European Centre for Minority Issues

External evaluation 2007

European Centre for Minority Issues

Contents

Preface

This report contains the results of an external evaluation of the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI). The evaluation has been conducted between March and September 2007 by the Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) in co-operation with an international expert panel, and at the request of the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation. EVA has been responsible for the evaluation process and methodology. The expert panel has been responsible for the conclusions and recommendations of the report.

The evaluation examines three defined main tasks of ECMI: research, constructive conflict management and advisory services and documentation. Furthermore, the evaluation addresses ECMI's network and co-operation activities, and analyses the content and structure of ECMI's strategy work, ECMI's performance and the organisation of ECMI. Finally, the evaluation provides an account of the Centre's follow-up activities on the recommendations presented in an external evaluation conducted in 2001.

The panel of experts has experienced the evaluation process as an open and professional approach and a source of mutual inspiration. Furthermore, the evaluation method has been relevant to a review of the goals and results of ECMI.

The expert panel and EVA expect the report to encourage the process of developing ECMI's organisation and strategy, as well as its research, conflict management and advisory services and publications.

Joseph Marko   Agi Csonka
Chairman of the expert panel   Executive Director of EVA

1   Executive summary

Introduction
This evaluation provides an assessment of the output, the strategic direction and the organisation of the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI). The assessment, conclusions and recommendations have been the responsibility of an international panel of distinguished experts from the academic and practical field of minority-majority issues. A project group from the Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) has been responsible for the evaluation methodology as well as the practical organisation of the evaluation.

The evaluation analyses the results and the quality of ECMI's research, advisory and publication activities. The evaluation also examines the general strategic development and aims of ECMI and their correspondence and coherence with actual ECMI activities. In addition to this, the evaluation analyses the fitness of the general organisation, governance and staff issues.

Overall conclusions
In general terms, ECMI operates according to its mandate as defined by the founding governments. ECMI produces research of good quality, carries out relevant advisory activities and publishes documentation of its activities. ECMI's research results and research output are of good and often high academic quality; at its best, ECMI's research is impressive, excellent and groundbreaking. Even though the evaluation has been conducted without field visits, the advisory services of ECMI, for instance in Kosovo/a and the Caucasus region, appear relevant, adequate, research driven and to have had an impact in the field.

ECMI has experienced difficulties with regard to its organisation. While the Centre's general strategy development and implementation is stable – a result of a substantial management effort – a series of perspectives for development remain with regard to governance and internal management. The composition of the Board should be reconsidered in order to make it more credible and operational, and to emphasise the independence of ECMI's activities. The degree of turnover among research staff is a distinct cause for alarm and is addressed by the panel.

ECMI has also experienced economic difficulties for a number of years. When the Centre was launched, it was an expectation of the three founders, Denmark, Germany and the federal state (Land) of Schleswig-Holstein, that a fourth founder could be established, namely, the EU Commission. This expectation was not fulfilled, and core funding has consequently from the beginning been out of proportion with the Centre's activities. Furthermore, core funding has not been increased since the foundation. The leadership at ECMI has been successful in attracting external funding, which now exceeds the core funding.

Central recommendations of the expert panel
Give more priority to internal management and staff development
In order to retain the research staff and to recruit future candidates, the management should as a matter of urgency employ the research staff on a long-term basis and create better career opportunities. The research staff are employed on one-year contracts and have too limited resources for external activity.

Create formalised networks with universities, research institutions and leading minority institutions
ECMI should initiate formalised and binding networks and co-operations, and deploy these proactively, e.g. in staff development, external promotion of the Centre and cross-institutional ventures. ECMI does indeed partake in a variety of network and co-operation activities generating output. These do not, however, generate sufficient synergy and knowledge exchange in general. Furthermore, networking, exchanges with universities for the research staff and training of PhD-students are not sufficiently facilitated be the leadership of ECMI.

Ensure research staff a higher degree of autonomy
The leadership of ECMI should ensure the research staff a higher degree of autonomy, independence and operational freedom by introducing a more democratic and open leadership style. Further involvement of the active research staff in the details of research activities and external contacts should take place in order to enhance further synergy and staff development, and it should be a key effort to ensure the research staff a higher degree of autonomy and influence in their daily work.

Consider a recomposition of the Board
The Board of ECMI assumes the overall responsibility for all activities conducted at the Centre, including the academic quality. This requires an operational Board comprising a majority of specialists and professionals appointed due to their personal capacity and expertise. Currently, too many representatives who are non-professionals, directly representing the founding governments, have seats on ECMI's board. The direct representatives of founding governments may also contribute to an image of ECMI as overly dependent on the governments.

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Increase core funding and draw further use out of external funding
ECMI is challenged in a financial sense; e.g. key research priorities identified in the strategy are currently not operational. ECMI's external funding exceeds the core funding, and the external funding should in the future be utilised more aggressively in order to cover internal needs like administration and overheads. Furthermore, the founders should grant ECMI an immediate increase of €200,000 in the annual budget in order to ensure sufficient research activity and staff development of senior researchers. The grant should be at the disposal of ECMI provided the Centre meets pre-defined performance indicators for its research and projects.

About the recommendations
The recommendations are the responsibility of the international expert panel. The panel agrees that all focus areas of the evaluation are important in order to assess the organisation and the output of ECMI. The panel has, however, approached its recommendations on the basis of firm priorities, in order to encourage a precise follow up process on the part of ECMI and its board.

Thus, the recommendations summarised above reflect the panel's main priorities and should be read as the panel's accentuation of key points in the evaluation. However, the report contains several more recommendations than those outlined above. These are presented in context in the relevant chapters and sections of the report and, furthermore, are listed in total in appendix A.

2   Introduction

This report presents the outcome of an external evaluation of the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) located in Flensburg, Germany. ECMI is a joint research effort between Denmark, Germany and Land Schleswig–Holstein.

The evaluation has been conducted by the Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) in co-operation with an international panel of prominent experts in the field of minority issues. EVA has been responsible for the evaluation process and methodology. The expert panel has been responsible for the conclusions and recommendations of the report.

Firstly, the evaluation addresses ECMI's current strategy work, ECMI's performance as well as the organisation of ECMI. Secondly, the evaluation addresses the three defined main tasks of ECMI: research, constructive conflict management and advisory services (also referred to as action-oriented work) and documentation. Thirdly, the evaluation addresses ECMI's networking activities and external co-operation, and fourthly, the evaluation addresses the development of ECMI since an external evaluation was conducted in 2001.

2.1   Background and purpose

On 29 January 1998, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany and Land Schleswig–Holstein (referred to as the founders) established the ECMI as a foundation under civil law seated in Flensburg, Germany.

On the same date, the Federal Ministry of the Interior of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Ministry of Information Technology and Research of the Kingdom of Denmark entered into a mutual agreement. Article 8 of this agreement stipulates that ECMI's activities in relation to its regulations as well as ECMI's efficiency are to be evaluated by an independent, scientific commission. The evaluation is to take place every four years.

The founders acknowledged the need for additional financial means, as expressed by ECMI, and decided to advance the first evaluation to the second half of 2001. Following the four-year evaluation cycle, the second evaluation of ECMI was initiated at the end of 2006 and carried out at the beginning of 2007. A financial and administrative evaluation was conducted in January 2006. Accordingly, this evaluation will focus on ECMI's substantive performance in terms of research, documentation and action-oriented work.

2.2 Expert panel and project group

An international expert panel and a project group from EVA have carried out the evaluation. The international expert panel is responsible for the academic quality of the evaluation and has two members, including the Chairman, appointed by the Danish founder and one member appointed by the German founders. The members of the expert panel are:

- Professor Joseph Marko (Chairman), Full Professor of Public Law at the Institute of Austrian, European and Comparative Public Law and Political Science, University of Graz, Faculty of Law.
- Birgit Lindsnæs, Director of the International Department, The Danish Institute for Human Rights
- Professor Dr. Stefan Oeter, Institut für Internationale Angelegenheiten Fakultät für Rechtswissenschaft, Hamburg Universität

Curriculum vitae information on the members of the expert panel is available in Appendix C.

The EVA project group is responsible for the methodological and practical aspects of the evaluation.

Former Executive Director of EVA, Christian Thune, has participated in the evaluation in the capacity of Senior Advisor.

The members of the EVA project group are:

- Director of Projects, Anette Dørge Jessen
- Special Adviser, Tine Holm (until March 2007)
- Evaluation Officer, Søren Poul Nielsen (Project Manager from April 2007)
- Evaluation Assistant, Mette Juul Jensen (until March 2007)

2.3　Evaluation method

The Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation has appointed The Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) to carry out the evaluation and be responsible for the methodological and organisational planning and to support an expert panel appointed by the founders in writing the evaluation report. EVA has been responsible for planning the evaluation in co-operation with ECMI.

Assessment focus, evaluation process and objectives as well as evaluation methodology are accounted for in the terms of reference, available in Appendix B.

2.3.1　Evaluation focus

The evaluation is a peer review of the main internal and external activities at ECMI. The evaluation includes an analysis of the actions taken to follow-up on the 2001 evaluation, an assessment of the strategic direction of ECMI, and of the relevance and results of the research conducted at ECMI.

The expert panel has applied the evaluation focus defined in the terms of reference in an operational manner in order to ensure transparency and thus make evident how the panel through the peer review has reached its conclusions.

The expert panel has applied an evaluation method that does not include the use of predefined criteria. The evaluation focus has been directed towards research, quality assurance and organisation and management under the following sub-headlines:

Research quality assurance

Basic research	- EU or national research projects: competitive, non-competitive; number of partners, - Publications (monographs, edited volumes, scholarly articles in edited volumes, scientific (electronic) journals): peer reviewed or not - Other research papers, conference papers - Relevant placement in citation indexes
Applied research	- Commissioned reports - Consulting activities - Action-oriented activities

Documentation	- Library - Electronic database - Number of users
Research methods	- Based on scientific disciplines, multi-/interdisciplinary versus one-dimensional or syncretistic
Thematic focus or broad range of issues	

Organisation and management

Planning of research activities	- Ad hoc financial requirements vs. long/mid/short term research strategies; - Participation of scientific staff - Control of implementation
Organizational hierarchies	- Balance between administrative personnel and scientists - Relevant structure of junior and senior researchers - Balance between open and closed leadership style
Staff development	- Balance between size and tasks of staff - Diversification of qualifications - Higher qualification measures - Accompanying training - (internal/external) career perspectives
Strategic partnerships	- Balance between co-operation and competition with similar institutions - Networking
Financial resources	- Balance between core budget and additional fund-raising - Research driven or market-oriented

2.3.2 Methodological considerations of the panel

With regard to the action-oriented projects of ECMI, the conclusions and recommendations of the panel in the evaluation should be considered in the following context. The evaluation focus and the documentation available allow the panel to review the action-oriented projects at ECMI only on the basis of individual examples. The panel has been presented with case studies, rather than with a comprehensive overview and presentation of the action-oriented projects conducted by ECMI.

The panel members are prominent, international professionals and highly qualified to review the quality of the output of ECMI. The focus and the budget of this evaluation, however, have neither justified nor allowed a full-scale peer review evaluation of action-oriented projects. Such an evaluation would have required site visits to the regional field offices in Kosovo/a and in Georgia. This has not been possible, nor has it been necessary, as the focus of the evaluation is ECMI and ECMI's activities in general and as a whole, and not solely an evaluation of the action-oriented projects.

The conclusions and recommendations of the panel on action-oriented projects must consequently be read in the context presented above.

2.3.3 Documentation

Three types of documentation form the basis of the evaluation: the self-evaluation report of ECMI, the supplementary documents and background material and the site visit in Flensburg on 10–11 May 2007.

ECMI has prepared a self-evaluation report in April 2007, analysing its own strengths and weaknesses based upon self-evaluation guidelines sketched by EVA and endorsed by ECMI prior to initiation. EVA's self- evaluation guidelines were designed in such a way that the answers would provide the panel with the necessary information for assessing the programme against the assessment focuses as described in the terms of reference.

The self-evaluation report produced by ECMI has in general served the expert panel well in assessing the Centre and its activities. On a formal level, the self-evaluation report is very well written and reads as the result of a thorough, comprehensive and joint effort by a dedicated ECMI management and staff. Moreover, the self-evaluation report contains reflections on the Centre's activities and, together with the annexes, provides a useful, but also somewhat general introduction to the activities conducted. In addition to this, it is evident from the report that the Centre has experienced difficulties and challenges throughout the years; at the time of the 2001 evaluation, the present Director had only held office for about a year, and the Centre was in the midst

of finding its feet following its establishment. The report and the activities of the Centre must be, and have been, considered within this context.

However, the self-evaluation report and the annexes do not address adequately all parts of the terms of reference; e.g. the actions ECMI has taken to follow up on the 2001 evaluation and the questions that were raised in relation to research and documentation activities. Furthermore, aspects regarding the Centre's strategy, organisation and activities in general needed further explanation. These aspects were, however, constructively addressed at the site-visit in Flensburg.

The expert panel visited ECMI in Flensburg on 10–11 May 2007. The site visit was arranged by EVA in co-operation with ECMI in order to provide the expert panel with the opportunity to elaborate on potentially unclear and less substantiated sections of the self-evaluation report. The site visit also served to validate the information provided in the self-assessment report. The visit comprised interviews with the stakeholders of ECMI, management and staff. Thus, the site visit was used to clarify the opinions and perspectives of the different parties in relation to the issues of the self-evaluation report.

The self-evaluation process as such was designed to provide documentation for the work of the expert-panel in connection with the site visit and reporting and, moreover, to motivate discussions on strengths and weaknesses related to the issues of the evaluation and encourage the process of continuous improvement of the quality of ECMI's activities. The information provided has mainly been of a qualitative nature with some limited quantitative data.

The site visit agenda is available in Appendix D. Supplementary documents and background materials are listed in Appendix E.

2.4   Content of the report

The report contains a preface, an introduction, five main chapters and a number of appendices.

Firstly, the report provides a preface and an executive summary of the evaluation's main conclusions. Chapter 2 introduces the background to the evaluation as well as relevant methodological aspects of the evaluation. Chapter 3 analyses ECMI's strategy work and overall performance in the respective strategy interims, whereas chapter 4 presents an analysis of ECMI's organisation, financing and staff issues. Chapters 5 to 7 present analyses of ECMI's three main tasks: research, constructive conflict management and advisory services and documentation[1], whereas chapter 8 introduces the panel's assessment of ECMI's co-operation and networking activities. Finally, chap-

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[1] *Defined in ECMI statutes, article 3.*

ter 9 presents a brief analysis of the follow-up activities ECMI has initiated on the basis of an external evaluation conducted in 2001.

The individual chapters present both conclusions and recommendations of the expert panel.

3   Strategy and general performance

This chapter deals partly with the strategy work of ECMI since 2001 and partly with ECMI's general and overall performance.

At the time of the 2001 evaluation, ECMI was in the process of implementing the Centre's Strategy Document 2000-2005 which was drafted immediately after the present Director took office in 2000. Consequently, this strategy work is addressed and analysed below. ECMI has also formulated an interim strategy for the period commencing 2005 until a new strategy is prepared, and an analysis of both the content and actual implementation of this interim strategy is also presented below.

In addition to this, the overall and general performance of ECMI is subject to a brief and transverse analysis and summary in section 3.2. The conclusions presented there are elaborated in further detail in the thematised chapters 5 – 8. The structure presented in the present section is meant to provide the readers with a preliminary and general overview of ECMI's overall performance.

3.1   Strategy

3.1.1   Strategy 2000-2005
This section addresses the strategy work of ECMI in the period 2000-2005. The period was the focus of the 2001 evaluation, and the substantial contents of this were also accounted for to the founders in August 2005. Therefore, this section will focus briefly on the strategy period and primarily on implementation of the strategy.

In 2000, a strategy for ECMI was presented in the Strategy Document 2000-2005. In this document the overall aim of ECMI was to:

Promote interdisciplinary research on minority-majority relations in a European perspective and to contribute to the improvement of interethnic relations in those parts of Europe where ethno political tension and conflict prevail.

With this aim in mind, ECMI generated the following operating principles for the activities engaged in and conducted:

- Non partisan
- Independence
- Long-term interest
- Beneficiary-led
- Multi-level engagement.

In addition to this, the principles were supplemented by a set of operational criteria used for ECMI's selection of and tendering for (action-oriented) projects:

- Responsiveness and longer-term vision
- Focused approach
- Comparative advantage
- Practice-orientation
- Learning cycles.

The implementation of the strategic aim was to result in practice-oriented research, constructive conflict management and advisory services (action-oriented projects), publication as well as networking and co-operation activities.

The 2001 evaluation of ECMI addressed this framework and concluded that the Strategy Document 2000-2005 was in correspondence with the overall objective of ECMI as defined by the founders, and the document was also endorsed by both the founders and Board of ECMI.

The panel concludes:

The aims and strategic goals identified in the Strategy Document 2000-2005 have been met, and the fulfilment of the strategy has been successful. The fulfilment of the strategy has been accounted for continuously in ECMI's annual reports and in the ECMI Strategic Review Document from 2005.

The current Director of ECMI took office in 2000 and faced a number of challenges that were described in the 2001 evaluation. He has headed an outstanding development of ECMI in terms of the quality of its substantive performance.[2] Also, he has dealt very well with the general challenges during the period in question.

3.1.2   Interim strategy period 2005-2007

In this section, an assessment of the strategy work of ECMI in the interim period of 2005 to May 2007 is provided. This assessment will also include overall reflections on the substantial contents of the present interim strategy of ECMI, relating to the three main tasks of ECMI: research, action-oriented work and documentation.

In 2005 an ECMI Strategic Review Document was formulated by the ECMI management, assessing the 2000-2005 strategy. This document describes the fulfilment of the 2000-2005 strategy and accounts for ECMI's past achievement. Moreover, the document discusses ECMI's current and immediately prospective status, challenges and strategic aims. Consequently, the document also serves as ECMI's interim strategy until a new strategy is prepared. This is scheduled to initiate in the second half of 2007.

A central point in this interim strategy is ECMI's identification and planned pursuit of four strategic fields of specialisation in addition to ECMI's present focus on conflict transformation and institution building. The strategic fields of specialisation have been identified following the expiry of the 2000-2005 strategy and form the basis of ECMI's current work within the tasks of research and documentation. The fields of specialisation also define ECMI's four core competence areas, and as such they are intended to feed into the action-oriented projects conducted by ECMI. Finally, the strategic fields of specialisation lay down the areas within which ECMI actively seeks to manifest itself as a leading institution within the international academic field of minority-majority issues. The four fields of specialisation are:

- Conflict transformation, state construction and institution building
- Political participation of minorities
- Economic and social dimensions
- Cultural and linguistic diversity.

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[2] *Please refer to section 3.2 as well as the relevant thematised chapters for substantiations of this assertion. The fulfilment and substantiation of the outcome of the 2000-2005 Strategy Document has furthermore been accounted for in ECMI's Strategic Review Document from August 2005.*

The identification of these four fields of specialisation naturally has consequences for ECMI as far as staff, recruitment and research outcome are concerned.

Firstly, the Centre has formulated an intention to attract to Flensburg a number of dedicated scholars who can adequately cover this research priority. Secondly, the Centre intends to generate at least one handbook, a study (in co-operation with international researchers) as well as articles on each of the respective fields in order to manifest itself as a centre of competence and knowledge. Thirdly and finally, ECMI is currently considering its future research engagement within anti-discrimination and Roma issues.

The research strategy is also addressed in chapter 5.

With regard to ECMI's action-oriented work, this is somewhat more narrowly defined in the interim strategy than was the case with the earlier strategies. This is due to the fact that the interim strategy formulates intentions of reducing the project activities in the Balkan area in favour of an upgrading of action-oriented projects in the Caucasus area. The field office in Kosovo/a is, however, to be maintained, as is the focus on both the Caucasus and Balkan areas, as well as on general European minority-majority issues.

The interim strategy addresses future challenges with regard to the effort to attract external funding and to take initiatives to tender for action-oriented projects. External funding for an institution such as ECMI is largely dependent on a variety of circumstances, e.g. supply and demand, competition, current ethno-political situation in the relevant regions, as well as political priorities.

Consequently and firstly, ECMI's interim strategy contains reflections on the Centre's own identity as a 'neutral' partner to governments and minority representative organisations. Taking advantage of the fact that ECMI in principle operates independently of its founders, minority organisations and governments may perceive ECMI as a 'neutral' partner. Accordingly, the Centre may give priority to various services to governments in relation to the four fields of specialisation. Among these are the support of drafting of legislation and implementation of best practises. ECMI has been quite successful in implementing this priority in Kosovo/a, where the Centre's first major case of action-oriented work took place, e.g. supporting the drafting of extensive legislation. The documentation available indicated a substantial impact of ECMI's work in Kosovo/a.

Secondly, ECMI is currently planning on entering into activities funded by bodies such as the European Commission, UNDP and the World Bank. In the interim strategy, ECMI elaborates on the downsides of being a relatively small institution in this respect, given the context of similar but larger European minority-majority institutions. ECMI nevertheless maintains the venture and cements the priority. The idea is to develop and transform one or two of the fields of specialisa-

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tion (the main priority being economic and social dimensions) into an actual programme or several programmes; a venture presently undertaken by the Director and Deputy Director.

The action-oriented projects are also addressed in chapter 6.

The panel concludes:

The identification of a number of fields of specialisation is relevant, and considering the current composition of the research staff, most of the fields of specialisations themselves are constructive and realistic. The chosen fields do, however, require that targeted efforts be made to retain the researchers currently employed, cf. section 4.3.

In relation to the four strategic fields of specialisation, it is an explicit intention of ECMI that all fields should be covered by at least one active research expert engaged at ECMI for a longer term. However, only three of these strategic fields of specialisation have currently been implemented and are covered by productive staff members; ECMI has not yet implemented the field Cultural and Linguistic Diversity, which furthermore is not covered by active research staff.

With regard to the strategic direction in general, ECMI has wisely chosen to focus the action-oriented projects on the Caucasus area – and additionally on the Balkan area, as well as on general European minority-majority issues. This is a relevant prioritisation that, furthermore, seems workable, also in terms of the continuing increase in external funding.

3.2　Overall conclusions on ECMI's general performance

This section presents a range of overall conclusions in terms of the general performance and current work of ECMI. The conclusions are elaborated in further detail in subsequent chapters, accompanied by recommendations when relevant in the theme structured chapters.

3.2.1　Mandate

Based on the self-evaluation report, the background material and the site visit in Flensburg, the panel concludes in strictly general terms that ECMI operates according to its mandate and produces research of good quality at its headquarters in Flensburg, also that it carries out relevant action-oriented projects in the regional field offices and publishes documentation for its activities that is relevant in terms of the strategy of ECMI. The current and tripartite function should remain unaltered. Thus, in the future, ECMI should continue to engage in research, action-oriented pro-

jects, as well as publication within the field of national and autochthonic (traditional, non-migrating) minorities and minority-majority issues in general across Europe, as stated in the ECMI statutes.

3.2.2   Leadership
Externally ECMI has a visible leadership that is highly successful in attracting external funding. It is evident to the panel that this is the result of a both dedicated and competent management effort. As far as leadership internally at ECMI is concerned, however, perspectives for development remain. Even though a reasonable and understandable division of labour and of responsibilities between the Director and Deputy Director has been agreed, the panel concludes that leadership in general has not been given sufficient priority, cf. section 4.2.

3.2.3   Output
The ECMI working papers, books, edited books, articles and general publications presented during the evaluation are of good and often high academic quality. At its best, ECMI's research results and research output are impressive, excellent as well as groundbreaking, cf. chapter 5.

With regard to the action-oriented work of ECMI, the documentation for the Kosovo/a and Georgia projects is satisfactory. Even though neither the quality nor the impact can be assessed in-depth without field visits, the panel considers the action-oriented work of ECMI to be relevant and adequate in relation to the strategy. Furthermore, the documentation available indicates that ECMI's action-oriented work has had an impact in the field, which is positive.

The documentation also indicates that the action-oriented work appears to be research driven, and this, too, is positive. However, the panel also finds that the interrelationship between core research and applied research in the action-oriented projects is not immediately evident and recommends that ECMI, in the future, considers how it can be made more transparent how in-house research conducted in Flensburg feeds into action-oriented projects in the field, and vice-versa; i.e. the interrelationship between research consuming and research generating activities.

4   Organisation, financing and staff

This chapter addresses ECMI's organisation, financing and staff issues. As stated in the terms of reference, an administrative and financial evaluation of ECMI was conducted in 2006, and this chapter will consequently focus only on limited but significant issues concerning the general organisation of ECMI. The issues dealt with in this chapter are: Board and Advisory Council, leadership, staff, geographical location and funding of ECMI. The sub-sections of this chapter introduce a few general remarks on the specific contexts accompanied by the panel's recommendations.

4.1   Governing and advisory bodies
This section focuses on the Board and the Advisory Council of ECMI. The section briefly describes the composition and functions of these respective organs and provides an account of the panel's assessment of the practice of both organs.

The role of the ECMI Board is defined in the ECMI statutes as the supreme authority of the Centre. The members of the Board, nine in total, are nominated for a period of three years by the respective founders; the Board Chairman is nominated by the Danish founder. According to the ECMI statutes, the Board is to assemble at least biannually.[3]

The statutes of ECMI, furthermore, require that the ECMI Board should in consultation with the founders appoint an Advisory Council. The purpose of the Advisory Council is to support the management and staff in carrying out ECMI's mission through network contacts, representation and general promotion of ECMI. The Board of ECMI determines the number of members in the Council, whose duties are to be specified by the ECMI Board.[4] Currently the Advisory Council of ECMI has 15 members. The Council's function is strictly supporting, not governing.

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[3] *ECMI statutes, articles 5-7.*
[4] *ECMI statutes, article 10.*

4.1.1   Board

Firstly, the Board has overall responsibility for the strategic and substantial development of ECMI and for all its activities. Secondly, the Board instructs the management and staff in the general fulfilment of ECMI's mission.

The Board must therefore have a membership that is qualified to fulfil this double mandate. There must be a majority of members that are recognised experts in the field of minority-majority studies. Their background may be from universities or as academics and professionals with competences within ECMI's scope.

This is not the case today. The ECMI Board has few members matching the criteria described above, but also a substantial majority of public officers, high officials and politicians representing the founding governments and European organisations mentioned in the Statutes. The panel feels strongly that a pre-condition for the Board's authoritative and credible steering of ECMI is a re-thinking and re-constitution of the Board in order to secure greater representation of specialists and researchers within the minority-majority field, although political and administrative experiences and competencies at the same time should remain represented in the Board.

Furthermore, ECMI has since its foundation been intended to operate independently from its founding governments. The panel endorses this reasoning and finds it essential that ECMI can be perceived as independent in its choice of projects, methodologies and operations from the direct influence of the founding governments. Consequently, it is problematic that direct representatives of the founders are represented on the Board. This hinders ECMI's independence from the founding governments.

Therefore, it is important to compose and establish a Board where members are appointed in their personal capacity and on the basis of their expertise and professionalism, and not as direct representatives of governments. ECMI regulations should be revised to ensure this.

The panel recommends:

A recomposition of the ECMI Board should take place in order to introduce more specialists, researchers and professionals within the minority-majority field as members of the ECMI Board. All members of the ECMI Board should be appointed in their personal capacity and expertise or specific academic professionalism.

4.1.2 Advisory Council

The concept of an Advisory Council for ECMI is in principle positive and constructive. The appointment in an advisory capacity of prominent scholars that can provide guidance, advice and inspiration is a value added to any research institution, at both leadership and research staff levels – and naturally also at ECMI.

The Advisory Council of ECMI is not, at present, playing a very active role. The Council does not assemble or communicate on a regular basis, and the actual deployment of the Council does not seem to include all members, but rather specific and individual persons. Furthermore, contact with the Council in general, and the deployment of the individual Council members and their expertise in particular, for instance in drafting a new strategy for ECMI and setting an overall strategic direction for the Centre, is the remit of ECMI's Director, and not of the other research-active staff members.

The current composition of the Advisory Council – predominantly prominent scholars from prestigious institutions within the field of minority-majority issues in general – results in the Council's direct impact being at a general and strategic level, and that a primary function of the Council may be to add visibility and prestige to ECMI through the function of Council members as de facto ambassadors for the Centre. This is very constructive and should certainly also remain so in the future.

The present organisation and activities of the Advisory Council are in consequence not directly involved with ECMI's activities, and the Advisory Council is not exploited as a quality assurance mechanism at project level. However, the self-evaluation report of ECMI emphasises consistently that the Council not only provides overall and general advice on ECMI's research program and strategy but is also involved with the research staff in individual research and action-oriented projects, e.g. in project design.

The panel does not recognise this role of the Advisory Council from the documentation available and from the site visit. While individual members of the Council interviewed during the site visit did confirm that they had been involved in developing strategic documents, in identifying strategic priorities for ECMI and at a rather general level in research and action-oriented activities, neither the members of the Council interviewed nor the research staff confirmed ad hoc and direct involvement of the Council in research and action-oriented activities. The involvement of the Advisory Council is strictly general and overall.

While possible ad hoc involvement of Council members in research and action-oriented projects may certainly be a positive dimension, the Advisory Council should also facilitate overall and general support, primarily for the management level. The Council should as a general rule not be in-

volved directly in research and projects conducted, but serve as advisers, e.g. in drafting a new (research) strategy for ECMI. The members of the Council count a large number of prominent academics who cannot be expected to take part in activities such as the editing of articles or the design phase of action-oriented projects as described in ECMI's self-evaluation report. In addition to this, the prominence of most of the members should also be exploited for general promotion and external representation of the Centre and its activities.

The panel believes that the central task of the Advisory Council should be to provide overall guidance to ECMI and to act as ambassadors for ECMI – as is also defined in the statutes of ECMI. It must be a priority to enhance this role in the future. At the same time, the panel stresses that the potential ad hoc involvement of the Advisory Council in specific research activities – both by the leadership and the research staff at ECMI – may very well be a positive dimension that should be further exploited by ECMI leadership and staff.

Furthermore, the panel is aware that the Board and the Advisory Council have – and must have – different tasks and goals. The Board is the governing body and the panel has no ambition that the Advisory Council should parallel or interfere with the governing function. It must be a task for the Board and the leadership to define more precisely tasks and goals for both bodies.

The panel recommends:

The Advisory Council should be consulted more frequently by the ECMI leadership and staff in the overall and general development than is the case today. Furthermore, the Advisory Council should be involved in formulating the upcoming new strategy of ECMI. The Advisory Council should in the future enhance its role as ambassadors of ECMI. Finally, the respective tasks and goals for the Board and the Advisory Body must be more clearly defined.

4.2   ECMI leadership

This section describes, discusses and analyses the organisation of the leadership of ECMI. It opens with a brief account of the structural organisation and work divisions of the ECMI management and goes on to analyse the management practice at ECMI, and this is supplemented with recommendations.

As stipulated in the statutes of ECMI, the Board appoints a Director of ECMI with responsibility for the daily management of the Centre and the realisation of its mission. Today, ECMI's man-

agement is the responsibility of the Director and the Deputy Director, assisted by the Chief Financial Officer.

The Director assumes a leading and overall role with responsibility for ECMI's activities as a whole and delegates the carrying out of specified tasks to the Deputy Director and the Chief Financial Officer. While the Director is in an overall position with regard to the internal and external dimensions of ECMI's activities, the Deputy Director assumes the immediate responsibility for the daily internal management, administration, supervision of research, action-oriented and publication activities, daily coaching of staff and general implementation. Parallel to this, the Director and Deputy Director in co-operation cover programming activities, as described in chapter 3.

Due to extensive external activity and travelling, the Director spends roughly 50 per cent of his working time at ECMI in Flensburg and another 50 per cent away from the Centre, whereas the Deputy Director is away approximately 30 per cent of the working time and in-house approximately 70 per cent. The management of ECMI attends management meetings at fixed monthly intervals.

4.2.1   Leadership and management

Leadership should be given a high priority in an organisation like ECMI, and the ECMI leadership should also be visible on a daily basis and make efforts to ensure that the employees experience adequate job satisfaction. The Centre staff is not large and thus the basis for a goal-directed leadership effort exists.

In many respects, the division of tasks between Director and Deputy is quite relevant and workable. The Director must by necessity assume a wide range of important external functions, e.g. networking, fundraising and action-oriented projects. The panel acknowledges this division of labour and certainly appreciates the extent of the external activities of the Director.

Nevertheless, the panel recommends that the Director gives both management in general and the rethinking of its organisation a higher priority, which seems not to have been the case in the interim period since the 2001 evaluation, even though the panel acknowledges that e.g. research meetings and individual work plans have been introduced. The uncomfortably high staff-turnover at ECMI over the years in the interim period since 2001 could in the panel's view partly reflect this lack of leadership focus, as described below. Of course, a higher priority to management obligations must be a shared effort by both Director and Deputy Director.

The presence and leadership of the Director is of particular importance to the research staff at ECMI. Researchers do in many cases need a mentor and an academic role model to follow and support their work. Consequently, the Director should make his professionalism and knowledge

more immediately available to his research staff. It is not realistic that the Director directly supervises and mentors all members of the research staff even outside his area of expertise. But the Director should be regularly present at staff meetings in fixed intervals in order for the staff as a group to meet him and discuss items such as research initiatives, networking activities, co-operation with universities, fundraising or ongoing projects in general. In short, the Director should strengthen his role and visibility internally in an appropriate balance with his external obligations.

The panel also finds that the Deputy Director should – in co-operation with the Chief Financial Officer – maintain responsibility for the internal, administrative and day-to-day management and continue to be a visible daily leader, but to a certain and appropriate degree share the academic supervision with the Director.

The panel recommends:

The Director should give more priority to leadership in general and to rethinking the organisation of leadership. Furthermore, the Director should on a regular and ongoing basis make his professionalism and knowledge more immediately available to the research staff through academic supervision and support.

4.2.2 Division of roles and responsibility

It is important in any research community big or small that individual researchers experience a certain degree of autonomy, independence and freedom of operation in their work and daily research activities. The panel believes this to be an essential requirement for good quality research and essential for acceptable working conditions in general.

The panel acknowledges the fact that ECMI's current Director is responsible for an outstanding development of the Centre and for the quality of the activities conducted since taking office in 2000. He has, as stated above, dealt remarkably well with these challenges.

There is, however, an unnecessarily asymmetric relationship between the Director and the research staff at ECMI. Network contacts and activities are predominantly those of the Director, and the Director is also responsible for quite a large part of the research output as far as scholarly articles, edited books and monographs with academic journals and foreign publishing houses are concerned.

This asymmetry may have been relevant and necessary during the first years of the Director's activities, in order to establish network contacts, a reputation, an academic focus, progression and so on. However, now is the time to disseminate and spread external activities and network contacts to the research staff members.

The fact that the Director has a high personal research output is impressive and should be positively commented upon. However, it would be important to seek a balance in research output among all researchers at ECMI as this reflects the leadership time dedicated to coaching and motivating junior and senior researchers and attending regular research meetings. Furthermore, the site visit indicated that the active researchers' budgets for e.g. conference participation are not sufficient, and the leadership's encouragement of the researchers to engage in external activity needs to be accompanied with the resources required.

The panel is aware that research output is dependent on the actual implementation of the research strategy and that research output from the research staff will increase correspondingly as the strategy is implemented. The panel feels confident that the present staff will cope with these added responsibilities and serve ECMI well by representing to a wider extent the Centre externally.

The panel recommends:

The leadership of ECMI should ensure the research staff a higher degree of autonomy, independence and operational freedom by introducing a more democratic and open leadership style and regular research meetings with the Director. The panel recommends further involvement of the research staff in the research activities (scholarly articles, edited books and monographs with academic journals and foreign publishing) and external contacts in order to enhance further synergy and staff development.

4.3   ECMI staff

This section addresses the general organisation of the Centre and a range of specific circumstances concerning the research staff employed at ECMI, both in the Flensburg headquarters and in ECMI's regional field offices. Also, the section deals with the composition of the staff, the Board and the Advisory Council from a gender perspective.

The nine staff members working at ECMI headquarters in Flensburg staff are distributed as fol-
lows:

Position	Type	Duration of contract
Senior Research Associate	Full-time	2007
Research Associate	Full-time	2007
Project Associate	Full-time	2007
Project Associate/trainee	Full-time	2007
Librarian	Full-time	(indefinite)
Project Coordinator/Secretary	30 hrs	(indefinite)
Financial Accountant	30 hrs	(indefinite)
Executive Assistant	30 hrs	(indefinite)
Janitor	18 hrs	(indefinite)

In addition to this, ECMI's staff includes two regional representatives (for the Balkans and the
South Caucasus respectively) as well as a National Programme Manager in Kosovo/a.

Currently ECMI employs a total of three staff members with PhD degrees and four members with
MA/MA.BA degrees.

4.3.1   Employment and internal career opportunities of researchers

During its period of existence, ECMI has experienced a range of challenges as far as staff recruit-
ment and retainment are concerned. There has been a fair degree of turnover among the re-
searchers employed at ECMI, and certain positions have been somewhat difficult to fill.

Part of the explanation for the difficulties in attracting staff to, and retaining staff in Flensburg is
allegedly the somewhat isolated geographic location of the Centre. Also, it has been presented as
a reason for the high staff-turnover that the level of salaries ECMI is capable of offering is not
able to compete with the salaries offered elsewhere, e.g. by international organisations.

The panel acknowledges that the geographic location of the Centre and the level of salaries may
be part of the explanation for the high turnover in staff and the difficulties concerning recruit-
ment. However, as noted above, the panel also finds that the management style employed at
ECMI may to a degree have contributed to this situation, cf. section 4.2.1.

However, perhaps even more importantly, the researchers and project associates at ECMI are
employed on contracts of one year's duration only. These contracts are negotiated annually and
sometimes renewed. The management argument for this arrangement is the fact that the core
research instructions ECMI receives from the founders do not allow the allocation of the re-
sources required to employ the research staff and project associates for longer terms, and the ar-
rangement is described by ECMI as not being ECMI norm, but motivated by the ongoing evalua-

tion period. Furthermore, at the site visit it was argued that the short term external funding that ECMI continuously tenders for, makes up a large proportion of the salaries. Since external funding in a longer term perspective means a degree of budgetary uncertainty for the organisation as a whole, the management argument is that longer term employment of researchers and project associates (that are often the ones attracting external funding) is simply not possible.

The panel considers this arrangement with contracts of a single year's duration to be highly problematic. Basically, ECMI's alleged recruitment difficulties should cause the management to recognise the importance of retaining competent research staff and project associates at the Centre and in the regional field offices. The present arrangement inevitably imposes considerable and understandable uncertainties on the research staff and project associates, both in-house and in the field offices – a staff that is necessary for ECMI to be able to survive as a research institution. The use of one-year contracts is therefore not sustainable.

The panel does not agree that the level of core funding and the uncertainty of external funding constitute sufficient arguments to impose the degree of uncertainty on the research staff and project associates that one year contracts cause. The argument may be understandable that the arrangement with contracts of a single year's duration is motivated by the ongoing evaluation period, but the leadership must nevertheless find ways to solve this very central issue within the funds available and let the research staff and project associates enjoy the same status and relative job security as the administrative staff members that are employed on long-term contracts. Therefore, the panel strongly advises that the leadership of ECMI rapidly employs the researchers and project associates at the Centre on two to three year contracts as a minimum, but preferably longer.

Researchers generally thrive in academic environments with visible perspectives for development and further career opportunities. ECMI offers a combination of applied research and project implementation and deploys three different categories of researchers which illustrate that a structural perspective for development is visible and attainable for the research staff:

- Project Associate for action-oriented activities and research-based project development
- Research Associate
- Senior Research Associate

Some of the researchers currently employed at ECMI have benefited from this development path, e.g. by initially attending ECMI as interns and having later deployed the career path available in-house and structurally at ECMI.

Although ECMI offers its active researchers the combination of applied research with project implementation and provides the research staff with opportunities to develop project management competencies, the panel cannot see that perspectives for academic development for the active research staff at ECMI are sufficiently available or apparent today. This could e.g. be the opportunity for the researchers to enrol into a Master or PhD programme or teach at universities while working at ECMI or for ECMI to be included in European exchange programmes.

ECMI itself is not a university institution and does not award academic degrees, and neither should this be the case in the panel's view, as this would collide with ECMI's combination of applied research and project implementation. The initiatives for enhancing career opportunities addressed above should be an integrated part of the development of formalised networks with universities, research institutions and leading minority institutions, cf. section 8.2.

The panel acknowledges that further economic resources are indeed required in order to provide and make apparent development areas for the research staff, but nevertheless recommends that the leadership of ECMI takes this view point into serious consideration. This should lead to initiatives being made to challenge and inspire the research staff and formulate strategic aims and objectives to create further concrete development perspectives for this group of employees.

The panel recommends:

The researchers and project associates employed at ECMI should as a matter of urgency be employed on two to three year contracts, but preferably longer.

The management of ECMI should create further concrete development perspectives for the active research staff, besides the existent possibilities for development of methodology, library resources and action-oriented projects.

4.3.2   Gender balance
The panel notes that there is a significant gender imbalance primarily on the ECMI Board, in the Advisory Council but also among the active research staff at ECMI (not including Project Associates), cf. section 4.3. ECMI engages seven active researchers in total, six of whom are men.

All organisations benefit when both men and women are represented somewhat equally. If it is important for organisations in general to aim at and secure some degree of balance between the sexes represented in various activities, this dimension may be especially relevant in an academic environment.

The panel acknowledges the fact that recruitment of staff to ECMI is a challenge for ECMI in general and the leadership in particular. However, the panel finds the present imbalance between men and women at ECMI problematic.

The panel recommends:

The founders, the Board and the leadership of ECMI should launch the necessary initiatives in order to reduce the gender imbalance on the Board, in the Advisory Council and also among the active research staff.

4.4   Geographic location of ECMI

This section discusses the geographical location of ECMI in Flensburg and presents the panel's assessment of the various points of view in this regard, accounts for some perspectives for development and possible future priorities linked to the immediate geographic surroundings of ECMI.

Throughout the brief history of ECMI, discussions on the Centre's geographic location in Flensburg have been frequent. It was an issue in the 2001 evaluation, and it figures prominently in ECMI's self-evaluation review for this 2007 evaluation.

Certainly, the issue is complicated. The actual placement of ECMI in Flensburg is defined in the Statutes (article 1) and was motivated by the fact that ECMI is a joint Danish-German venture, and also the idea was for ECMI to disseminate minority-majority experiences in the Danish-German border region in a general European context.

The focus on location by various stakeholders was confirmed to the panel through interviews during the site visit. The location was identified as problematic and as an impediment, among other things, to networking, staff recruitment and assembly of the Advisory Council. The geographic location of ECMI allegedly causes academic isolation as, for example, universities and leading minority institutions are not physically nearby. Flensburg was described as a somewhat isolated location for a Centre engaging in a highly international academic environment.

However, the panel does not consider the geographical location of ECMI to be a subject for change. The panel believes that the location of the Centre in Flensburg – in spite of the limitations accounted for above – nevertheless provides the opportunity to contextualise the work of ECMI and minority-majority issues in general.

The intergovernmental structures of the Centre do not allow uprooting. Furthermore, ECMI was from its foundation intended to disseminate the minority-majority experiences in the Danish-German border region. Discussions of the geographical location of ECMI are accordingly unprofitable.

Considering the unlikelihood that the Centre will be moved to a new geographic location, the panel is surprised that ECMI is not more visible or engaged in the local environment. Indeed, in-house activities that are open to the local public are carried out, cf. chapter 7. However, interviews at the site visit indicated that the local environment is not well aware of ECMI or its activities, and as an example ECMI does not promote or attempt to promote the Centre or its activities in local media. The information displayed on the ECMI website and the press releases alone are in the panel's view insufficient and further efforts should be made to enhance ECMI's visibility.

The constructive experiences of the Danish-German boarder region were primary reasons for both founding ECMI and for its location in Flensburg. A possible path for increasing local visibility and engagement could be to resume concrete activities in the Danish-German context.

The panel recommends:

ECMI should proactively exploit its geographical location in Flensburg and engage more actively with the local community and media by enhancing the visibility of its activities.

4.5   Funding
This section addresses ECMI's funding situation. ECMI receives a core grant from its founding governments, and in addition to this ECMI has the possibility to attract external funding by tendering for externally financed projects, by offering advisory services to external parties, etc. As stated in chapter 2, a financial and administrative audit of ECMI was carried out in 2006, and this section will consequently focus only on core and external funding.

4.5.1   External funding
The leadership of ECMI has in the interim period since the 2001 evaluation increased ECMI's external funding so that it today exceeds the core funding, and the panel acknowledges this achievement. The panel believes this demonstrates ECMI's capacity to produce quality and indicates a positive level of interaction with the surrounding academic environment.

However, the management at ECMI has not adequately exhausted the possibilities that the external funding provides, in particular in terms of covering overheads. Furthermore, ECMI has until now not tendered for projects in consortium structures, which might be a possibility that should be explored.

The leadership of ECMI should make further use of external funding for internal needs (i.e. administrative costs) and explore the possibilities for overhead resources in the external funding more aggressively. The panel is well aware that in certain projects, overheads are simply not included, but ECMI should exploit the possibilities for increasing markedly the percentage for administration work. Furthermore, ECMI should exploit the possibilities for including overheads in salaries in project budgets and, at the same time, secure a 7 per cent overhead from the total project budget.

Furthermore, the panel recommends that ECMI considers tendering for projects in consortium structures, and doing so as an integral part of the increased networking and co-operation activities recommended above.

4.5.2   Core funding
The core funding ECMI receives from its founders, has over the years not increased in real terms. Accordingly core funding is relatively low and not in balance with the external funding attracted by ECMI since the appointment of the present Director. The self-evaluation report of ECMI elaborates on the consequences of the low level of core funding, in particular with regard to filling the various posts at the Centre, and calls for an immediate increase of €200,000 in the annual budget.

The panel recommends that this budget increase be granted and the additional expenditure be distributed between the founders. However, the panel also recommends that this budget increase be linked to a series of performance indicators for research and local action oriented projects as outlined below.

The core activities of ECMI include both research and action-oriented projects. Core funding normally finances basic research activities, while external funding normally finances project activities with less research content. Accordingly a budget increase could be based on the concept that ECMI be rewarded in accordance with the quality of the work and the efficiency of the institution. A possible solution could be for the founders, in addition to the current budget, to award ECMI an immediate and special grant of €200,000 increase of in the annual budget and based on a number of quality indicators regarding ECMI's performance. Such criteria could, by way of example, be positive evaluations, the number of publications ECMI produces annually, citations in scientific and research publications, peer reviewed articles and the amount of external funding

which ECMI attracts during that year. The development of criteria/indicators should be a joint task for ECMI and the founders.

The panel recommends:

ECMI should make further use of external funding for internal needs and exploit the possibilities for overhead resources in the external funding more aggressively.

Furthermore, the requested increase of €200,000 in the annual budget should be immediately granted by the founders. The panel also recommends that the founders and ECMI in co-operation develop performance indicators for ECMI's research and local action-oriented projects, making the additional grant dependent on the fulfilment of these.

5   Research

This chapter addresses the research activities conducted at ECMI. According to the terms of reference, the evaluation must comment and conclude on the overall performance of the Centre. The international expert panel has been presented with a variety of research output, partly in the self-evaluation report and annexes, and partly on the site-visit to Flensburg. This provides the background for the following description of the situation regarding the research conducted at ECMI. The chapter also considers ECMI's implementation of its research strategy.

5.1   Strategy, methodology and output

As accounted for in chapter 3, ECMI has formulated a working interim strategy for its activities, and included in this strategy is a setting for the research activities. Through this strategy, ECMI offers information, evaluations, recommendations and policy options to decision makers, political observers and others involved in minority-majority relations and ethno-political issues. The substantial and strategic priorities are accounted for in section 3.1, whereas this section briefly summarises the context for ECMI's research strategy, methodology and output.

ECMI presents its research activities as comparative, and outlined as regional or country-based case studies that aim partly at the identification of structural problems and partly at the production of theoretical platforms for resolving these through policy development.

ECMI's research is conducted in a multi-disciplinary manner so that various disciplinary and methodological approaches are employed. In short, the relevant research methods are identified freely by the research staff in order to address the subject matter adequately. ECMI has, however, formulated requirements defining that the research conducted should be systematic, cumulative, evidence-based, non-subjective and generalising. This activates different academic traditions and methodologies at ECMI:

- Law
- Political science

- Anthropology
- Economics
- Ethnography
- History
- Sociology

The researchers draw on qualitative and quantitative methods that represent predominantly case study analyses, comparative case studies, content analyses, ethnographic methods, focus groups, survey techniques, and evaluation research. This is done differently and adjusted for each individual research project. The positive implication is that methods are chosen on a fitness for purpose basis. The potentially negative implication - that was also a focus point in the 2001 evaluation - is that researchers may fall victim to an eclectic approach to choice of methods. The panel is confident, though, that ECMI researchers can successfully steer clear of this pitfall and believe that the methodologies deployed are reasonable and workable.

The panel concludes:

Efforts have been made by the ECMI management to strengthen the research and methodological components in ECMI's work. With regard to the 2001 evaluation's focus on a common theoretical methodological approach at ECMI, the panel believes that the employed methodological approach to the research activities conducted at ECMI is satisfactory and adequate.

The research projects conducted at ECMI in this evaluation period can as far as substance is concerned be structured under the following headings that expose a certain, though not complete compliance with the present working research strategy of the Centre:

- Conflict transformation
- Political participation
- Social and economic inclusion
- Legal standards and implementation mechanisms.

The panel is generally impressed with ECMI's research results and research output. The working papers, books, edited books, articles and publications in general from ECMI presented during the evaluation are of good and often high academic quality. In particular the Commentary on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, edited by the Director, and the scholarly article of the Director "From Security to Co-Governance: Towards an Integrated System of Diversity Management in Europe", in the co-edited book on 50 years of the Bonn-

Copenhagen declarations, may serve as illustration for excellent and groundbreaking research. In other words the panel acknowledges and supports the extent, scientific quality and focus of the research conducted at ECMI.

5.2   Implementation of strategy

In this section the implementation of ECMI's research strategy is addressed. The research strategy of ECMI is linked to its strategy as a whole, intending to allow the research activities to feed into other activities at ECMI. This section concentrates on the fulfilment and manning of ECMI's four identified fields of specialisation as far as research is concerned.

The research outcome presented to the panel provides evidence that ECMI has ensured correspondence between strategy and research output as far as the geographic focus of the activities is concerned. The output covers the geographic areas identified in the strategy.

However, with regard to the four strategic core areas identified in the strategy, cf. section 3.1.2, the research output, activities and their substance do not address the fourth field of cultural and linguistic diversity – a circumstance that is allegedly due to lack of funding and, consequently, staff capacity.

As noted above and in chapter 3, ECMI has wisely chosen to focus on the Balkans, the Caucasus and general European minority-majority issues. This strategy is relevant and seems workable. But it is problematic that with regard to the fourth field of specialisation, cultural and linguistic diversity, the strategy has not yet been implemented.

The site visit and the self-evaluation report make evident that ECMI has decided to focus less on research within the fields of conflict transformation, state construction and institution building. ECMI's research activities within these fields have been active and productive up until today, e.g. in Kosovo/a, Moldova and Georgia, but recently the fields of political participation of minorities and economic and social dimensions have received even more attention in the ECMI research portfolio.

Development of the research portfolio is obviously a necessity, as the research field of minority-majority issues is not static, and all three of the remaining fields of specialisation, besides cultural and linguistic diversity, as mentioned above, have generally been addressed and resulted in research of good quality.

The panel recommends:

The ECMI leadership should ensure that all strategic fields of specialisation (or any future identi-fied research priorities) are covered and actively engaged in by at least one active researcher em-ployed at ECMI.

If funding is not available to ensure this, it may be that ECMI has too many fields of specialisation (research priorities), which in the end is the responsibility of the Board.

In order to implement the research strategy as a whole, including the four fields of specialisation, it is crucial that the staff is provided with a certain amount of research time. Applied research is an important element in implementing the strategy. Currently the researchers employed at ECMI are often occupied with action-oriented projects and fundraising and less with applied research.

A reasonable balance between these two activities should be ensured in the future. Even though the panel recognises that both research and action-oriented projects enrich each other. They are – and also in the future should be – main tasks at ECMI and constitute one of ECMI's greatest strengths.

A large proportion of the research output and articles have been written by ECMI's Director. His high level of productivity is obviously very positive. However, publishing by the remaining re-search staff needs to be balanced with other activities in order to reduce this imbalance between the Director and other research staff. This issue was also addressed in the 2001 evaluation, and consequently this evaluation agrees that the teamwork in this respect still calls for a general strengthening. The publishing and research output should reflect and demonstrate a joint re-search effort with all research staff contributing as equally as possible.

The panel recommends:

The ECMI leadership should ensure an appropriate balance between on the one hand applied re-search and on the other action-oriented projects and fundraising among the research staff in or-der to ensure that the researchers at suitable intervals are allowed time to concentrate on re-search and publication only, e.g. as visiting fellows at universities, research institutions and lead-ing minority institutions.

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6   Constructive conflict management and advisory services

This chapter addresses the activities of ECMI relating to constructive conflict management and advisory services (action-oriented projects), that the founding documents present as one of the Centre's main activities.

The panel has been provided with documentation in the form of individual examples and case studies, and not with a comprehensive overview and presentation of the action-oriented projects conducted by ECMI.

6.1   Setting of activities

This section presents a brief account of ECMI's action-oriented projects. Also, the section contains the panel's overall conclusion on the action-oriented projects of ECMI.

The statutes of ECMI require that the Centre must engage in advisory activities regarding minority policies. Part of ECMI's mandate is consequently formulated as constructive conflict management and advisory services (action-oriented work). As such, ECMI has addressed the task of action-oriented projects in strategy papers defining goals for and expectations to the activities conducted by the Centre. These were also touched upon in chapter 3.

ECMI's operational criteria for selecting and tendering for (mainly) externally funded projects, cf. section 3.1.1 on the Strategy Document 2000-2005, were motivated by two strategic considerations. Firstly, in conducting action-oriented projects, ECMI intended, and still intends, to make use of the fact that even though funded by the Danish and German governments, the Centre can operate freely, i.e. as an inter-governmental organisation. As such ECMI may act as an independent partner, not relying on the immediate consent of a founding government in any given project. This is strategically advantageous within the field of minority-majority issues, because gaining the trust of local actors is obviously crucial.

Secondly, ECMI has another main task, namely research, potentially qualifying and underpinning the Centre and its accumulated competences in tendering for action-oriented projects compared with other actors in the field. This, too, was and still is an underlying reasoning behind the criteria definitions.

The actual action-oriented projects and advisory services conducted by ECMI vary a lot in substance, scope and proportions. A total number of 36 on-going or completed projects are or have been conducted primarily in the Balkans or in the Caucasus region, but also in places such as Bulgaria, Kaliningrad, Macedonia and Romania. Examples of the projects include:

- Conflict transformation activities
- Advisory services to governments
- Facilitating dialogue
- Implementation
- Establishing minority councils
- Evaluations.

These activities match the goals in the ECMI strategy and the aggregation of projects is thematised in the table below:

Themes	Total number of projects
Standards and implementation	11
Conflict prevention, conflict transformation and state construction	11
Political participation of minorities	8
Social and economic inclusion	6

Action-oriented work addresses and potentially fulfils one of the Centre's three main tasks, but it also has an impact on ECMI's external profile, because the projects inevitably involve co-operation and an interface with similar institutions, governments and a series of other bodies within the minority-majority field. The action-oriented research ought also to feed into the Centre's other activities, because the scopes of all three main tasks are closely interwoven. Finally, the action-oriented work of ECMI has for a number of years been the primary source of external funding, as accounted for in chapter 4.

Currently, the ECMI management is awaiting the results of this evaluation with a view to formulating a new strategy which will, among other things, address future action-oriented projects. The intention is, however, to continue linking activities to the four fields of specialisation and to maintain the same geographic focus, cf. section 3.1.2.

The panel concludes:

ECMI's action-oriented work seems at an overall level to be excellent, as evidenced by the documentation presented during the evaluation. The development of ECMI's concepts of action-oriented projects during this evaluation period has been substantial.

6.2   Synergy and research-driven projects

This section analyses the synergy observed between ECMI's action-oriented projects and other activities conducted. Furthermore, the section contains the recommendations of the expert panel.

The panel is generally impressed with the documentation of ECMI's action-oriented work. The achievements in this area appear to be outstanding in, and the work seems to have had an impact in the field, which is very positive. Moreover, ECMI is evidently conducting research-driven projects and has documented synergy among the activities.

As a general rule, research driven action-oriented projects are more time-consuming and require more commitment than projects of a strictly practical design. Research driven projects are generally of correspondingly higher quality, and research driven projects have better chances for a positive impact in the field. ECMI deserves praise for the apparent priority given to research-driven projects.

In order to succeed in offering research driven action-oriented projects, a fair amount of synergy between the action-oriented projects and other activities is required. Synergy means, for instance, that an action-oriented project in the field is originally motivated by and designed in continuation of an on-going or concluded research activity, and that the experiences – positive and negative – of the implementation of the specific projects feed into other on-going projects and activities. In ECMI's case, this could be the group of researchers active at ECMI either in-house in Flensburg or in the regional field offices.

The panel is generally impressed by the fact that the action-oriented projects of ECMI seem to be research driven and acknowledges that ECMI promotes synergy in the activities conducted. The synergy is documented through ECMI's external and internal publications, the working papers in particular. The panel believes, however, that the synergy between ECMI's research and action-oriented activities could be better documented with regard to methodology applied.

The panel believes that ECMI should continue to increase and expose synergy between applied and basic research and action-oriented projects. Knowing that ECMI is already very active in developing the action-oriented projects, the panel calls for *further* exposure of synergy between the various activities, for more applied and core research activity at ECMI and for a continuation of research-driven projects. The added value of doing so will predominantly be more transparency, but the panel also finds this would further develop ECMI's excellent work with action-oriented projects.

The panel recommends:

ECMI should continue to increase and expose synergy between applied and basic research and action-oriented projects.

ECMI should ensure and promote *further* synergy between the various activities. In relation to this, the methodology applied should be better documented. One way of achieving this should be to exploit network activity and institutional co-operation to promote further synergy among the research staff (both in-house and in the field offices), e.g. by welcoming and sending visiting fellows from and to other institutions and by making sure that the exchange of knowledge is mutual and beneficial for both parties, including the in-house research staff in Flensburg and in the regional field offices.

ECMI should continue to initiate action-oriented projects that are research-driven.

7 Documentation, information and publication

This chapter addresses the activities of ECMI relating to publication, information and documentation, which the founding documents describe as one of the Centre's main activities. The chapter contains brief descriptions of ECMI's activities as well as analyses of and recommendations regarding the practice of the Centre. Also, the chapter contains a section concerning the quality assurance and accountability of ECMI's publications, information and documentation.

7.1 Setting of activities

This section presents a brief account of ECMI's publication, information and documentation. ECMI's activities in this respect are:

- Library
- ECMI websites
- Newsletters and Annual Report
- Conferences and seminars
- Databases
- Publications.

The ECMI Library is open to the public and contains primarily books and journals within the fields of international relations, ethnic conflicts, and minority protection. In addition the Library houses ECMI's internal working papers, briefs and reports. Moreover, the ECMI Library engages in co-operation and exchange agreements with other libraries and institutes providing access to a range of international sources of information available on the ECMI website. Scholars and students engaged in academic fields similar to ECMI are free to use the Library's resources which, furthermore, are accessible through an online catalogue.

ECMI's website http://www.ecmi.de comprises first and foremost an external presentation and introduction to ECMI as a whole. A variety of information is available, including items such as listings of projects and research activities, an ethno-political map of Europe, databases, library access, conferences and seminars. The website also presents subordinate websites for ECMI's regional offices and activities, e.g. in Kosovo/a and Georgia.

The Annual Report 2006 provides a quantitative specification of the number of visitors to the ECMI main website in 2006 indicating the external use:

Site / page area	Unique visitors	Average unique visitors / day
www.ecmi.de (entire website)	432,800	1,186
/elinks/ (ECMI Links Database)	55,689	153
/emap/ (ECMI electronic Map)	80,724	221
/jemie/	60,477	166
/doc/ombudsman	16,770	46
/doc/CoE_Project/	13,617	37
/doc/Parallel_Reports_Database/	9,191	25
/rubric/49/comir	6,029	17

Twice a year ECMI publishes the ECMI Newsletter both on paper and electronically. The Newsletter covers the Centre's ongoing projects and activities. Furthermore, the Newsletter gives information on recent publications, ECMI related events and conferences. The Annual Reports, also available in print and electronically, account on an overall level for ECMI strategy, activities and projects as well as ECMI staff. An online archive of Newsletters and Annual Reports is available on the ECMI web site.

ECMI is also active in arranging or attending conferences or seminars. These activities vary in scope, content and size, and occasionally generate an output, e.g. conference papers or reports. Also ECMI is active in conflict management workshops and occasionally holds on-site public lectures at ECMI's Flensburg premises. These events are publicised via the ECMI website, press releases and invitations but not through the local media. Efforts to make visible and disseminate the activities of ECMI are made, but could favourably be strengthened further, cf. section 4.4.

Available on the ECMI website since 2003 are two databases providing information on a range of ECMI related issues. The *FCNM Database* provides scholars and practitioners with a collection of materials on the negotiation and implementation of the ECMI Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The database is available at http://ecmi.de/doc/CoE_Project/articles.html. The *FCNM NGO/Reports* present reports to minorities and practicing NGOs' that are parallel to the reports of the countries that have ratified the

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Framework Convention. This database is available at
http://ecmi.de/doc/Parallel_Reports_Database/.

Finally, ECMI produces different kinds of publications, which are available on the ECMI website and cover the following categories:

- Monograph series on Ethno-Political and Minority Issues
- Handbooks
- Studies
- Documents and Analysis volumes
- The European Yearbook of Ethno-politics and Minority Issues.

In addition to this, ECMI has developed an electronic Journal on Ethno-politics and Minority Issues in Europe (JEMIE) targeted at practitioners and academics, with the intention of creating debate and discussion on minority-majority issues and theoretical approaches to these by presenting the work of ECMI outside the strictly academic publications.

The panel concludes:

ECMI addresses publication, information and documentation obligations adequately and satisfactorily. Furthermore, ECMI has with the resources available also taken interesting initiatives, e.g. in developing JEMIE and in displaying useful information on the ECMI website.

7.2   Quality assurance and accountability of publications

This section presents a brief assessment of the quality control procedures activated in ECMI's publication, information and documentation activities in general. The section also covers ECMI's research publications in general.

The panel finds that an institution like ECMI should to a certain degree have quality control procedures in place. However, the extent of such quality procedures should be in proportion to the resources of the institution. A full-scale quality assurance system is not necessarily the best way for ECMI to carry out quality control, and the stakeholders of ECMI should also be aware that quality control to a certain extent already exists at ECMI, e.g. through the policy of submitting articles to peer-reviews.

However, the panel finds that certain aspects of ECMI's publication, information and documentation activities need to be subjected to increased quality control in order to promote accountability and transparency in the activities conducted, as was also partly mentioned in the 2001 evaluation.

One solution could be that ECMI more systematically monitors the peer-reviewing and external use and reference to ECMI's articles and publications, and publishes the results. This would make information available and expose potential areas calling for development or improvement within the research portfolio, as has already been the case in the management's use of the Advisory Council in setting the strategic direction and development of the Centre.

An organisation like ECMI, receiving core funding from governments, needs to be able to report on its activities regularly and consistently – to the surrounding academic environment, to professional collaborators as well as to the founding governments. Today, ECMI lists some quantitative indicators in the Annual Reports (e.g. hits on the ECMI website and downloads of articles). This listing could profitably be broadened somewhat so that more quantitative indicators are listed in the Annual Reports, as with the concept for conditions for additional funding mentioned above in section 4.5.2.

Documentation and calculation for peer-reviewed articles as well as, references to articles are examples of obvious, easily documented and realistic quality indicators for ECMI.

The panel recommends:

ECMI should introduce quality control primarily for internal use, but also for external demonstration and documentation of quality. This should ensure accountability, monitoring and documentation of external use and reference to ECMI's publications and peer-reviewed articles published by ECMI. The quality control should, however, correspond to the quality indicators developed by the founders and ECMI in co-operation.

This information should furthermore be listed in Annual Reports as is the case today with other quantitative data and on the ECMI website.

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8   Co-operation and networking

The founding documents require ECMI, parallel to its three main tasks, to engage in network research on minority issues and engage in symposia, seminars and publications regarding the protection of minorities. In addition to this, the ECMI statutes define the role of an Advisory Council. This chapter, therefore, presents an account and analysis of ECMI's co-operation and networking, together with the recommendations of the expert panel.

8.1   Setting of activities

ECMI's present external co-operation and network activities can be structured into the following four sub-categories:

- Advisory Council and non-resident experts
- Expert networks related to research projects
- Partnerships with established scientific networks
- Network initiatives and partnerships with key academic and research institutions.

Firstly, the ECMI statutes state that an Advisory Council should be appointed with the particular function of supporting the Centre's management and Board in carrying out its mission by contributing with network contacts, representation and promotion of ECMI. The Advisory Council is addressed above in section 4.1.2., and in addition to the Council, ECMI has informal networks with a number of senior research associates and fellows and – depending on the available resources – welcomes visiting researchers.

Secondly, ECMI has in relation to and in continuation of specific research projects participated in, facilitated and in some cases maintained networks comprising predominantly research institutes, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, universities and single individuals from relevant institutions. For instance, ECMI managed a network of ombudsperson institutions in Europe in relation to the Centre's Minority Ombudsperson project.

Thirdly, ECMI participates in international networks within its field of activity. For instance, ECMI has contributed with experiences from the Centre's Kosovo projects to the Conflict Prevention Network (CPN) established by the Berlin-based Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik. The network provides methodological advice on conflict management, policy analysis and strategic guidance to the European Commission in developing a European policy of conflict prevention. In 2006, the Social Policy, Integration, Diversity Management and Ethnicity (SPIDER) Web Network was founded at ECMI. This network aims at to support and inform policy making processes and the general political discourse in Europe on the social inclusion of national and ethnic minorities. The network, its purpose and members are listed here: http://www.ecmi-eu.org/no_cache/home/

Finally, ECMI has also played an active and leading role in the establishment of the Consortium of Minority Resources (COMIR) which covers ethnic relations and minority rights institutes in the OSCE region. COMIR is web-based and promotes information and dialogue, and disseminates information on ethnic relations, multicultural politics and minority rights. An account of COMIR and its member institutions and databases is available here: http://www.ecmi.de/rubrik/49/comir/

8.2 Deployment and proportions of network and co-operation

This section presents the assessment and recommendations of the expert panel with regard to the proportions and actual deployment of ECMI's external networks and co-operation activities as described above.

As a general rule, it is of great importance for research institutions like ECMI to engage in network activities and institutional co-operation. This not only generally enriches the activities conducted in a given organisation but also advances synergy in general and creates a wider perspective on the subject matter in question.

ECMI is indeed active in a range of external co-operations and networks, as described above. These activities vary in both content and purpose, and involve a variety of institutions, bodies and persons, including universities and university representatives and result in e.g. conferences and publications. Especially the composition of ECMI's Advisory Council is noteworthy, as the Council members are prominent experts from highly relevant institutions and European bodies with a great capacity for serving ECMI very well as ambassadors. Furthermore, ECMI is currently looking for further network opportunities that fit ECMI's institutional structure and mandate, competence and capacity, and the expert panel strongly supports this effort.

Only recently ECMI has been provided with the opportunity of providing a series of lectures both at the University of Flensburg (2006) as part of a cross-border initiative between University of

South Denmark (SDU) and University of Flensburg European Studies, offering classes in English. SDU, a new university structure emerged on the Danish side only in 2006, absorbing ECMI's partner, the Institute of Border Region Studies. This requires establishing contacts in the new context and format. Unfortunately, the minority aspect of European Studies did not attract enough interested students to establish a teaching component in 2006 /2007. ECMI is currently leading regular meetings of minority-relevant institutions and organisations for the purpose of information exchange 3-4 times a year.

Nevertheless, the panel at an overall level finds a degree of reluctance at ECMI with regard to creating formal networks with universities, research institutions and leading minority institutions. Furthermore, the present external activities are deployed predominantly at management and general levels and not disseminated to the research staff and exploited in connection with every-day research activities and staff development. By 'formalised' network and co-operation activities the panel means networks and co-operation activities that enable steps and development initiatives similar to the ones described below.

At the site visit, ECMI was in the interviews with the management characterised as an institution that operates in the area between conducting research and carrying out action-oriented projects – not adopting the identity of one of these activities in particular, but indeed covering both. This was furthermore brought forth as an argument for not focusing more on research staff exchanges with universities, training PhD-students or for creating opportunities for the ECMI research staff to give lectures at related institutes. Furthermore, it was stated that ECMI, according to its mandate, is not supposed to be inter-connected with universities in this formalised manner.

The panel does not agree with the assumption that ECMI's mandate impedes more regular networking and co-operation with universities, research institutions and leading minority institutions. Furthermore, the panel finds the absence of these structures a weakness and believes this to be an area and a perspective for further development, which ECMI should prioritise in the future.

Increased network activity and institutional co-operation will create added value, to the benefit and positive development of the Centre and its activities in general and to research and action-oriented projects in particular. Also, this approach will advance synergy in terms of staff development, create better career opportunities for the research staff and contribute constructively in terms of retainment of staff at ECMI, cf. section 4.3. In addition, formalised co-operations and network activities could potentially lead to the enhancement of the academic environment at the Centre, the initiation of further integration of research and action-oriented activities and, in the wider perspective, increase ECMI's opportunities for raising future external funding (among others from the EU), for instance in consortium structures.

Also, future network partners and co-operating institutions will be able to benefit considerably from ECMI's impressive and extensive practice and field experience, which has accumulated among the active research staff in general and through the action-oriented and the regional field offices projects in particular.

The panel recommends:

In addition to its existing contacts, ECMI should begin creating formalised networks with universities, research institutions and leading minority institutions.

Furthermore, the research staff at ECMI should be involved in the creation of, participation in and deployment of professional networks and co-operation activities. Activities might include, by way of example, exchanges with universities, training PhD students and giving lectures at related institutes.

9   Follow-up on the 2001 evaluation

The external evaluation of ECMI conducted in 2001 contains 14 concrete recommendations expressed by the Evaluation Board. The terms of reference for this new evaluation stipulate that it should include a brief analysis of the actions taken by ECMI to follow up on these recommendations.

Consequently, in the following, the individual recommendations are introduced once again, accompanied by the expert panel's account of the follow-up activities conducted:

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1. **ECMI should in the future be secured stabile institutional funding, as this will be a prerequisite for the overall implementation of the new strategy.**

ECMI has with success increased the external funding. The external funding now surpasses the core funding ECMI receives from its founders.

The core funding from the founders of ECMI has not increased during this evaluation interim period, i.e. since 2000.

Establishing ECMI in 1996, the founding governments counted on the European Union as a fourth founder, and throughout the years efforts have been made in order to recruit both the EU as well as other countries as a fourth founder. The recruitment of a fourth founder was originally intended to divide the ECMI core funding equally on the founders. These efforts have not been fruitful, and ECMI has consequently received core funding lower than originally intended, since the Centre was established up until today.

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2. A re-location of ECMI should at the present time not be considered.

No discussions of a re-location of ECMI are taking place among the ECMI management, Board or founders. Furthermore, the panel does not believe a re-location of ECMI to be a relevant discussion in this evaluation period.

3. In the future, stronger scientific components should be found in ECMI's work, especially in its activities on constructive conflict management and advisory services. This could be helped along the way if reducing the built in weaknesses of the interdisciplinary approach by means of establishing a common theoretical methodological approach. If the interdisciplinary approach is to be upheld in the future, it should be considered to allocate additional resources. The selection of conflict management projects undertaken should to a greater extent be based on scientific criteria. The results of these projects should feed into a research process, which in the end should lead to "knowledge based mediation".

The panel finds that efforts have been made in order to strengthen the scientific components in ECMI's work. Also, the panel is under the impression that the action-oriented work of ECMI is rather research-driven, cf. chapter 6. Referring to chapters 5 to 7 on ECMI's main tasks, the panel concludes that ECMI has complied with this recommendation satisfactorily.

With regard to the focus of the recommendation on a common theoretical methodological approach at ECMI, which is addressed repeatedly in the 2001 evaluation, the panel believes that the employed methodological approach to the activities conducted at ECMI is satisfactory.

4. Greater focus should be put on qualified generalization instead of on individual case studies.

Referring to chapters 5 to 7 on ECMI's main tasks, the panel concludes that ECMI has complied with this recommendation. Individual case studies are indeed still undertaken by ECMI, and the panel believes this should continue. In the panel's view, however, the dominant research approach at ECMI is thematic research.

5. A system of scientific control should be established to support the emergence of a stronger research component in ECMI's work. In this respect it is suggested that the role of the Advisory Council be taken under consideration. It should in the future be given a more active role with the task of ensuring the scientific underpinning of ECMI's activities. It is also suggested that the number of members should be reduced and that future re-constitutions should be based on the appointment of a scientific majority within a variety of relevant research disciplines.

The Advisory Council of ECMI does not function as a quality assurance mechanism in a system of scientific control, as indicated in this recommendation. The Council serves rather as a body providing overall and general advice to the ECMI management. The panel does not believe that the Advisory Council should be deployed as part of a quality system, but rather as a body providing overall and general advice, cf. section 4.1.2.

A recomposition of the Advisory Council has taken place in the interim period, so that the Council today comprises prominent scholars and academics from prestigious institutions within the field of minority-majority issues.

This evaluation contains a recommendation for ECMI to facilitate a more active and direct use of the Advisory Council, e.g. in drafting a new strategy for ECMI. Combined with the fact that the research output of ECMI is indeed of high quality, a more active and direct use of the Advisory Council in the general strategic setting of ECMI's research activities should ensure a further scientific underpinning of ECMI's activities in general and future compliance with this recommendation.

6. ECMI should in the future discuss the relationship between ethno political conflicts and minority issues.

Referring to chapters 3 and 5, the panel concludes that ECMI has complied with this recommendation.

7. As the publishing programme for the upcoming years seems to be too ambitious, a renewed assessment of the programme should be made in order to establish an order of priority. ECMI should also attempt to strengthen the teamwork as regards publications and increase its efforts to get published in scientific journals and by commercial publishers.

Referring to chapters 4 and 7, the panel concludes that ECMI has complied with this recommendation.

However, this report also contains a recommendation for a future strengthening of teamwork in general. Consequently, that part of the 2001 recommendation still contains perspectives for development. These will, however, be addressed through future compliance with the recommendations in this evaluation.

8. ECMI should give both the participation in and the establishment of new actual networks a higher priority. ECMI should also establish closer co-operation with universities etc., and in particular seek to establish relationships with Danish universities and institutions.

The panel finds that this recommendation has not been complied with satisfactorily and agrees with the fundamental idea behind the recommendation for increasing co-operation and network activity.

Consequently, this evaluation contains a similar recommendation for an increase in institutional co-operation and network activities, cf. chapter 8. Future compliance with this new recommendation will secure follow-up on this 2001 recommendation.

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9. ECMI should - as a matter of urgency - have an audit carried out, which could establish whether funds are used efficiently and economically and in compliance with the provisions of German budgetary legislation.

The panel notes that a financial and administrative audit of ECMI was indeed carried out in January 2006 and consequently concludes that ECMI has in a strictly formal sense complied with this recommendation.

10. ECMI should in the future aim at increasing its efforts to have personnel costs for permanent staff refinanced with overhead from project funds and attempt to obtain refunding of costs incurred for project administration. Likewise, ECMI should seek to handle as many administrative activities as possible within the framework of the given project.

The panel finds that this recommendation has not yet been fully implemented, and the follow-up activities on the recommendation are not accounted for in full detail.

ECMI has been successful in attracting external funding, and optimising overheads is not an easy task for small institutions like ECMI. This new evaluation nevertheless contains a recommendation similar to the above recommendation, cf. section 4.5.1, and ECMI's future compliance with this should ensure that the matter is satisfactorily addressed.

9.1 Follow-up on recommendations not assessed

The following four recommendations from the 2001 evaluation are aimed at strictly internal, financial aspects of the organisation of ECMI. As such, compliance with the recommendations cannot be assessed within the framework of the terms of reference for this evaluation. Furthermore, compliance with these recommendations is not evident from the documentation available for this evaluation.

11. **The administrative functions should be redistributed, and the focus of such re-organization should increasingly be put on an integrative-object-oriented execution of tasks.**

12. **Outsourcing of the basic bookkeeping aspects of system-based voucher registration should not be undertaken, as no – or, at most, a negligible – economic benefit regarding ECMI finances could be expected from such outsourcing.**

13. **ECMI should comply with the legal requirements on the utilization of reserves and make sure that the reserves are itemized in the correct manner in ECMI's annual financial statements. For the future, it should be clarified, whether ECMI should be allowed to form reserves, and to what extent this would be in conformity with German budgetary law. The German founders should create the necessary budget-law prerequisites for providing a larger scope for internal funds management/formation of reserves. ECMI should in the future be allowed full reciprocal coverage.**

14. **ECMI should as soon as possible clarify with the competent revenue office, whether limited participation of non profit institutions in economic activities is permitted under fiscal law, so in the future it will be possible to, within the legal limits, to generate income from activities.**

Appendix A

List of recommendations

- Consider a recomposition of ECMI's Board
- Consult the Advisory Council more frequently and strengthen the Council's function as ambassador
- Give more priority to internal management
- Provide research staff on longer term basis and create further career opportunities for active researchers
- Stabilise gender balance among ECMI staff, in the Board and Advisory Council
- Give more attention to research interaction with the local environment
- Increase core funding immediately and make extended use of external funding
- Ensure the coverage of strategic priorities and ensure sufficient research activity
- Strengthen balance between applied research and action-oriented projects
- Strengthen documentation of synergy between research and action-oriented activities with regard to the methodology applied
- Enhance quality control in publication activities and strengthen accountability
- Create formalised networks with universities, research institutions and leading minority institutions.

Appendix B

Terms of reference

On the 29th of January 1998, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Land Schleswig – Holstein (hereinafter referred to as the Founders) established the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) as a foundation under civil law, seated in Flensburg.

On the same date, the Federal Ministry of the Interior of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Ministry of Information Technology and Research of the Kingdom of Denmark entered into an interdepartmental agreement. Article 8 of this agreement stipulates that ECMI's activities according to its regulations as well as ECMI's efficiency are to be evaluated by an independent, scientific commission. The evaluation is to take place every four years, for the first time, however, in 2002.

Considering the need for additional financial means, expressed by ECMI, the Founders decided to advance the first evaluation to the second half of 2001. The main recommendations of the evaluation were:

- Need for additional stable funding
- Enhancement of scientific components in ECMI's work
- Greater emphasis on qualified generalizations instead of case studies
- Enhancement of scientific control through a new Advisory Council
- Emphasize relationship between ethno-political conflicts and minority issues
- Continue networking, including with Danish institutions
- Administrative reform.

Following the four-year evaluation cycle the second evaluation of ECMI is planned to take place in the second half of 2006. Indeed, a detailed financial and administrative evaluation was already conducted in January 2006. Accordingly, this evaluation will focus on ECMI's substantive performance in terms of research, documentation and action-oriented projects.

Method and scope
The basic principles of the evaluation will be peer reviews of the main internal and external activities at ECMI. Accordingly, the evaluation panel will consist of senior scientific experts in the field of ECMI's work, and heads of similar institutions with a remit to engage in scientific and project work.

The evaluation will include a brief analysis of the actions taken to follow-up on the first evaluation. Further to this, the evaluation will include an assessment of the strategic direction of ECMI, the relevance and results of the research conducted at ECMI. The general organization of the Centre may be considered, although the financial and administrative aspects have already been covered by the earlier evaluation of 2006.

Organisation
A panel, consisting of three members, will carry out the evaluation. The panel will have two members, appointed by the Danish Founder and one member, appointed by the German Founders. The Danish Founder will appoint the chairman of the panel.

From the two members appointed by the Danish Founder, one member should be a leading scholar with internationally recognized expertise in the area of ethno-political conflict, human rights and minority issues. The other should have experience in leading operations of an institution engaged in project management in this area. The German member should be an expert in international law.

The panel consists on the following members:

Professor Joseph Marko (Chairman), Full Professor of Public Law at the Institute of Austrian, European and Comparative Public Law and Political Science, University of Graz, Faculty of Law; former judge of the Constitutional Court of Bi
Birgit Lindsnæs, Director of International Department, The Danish Institute for Human Rights
Professor Dr. Stefan Oeter, Institut für Internationale Angelegenheiten Fakultät für Rechtswissenschaft, Hamburg Universität

Members of the ECMI Board and the Advisory Council are precluded from membership of the panel.

The panel's assignment includes the analysis of the self-evaluation report and other written documentation and the subsequent site visit to ECMI. The panel is responsible for the conclusions and recommendations in the final report.

The Danish Founder has appointed The Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) to act as academic secretary and be responsible for the methodological and organisational planning and assist the panel in writing the evaluation report. Further to this EVA will be responsible for the practical planning of the evaluation in co-operation with ECMI.

ECMI will assist to arrange visits to the Foundation and supply the practical assistance to support the evaluation. ECMI will also be responsible for the practical, procedural matters in connection with the evaluation, including planning of meetings.
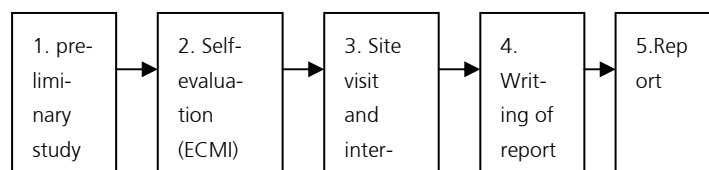
Assessment focus

The evaluation ought to include conclusions and recommendations about:

- ECMI's strategic direction and planning in light of fulfilment of its objectives and scientific goals
- ECMI's practical and constructive role in conflict management.
- ECMI's ability to manifest itself as a documentation centre.
- ECMI's ability to unite and promote networks of experience in minority issues.
- ECMI's co-operation with other institutions working on similar research topics, including universities of international standing, specialized research institutes and international organizations, such as the Council of Europe, the EU and the OSCE.
- The extent, scientific quality and practical deployment of ECMI's own research.
- The extent and sufficiency, or otherwise, of ECMI core funding in order to achieve its mission compared to the flow of additional funds (i.e. financial means, stemming from other sources than the Founders) and the contribution of earmarked additional project funds.

Documentation and process

The evaluation process will consists of following elements:

1. preliminary study	→	2. Self-evaluation (ECMI)	→	3. Site visit and inter-	→	4. Writing of report	→	5.Report

The evaluation will be based on relevant written documentation from ECMI. ECMI will be asked to prepare a self evaluation document. The document should be prepared in accordance to an outline submitted by the secretary of the panel. ECMI will have six to eight weeks to prepare the self evaluation document and to submit additional background documentation.

The self evaluation document and additional documentation will form the basis for 1-2 visits by the panel to the Foundation in Flensburg. In order to produce the necessary basis for ensuring the proper evaluation, the panel is to conduct an initial interview with the Founders as well as include a thorough deliberation with the Chairman of the ECMI Board and with other members of the board.

Time schedule

Date	Activity	Participants
December 2006	Contact and distribution of appropriate information to panel	EVA
December and January 2006	Initial interviews and research	EVA Founders and chairman of the ECMI Board
January 2007	Preparation of the self evaluation guidelines	EVA
February 1st to April 1st 2007	Writing of self evaluation report and gathering of documentation	ECMI
April 2007	Perusal of self evaluation documents and additional documentation to panel	EVA, panel
April 2007	Preparation of site visit and interview guides	EVA
May 2007	Site visit to ECMI (2-3 days)	EVA, panel
End June 2007	First draft of report sent to panel	EVA
July and August 2007	Comments from panel (1st proofreading)	Panel
September 2007	Report in consultation, subsequent revisions	ECMI, EVA, panel
End October 2007	Publication of report	

Appendix C

International expert panel

Joseph Marko (Chairman of the panel)

Joseph Marko graduated from University of Graz as Dr. juris and BA in English in 1977 followed by postgraduate studies of Political Science, Sociology and International Law at the University of Munich. Since 1979, employed at University of Graz; since 2004 as Full Professor of Public Law at the Institute of Austrian, European and Comparative Public Law and Political Science as well as Director of the Law School's Centre for South-East European Studies and Scientific Director of the interdisciplinary Master programme *European Integration and Regionalism* at University of Graz jointly with the European Academy Bolzano and European Institute for Public Administration in Luxembourg. In addition to this, Joseph Marko has held a several visiting positions at a variety of European and American universities and participates in a range of research projects and editorial activities within the field of minority issues. Moreover, Joseph Marko holds and fulfils a number of international positions and commitments, e.g. as International Judge of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1997-2002), member of the Advisory Council of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers under the Framework Convention of the protection of National Minorities (1998-2002) and as Director of the Minority Rights Institute at the European Academy Bolzano (since 1998)..

Birgit Lindsnæs

Birgit Lindsnæs graduated from University of Copenhagen as MA in Social Anthropology in 1984. Since 1991 Birgit Lindsnæs has been Director at the International Division of the Danish Institute for Human Rights. Birgit Lindsnæs is working within a number of areas of specialisation: state development and transition, national institutions and civil society, institutional and human rights capacity building, policy papers, strategies, concepts. Birgit Lindsnæs has extensive field experience, primarily in Africa, Asia, Europe and Central America. Birgit Lindsnæs' earlier employments include Danish Red Cross, Institute for Anthropology at University of Copenhagen and Amnesty International's Danish division. Furthermore, Birgit Lindsnæs is co-author of the books *National*

Human Rights Institutions, *The Role of Voluntary Organisations in Emerging Democracies* and *Towards New Global Strategies*.

Stefan Oeter

Stefan Oeter graduated from University of Heidelberg from studies of Law and Political Science in 1983 and as Dr.iur.utr. from University of Heidelberg in 1990 with a thesis on *Neutrality and Arms Transfers*. Stefan Oeter has since 1987 worked as a Research Fellow at the Max-Planck-Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, predominantly with the research priorities: Humanitarian Law, Protection of Minorities, Comparative Federalism and State Succession, and since 1999 has been employed as Full Professor for Public Law, European Community Law, and Public International Law and Managing Director of the Institute of International Affairs at University of Hamburg. In addition to this Stefan Oeter holds and fulfils a number of international positions and commitments, e.g. as chairman of the Council of Europe's Independent Committee of Experts for the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, as member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the German Federal Ministry of Transportation and as President of the Historical Commission of the International Society for Military Law and the Laws of War.

Appendix D

Site visit agenda

May 10th

9.00	Arrival at ECMI - Welcome and introduction
9.30	Preliminary meeting (Expert panel only)
13.00	Welcoming Lunch (Interaction with the Board)
14:30	Phone interviews a) 14:30 Phone interview with Mr. Dyvig b) 14:45 Phone interview with Alyson Bailes
15:00	Meeting on ECMI strategies, research and actions – Board Chairman, Dr. Knud Larsen
15.45	Meeting on ECMI strategies, research and actions – Director, Marc Weller
16.30	Meeting with Founders
17.30	Discussion with Advisory Council rep., Partners a) 17:30 Phone Interview with Alan Phillips b) 17:45 Phone interview with John McGarry c) 18:00 Interview Jörgen Kühl in-house
18.30	Review of Submitted materials, further issues to explore

May 11th

8.45	Phone interview with Marc Scheuer
9.00	Meeting on ECMI research activities
10.00	Meeting on ECMI constructive conflict management and advisory services
11.00	Coffee break
11.15	Meeting on ECMI networking and co-operation
11.45	Meeting on ECMI publication, information and documentation
12.15	Meeting on ECMI organisation, staffing and related issues
13.00	Closing meeting (ECMI Director and Expert Panel)
13.45	Lunch (Evaluation Team)
14:45	Phone interview Prof. Hofmann
15.00	Closing meeting (Expert Panel only)

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Appendix E

Supplementary documents and background material

- Annual Reports 2000-2006, ECMI
- ECMI Newsletters, 2004-2006, ECMI
- ECMI Strategic Review Document, 2005, ECMI
- ECMI Strategy 2000 – 2005, ECMI
- Empfehlungen des Vorarbeitenden Aussucsses für die Errichtigung eines European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), 1995
- European Centre for Minority Issues – Memorandum, 1991
- External Evaluation of European Centre for Minority Issues, 2001
- Hauptgutachten zu einem Europäischen Zentrum für Minderheitenfragen, 1994
- Report on the special audit for the year 2005 of the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) Flensburg, 2006
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