(b)	Use of time	X		
(c)	Use of training aids		X	
(d)	Answering questions		X	
(e)	Overall knowledge of the subject	X		
(f)	Managing discussions	X		

Note: Results shown above represent the average of all answers.

- **Comment:** It was difficult to gain information from presentations without unnecessary repetition of questions; **Comment:** Some presenters lacked sufficient information on Kosovo, which left many of the targeted questions unanswered;

10. *Please rate the facilitation of the sessions in terms of:*

		Very good	Satisfactory	Poor
(a)	Managing discussions	X		
(b)	Use of time	X		
(c)	Balance of presentation to questions		X	
(d)	Overall facilitation	X		

Note: Results shown above represent the average of all answers.

11. *Do you think that the organization of the workshop was: very good, satisfactory, poor?*

- Very Good (x 20); **Comment:** Phenomenal organization on the part of ECMI, especially given the large number of participants;
- Satisfactory (x 6);

12. *Do you think that the venue and facilities were: very good, satisfactory, poor?*

- Very Good (x 21); **Comment:** Similar events should be organized; **Comment:** visits to the EU, Brussels and NATO would be useful (x 4); **Comment:** EU and SME Union; **Comment:** European Parliament, NATO HQ in Brussels (x 2); **Comment:** Geneva (x 2); **Comment:** A visit to states which have a higher degree of civil society organization, for example: Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic;
- Satisfactory (x 2);

Additional Comments:

- A visit to other European institutions would also be beneficial to the participants, for example, Brussels or Geneva (x 3);
- A similar target visit to Brussels would help the Group members gain the knowledge required in Kosovo to build the road towards other European nations;
- Good organization, but too sessions too intense, the hotel was too far from the venue;
- Similar visits should be organized at the beginning of the calendar year, which would give participants from the different Expert Committees an added advantage. This would have a beneficial effect on the Expert Committees' work for the rest of the year;
- Since some Expert Committee members have agreed to deal with matters of integration and returnees, a study visit to states where minority problems have been addressed successfully would be very useful e.g. Holland, Belgium and Finland.