

NEWSLETTER

Civic Dialogue

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October 2006.

- To create a region of peace, cooperation and tolerance.
- To form alliances among people of good will across ethnic divides.
- To facilitate open dialogue between the ethnically diverse populations in Kosovo as well as between Kosovo and Serbia
- To publicly oppose official policies that threaten human rights and weaken the capacity for establishing a rule of law

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First edition of Civic Dialogue Newsletter

Dear readers,

After several months of preparations and active work, the Civic Dialogue proudly presents the first number of the electronic newsletter about our activities.

Due to the considerable progress in our activities, we are now obliged to work even harder on the promotion of Civic Dialogue activities.

By starting this newsletter we believe that we can effectively promote our work and there-

fore contribute to the development of cooperation among organizations and people from Kosovo and Serbia.

With this newsletter we want to address important issues such as dialogue among members of different ethnicities in Kosovo, dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia and the rule of law in the whole region.

Therefore, if you have any suggestions how to increase the quality of this newsletter please contact us. We also invite our readers freely to distribute the newsletter.

Visit of editors in chief of main Serbian media to Kosovo.

Civic Dialogue plans to organize a visit of editors in chief of main Serbian media to Kosovo. During this visit there will be a meeting with Prime Minister, Mr. Agim Çeku, the President of Kosovo, Mr. Fatmir Sejdiu and with the head of UNMIK, Mr. Joakim Ryker. Also, visit to Radio-Television Kosovo is planned. This visit will be realised by the beginning of November 2006. For more information about this event, please contact Ms. Tatjana Tucic by e-mail: smallgrants@nscable.net



UPCOMING CONFERENCE

“University Reforms and Cooperation Among Universities “

*26th - 27th of October
Prishtina*

Civic Dialogue is planning to organize two day conference relating to University reforms and cooperation among Universities.. The conference will be held from 25th to 26th October in Pristine. More than 120 students from about 15 Universities from whole region will be invited to participate in this conference. Student participation in the decision making process in the University, The Bologna Process and the role of University students in contributing to the wider society, are among the main topics that will be discussed on the conference. We believe that this conference will be great opportunity for exchange of the experiences and establishment of improved communication among students and Universities in the region.



Civic Dialogue Board - meeting

Small Grants Programme current status

The Request for Proposals for the third round which is financed by the RBF is closed. The final decisions about the results will be made by the CiD board, by the end of October 2006. Those projects will be realized by the end of march 2007.

Please visit:
www.civil-dialogue.org



THE SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

Building upon the framework of Civic Dialogue, the Small Grants Fund (SGF) program aims to solidify relationships between ethnically diverse NGOs developed within Kosovo and between Kosovo and Serbia by providing funding for joint projects.

Small Grants Program seeks to encourage youth organizations, women's organizations and media as target groups to build a more systematic and consistent partnerships and pursue joint activities on a longer-term basis.

Since the beginig of the SGP, 22 projects were realized. We would like to present you the second round of realized project for 2006. Those projects were financed by The Balkan Trust for Democracy. The Request for Proposals for the third round is closed. The final decisions about the results will be made by the CiD board, by the end of October 2006. Those projects will be realized by the end of march 2007.

The European Law Students Association, Novi Sad and Bird, Pristine implemented a joint project **"Through Youth Dialogue towards Stability in the Region of South-East Europe"** aimed at building cooperation between the Universities of Pristine and Novi Sad by initiating a Memorandum of Understanding. The memorandum encourages representatives of the Universities' Rectories to work together in the fields of education, culture, and student and educational staff exchange. The ultimate goal of this project was the development of a strategy and concrete action plan to address issues in regards to the recognition of UNMIK travel documents.

Multilink, Novi Sad in cooperation with **Radio Urban FM, Pristine** realized the **"Music Link project"**, which brought together DJs from Kosovo and Serbia. This event confirmed conclusions of the previously held round table discussion that possibilities and perspectives for cultural exchange and cooperation exist on both sides. Joint DJ performance proved to be an effective tool for combating prejudices and stereotypes among young people.



Association for Protection and Improvement of Mental Health of Children and Youth, Nis and Hareja, Orahovac/Rehovec simultaneously organized workshops for youth 14-18 years old on non-violent communication and peaceful solution to the conflict. The most active participants from Kosovo and Serbia were selected to take part in a five-day multiethnic camp in Divljan. Stay in the camp helped young people to overcome existing prejudices and to make plans for further improvement of cooperation and communication.

Action for Non-Violence and Peace Building, Gnjilan and Community Centre Veliko Roptovo, Kamenica addressed the obstacles young people are faced with in communication and cooperation with members of other communities through the project **"Empowerment of Youth Leaders in Public Communication"**.

The idea of the project is based on the need, recognized by youth leaders, to enhance youth networking in different fields of activities. This project has strengthened the communication skills of the youth of different ethnicities in this region.



Per Art, Novi Sad and Community Building Mitrovicë/Mitrovica continued their already established cooperation through the **"Family Houses"** project. The project focuses on empty family houses, abandoned and ruined, that have lost their real meaning. Using different artistic approaches and techniques, the project brings together artists, civil society activists and young people from Serbia and Kosovo. Through project, it is showed that culture and creativity present fruitful field for dialogue and cooperation.

Civil Resource Development Centre, Nis and Human Rights Youth Initiative designed a project **"ACTIVIST"** as a first step towards future activities that would be carried out jointly by women's activists, formal and informal groups, LGBT groups, and grass-root activists from Serbia and Kosovo. Five workshops addressing the need to face the past were held and one street action on both sides of Mitrovica.

Participants agreed on further cooperation and the project was successfully presented by the similar action on the EXIT festival attended by 150 000 visitors.

Radio Premiera, Kamenica and **Radio Kamenica, Kamenica** implemented a project **“Dialogue as an Important Process for Common Future”** in order to promote



dialogue through a series of radio talk shows. The aim of the project was to encourage the citizens of Kamenica to create peaceful atmosphere in their multiethnic city and to promote the standards of co-existence and joint prosperous life for citizens of Kamenica and the region.

Syndicate for Social Affairs in cooperation with **Hand to Hand, Kosovo Polje** realized

the third stage of the project **“It isn't so dark”**. The project consisted of three phases including researching the topic “One Kosovo for all, you are Kosovar too”, publishing the book “It Isn't So Dark” and then promoting this book. Promoting the success stories, two organizations contributed to the establishment of a sound civil society among different ethnicities and affirmation of the new reality in the country.

Communication for Social Development, Gracanica in partnership with **Eyes of the Future, Gracanica** brought together NGO and media representatives to discuss the impact of media on the interethnic relations and importance of human rights in the reconciliation process.

Kosovo Women Coalition and **Svet andjela, Mitrovica** carried out a research on the level of knowledge in local

communities concerning human rights and women's rights in particular. The results of the research were then presented to public. **NGO Mundesia (Possibility) Mitrovica** and **Women's Studies Research Mileva Maric Einstein, Novi Sad** conducted a comparative research on living conditions in two Roma camps in Kosovo and Novi Sad. On the findings of this project, two more projects were designed and approved.

Media Centre BETA, Belgrade and **Kosovalive News Agency, Pristine** jointly established **“Albanian-Serbian Forum for Exchange of Information”**. As a result of the project, web site in three languages (Albanian, Serbian and English) was created with the aim to foster dialogue and direct information flow between Serbs and Albanians. For more information, please visit www.kosovakosovo.com



Since the begining of the Small Grants Programme, 22 projects were realized. Those projects were financed by The Balkan Trust for Democracy and The Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

EXIT 2006. - “People - not Territory”

Center for Development of Civil Resources from Nis, in cooperation with Citizen's Pact for SEE from Novi Sad and Youth Initiative for Human Rights from Pristine organized the visit of twenty young activists from Serbia and Kosovo to the EXIT Festival.

Activists from Nis, Belgrade, Pristine, and Mitrovica performed together an activist performance entitled **“PEOPLE - NOT TERRITORIES”** as a continuation of the activities held in Pristine and Mitrovica in May this year.

The performance took place on the bench located on AGORA. The main aim of the programme at EXIT festival was the meeting of young

people from Kosovo and Serbia, exchange of experience, mobility of youth and making the strategies for future common activism outlined in slogan: **“PEOPLE – NOT TERRITORIES”**.

Programme and activities on EXIT festival included distribution of T-shirts with activists' messages written by car spray and badges with slogan **“PEOPLE - NOT TERRITORIES”** in Albanian, Serbian and English language.

Also, three workshops addressing transitional justice and activism were held during the festival and many activists from Serbia and Kosovo participated in discussions. One of the activities was

“ad hoc” research concerning youth attitudes on fascism, nationalism, xenophobia and homophobia.

The common bench of youth from Kosovo and Serbia was one of the most visited during the festival. Activities had to be stopped few times because of the big crowd and lack of possibilities to realize planned programme, and to enable the visitors to approach the bench and become the part of its programme.

Serbian President Boris Tadic, Minister of Foreign Affairs Vuk Draskovic, as well as Goran Svilanovic, Coordinator of Stability Pact for Eastern Europe and Oli Ren, Commissioner for Enlargement of EU



visited the bench. After short introduction with ideas and activities, they received T-shirts and badges with note: **“PEOPLE-NOT TERRITORY”**.

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Facts about Civil Dialogue Kosovo - Serbia.

Civic Dialogue (CiD), a non-partisan, multi-ethnic initiative of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from Serbia and Kosovo, was launched in 2002 to abrogate the consequences of the violent conflicts in former Yugoslavia.

After the tragic events in 1998 and 1999 that led to a political deadlock in relations between Kosovo and Serbia, civil society leaders joined forces in a focused and sensitive engagement to facilitate dialogue, promote tolerance and trust, guided by a vision of a democratic and stable Balkans.

Through policy research, regional and international conferences, workshops, publications, public debates and cultural events, the CiD designs, implements and promotes civil society-led projects that are of concern and in the interests shared by all ethnic groups in Kosovo and Serbia, including, but not limited to: coming to terms with the recent past, youth and gender issues, media freedoms, free movement of people and free trade.

Civic Dialogue is an initiative that engages over 250 NGOs from Kosovo, Serbia and other parts of the former Yugoslavia.

Two NGOs, the Novi Sad-based Center for Regionalism and the Pristine-based "Mother Theresa" Society, are the founding partners. They are supported by the OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMiK), Freedom House, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF) and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation (Mott).

CiD activities are coordinated by a Board of ten individuals from Kosovo and Serbia, headed by two co-presidents, public figures from Pristine and Belgrade, whose integrity and public engagement secure a high level of media attention for activities and values promoted by the initiative.

"... If God wants us to look at the past he would put our eyes in the back. We are not political, we are not going to discuss the issue of Kosovo's status. We want to promote human, inter-ethnic communication".

Ambassador Zivorad Kovacevic

"... Most of them are living in the past or dreaming about the future, they do not live in present. We are incorporated part of Balkans, Europe and the World, that are going forward, and we are going backwards, there is a huge whole between us and the World. Let us see what NGO's we can cooperate with and let us live here and down. Only jointly and with better organization will we be able to tackle challenges and reach our common goal"

Don Lush Gjergji, president of Mother Teresa Societies