

Minority Governance  
in Europe



# MINORITY GOVERNANCE IN EUROPE

*Edited by*

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**LGI  
Books**

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Local Government  
and Public Service  
Reform Initiative

Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative (LGI), as one of the programs of the Open Society Institute (OSI), is an international development and grant-giving organization dedicated to the support of good governance in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the Newly Independent States (NIS). LGI seeks to fulfill its mission through the initiation of research and support of development and operational activities in the fields of decentralization, public policy formation and the reform of public administration.

With projects running in countries covering the region between the Czech Republic and Mongolia, LGI seeks to achieve its objectives through:

- development of sustainable regional networks of institutions and professionals engaged in policy analysis, reform-oriented training and advocacy;
- support and dissemination of in-depth comparative and regionally applicable policy studies tackling local government issues;
- support of country-specific projects and delivery of technical assistance to the implementation agencies;
- assistance to Soros foundations with the development of local government, public administration and/or public policy programs in their countries of the region;
- publication of books, studies, and discussion papers dealing with the issues of decentralization, public administration, good governance, public policy and lessons learned from the process of transition in these areas;
- development of curricula and organization of training programs dealing with specific local government issues;
- support of policy centers and think tanks in the region.

Apart from its own projects, LGI works closely with a number of other international organizations (Council of Europe, Department for International Development, USAID, UNDP and the World Bank) and co-funds larger regional initiatives aimed at the support of reforms on the subnational level. The Local Government Information Network (LOGIN) and the Fiscal Decentralization Initiatives (FDI) are two main examples of this cooperation.

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# Introduction to the Series

*Minority Governance in Europe* is the first volume in the new ECMI/LGI Series on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues. The Series is a joint venture of the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) and the Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative (LGI). ECMI conducts practice-oriented research, provides information and documentation, and offers advisory services concerning minority-majority relations in Europe; in addition, it engages in constructive conflict management through its action-oriented projects, particularly in the Balkans and the Baltics. LGI, a programme of the Open Society Institute, is a think tank specializing in improving governance practices and the provision of public services, especially at the local level.

The ECMI/LGI Series aims to provide a highly visible and accessible platform for ECMI's cutting-edge studies. These multi-author works are the result of the Centre's cooperative research projects, often lasting a number of years. While these projects were at times supported by conferences and seminars, the resulting books attempt to present a coherent and comprehensive picture of the area under investigation. In this way, the Series avoids the pitfalls of conference publications that often lack a clear focus and structure.

The Series will also make it possible for both ECMI and LGI to strengthen the link between their proactive work across Europe and the development of scholarly work that is geared towards influencing policy decisions. Through these studies, ECMI and LGI will raise awareness of crosscutting issues related to majority-minority relations and will analyze new issues and practices as they arise. In this way, the Series will advance the practical understanding of new challenges concerning minority issues while at the same time adding a dimension of theoretically based understanding.

The majority of countries in the former Eastern bloc, in particular in Central and Eastern Europe, feature multiethnic societies. Decentralization and the transition to a free market environment have made this characteristic of nation-states more visible and have raised the claim for a proactive approach toward multiethnic community management. The first step for countries that plan to solve ethnic conflicts in a peaceful way is to draft legislation on individual and collective minority rights. The second step is to implement these rules and manage the public sector in accordance with the accepted principles.

As there is a lack of relevant literature and research in this field, the ECMI/LGI Series intends to fill the gap by providing information and 'food for thought' for public officials and relevant professionals as well as practitioners. It is hoped that the ECMI/LGI publishing partnership will result in a significant addition to the study and practice of emerging policy issues related to minorities.

Marc Weller  
*European Centre  
for Minority Issues*

Petra Kovács  
*Local Government and  
Public Service Reform Initiative*

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# Preface

There is no shortage of conference proceedings that end up thrown together, sometimes hastily, and published in the form of a book. Sometimes such ventures may be useful; on other occasions the urgent need of publication seems less persuasive. This book, it is hoped, manages to avoid the pitfalls of the latter scenario. The contributions contained in this volume are the result of a sustained, joint research effort, carried out over several years. The chapters in the main sections of this work were drafted according to a common methodology and a common structure. They were reviewed over time and exposed to critical examination at numerous pertinent workshops. Importantly, all of the contributions were written with a common purpose: to assess advances that have been made in the discourse on minority governance over the past decade.

This period has been turbulent indeed. Ethnopolitical conflict has dominated the political agenda of the wider Europe since the collapses of the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet Union, and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. A number of different approaches have been tried to address these tumultuous changes and challenges. The states of Central Europe have adopted minority regimes through networks of bilateral treaties embedded in the European Framework Convention on National Minorities. Autonomy systems are being introduced in places with wide-ranging circumstances, such as Corsica and Gagauzia. And adventuresome efforts are being made by international agencies to stabilize minority-majority relations in the Balkans, especially in Bosnia Herzegovina and in Kosovo.

This volume addresses many of these recent trends. It does so on the basis of a conceptual and theoretical foundation established in the first part of the book. Devolution and autonomy are then considered in some of the more well-established cases, as well as in relation to the attempt to utilize elements of minority self-governance for purposes of conflict management or settlement. In this way, an attempt is made to consider new developments against the background of tried and tested autonomous regimes.

An undertaking of this scope would not have been possible without significant support. Such support was made available by the OSCE Chairmanships of Norway and Austria. Their generosity is much appreciated. The kind hospitality provided for by the authorities in Bolzano/Bozen, South Tyrol, also deserves acknowledgement. In addition, ECMI received the cooperation of the Minority Studies Programme of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Its Director, Mr László Szarka, supported this project with unstinting vigour and effectiveness. The cooperation of the Ostrecht Institute at the University of Cologne and the European Academy at Bolzano/Bozen also merits acknowledgement.

However, the principal burden in carrying out this project fell on the shoulders of ECMI's Research Associate Dr Kinga Gál. She played the crucial role of conceiving this project, in the organization of the seminars and in pulling the contributions together in their present form. In the later stages, the editorial process was taken over by ECMI's

publications officer, Ms Marita Lampe, with Ms Sabine Kozdon providing valuable assistance. To all of the above, ECMI is profoundly grateful.

This book also marks the launching of a unique joint publication endeavour between ECMI and the Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative (LGI). This joint arrangement will greatly enhance the availability of this work, and of others that will follow. The splendid support of LGI, and especially of Ms Petra Kovács, director of the LGI Managing Multiethnic Communities Project, and LGI's production manager Tom Bass and his team, in the publication of this first volume in a series of studies, bodes well for the future of this venture.

As lies in the nature of collective works of this kind, the views expressed in this volume differ. They are attributable to the individual authors, and not to any particular institution. Taken together, however, it is hoped they will shed some further light on the often dramatic developments relating to minority governance in Europe at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

September 2002

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