
Part Two

Administration and Management

Institutional Development

CSD is registered as a public benefit organisation with the *Central Registry of NGOs* at the Bulgarian Ministry of Justice. Public benefit organisations are obliged by law to conform to a number of additional financial reporting rules and to submit annual activity reports.

In 2014, CSD continued its efforts to streamline its internal administrative regulations and procedures. After audits conducted by the European Commission, a review of the time management and reporting system was launched. Following a number of consultations with legal and financial experts, a computerised project cost reporting module was introduced. Due to the multitude of requirements from various financing institutions, and the need to comply with national labour legislation, a new remuneration system was implemented in 2014.

In 2014, CSD employed a staff of thirty-one of whom twenty-six in professional and management positions, including part-time consultants, and five employees in administrative positions.

Accountability and transparency are guiding principles in the operation of the Center for the Study of Democracy. They are intrinsic to CSD activity and are related to the critical analysis of social processes and trends in Bulgaria and in the EU. These principles are implemented by means of:

- annual audit reports published since 1992;
- audits of individual projects;

- CSD annual reports published since 1994;
- regular updates about CSD's activities on its website;
- press-releases about on-going projects and their results;
- publication of a wide range of analyses and reports.

The application of good management practices has been critical to the successful work of CSD. In 2014, the Center continued its efforts to diversify its sources of funding in addition to the traditional EU financial instruments available for the period 2007-2014: the Seventh Framework Program, the European Social Fund, and the financial instruments in the area of justice and home affairs. Some of CSD activities were funded through the operational programs administered by the Bulgarian government, as well as the World Bank and the Open Society Institute. Apart from the awarded grants, CSD took part in tenders through its consulting arm Project One EOOD.

In 2014, CSD proved its reputation as a reliable partner and coordinator of EU-wide projects encompassing research in the legal, security and social policy areas. In partnership with leading European think tanks and academic institutions, CSD took part in the European debate on the assessment and development of policies related to the fight against organised crime, the integration of victims of trafficking and other vulnerable groups, public confidence in justice, and cybercrime.

Internship program

The Center for the Study of Democracy aims to provide internship opportunities for outstanding students from various universities. Following a several-year-old tradition, in 2014 the Center hosted 52 interns from 12 different countries. In addition to Bulgarian students and recent graduates who enrolled either under a Ministry of Education scheme, or by an independent application via the CSD website, the Center accommodated interns from Austria, France, Germany, India, Italy, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the USA.

The Center has a robust, well-defined, standardised policy for welcoming and mentoring newly hired interns, which frequently leads to extending offers for permanent positions as researchers and experts at CSD or other institutions, to offers of admission to elite graduate schools, or to funding schemes for additional employment and/or education. Interns, who are variously employed for a period of up to six months, undergo a careful two-stage selection and are provided with complete information to facilitate their adaptation to the receiving country and the organisation's specificities. In all cases when interns are hired, CSD uses standardised templates and procedures for developing intern action plans as well as mentorship plans to guide the intern's supervisor(s), while clearly identifying the expected timeline(s) and performance indicators that would determine the successful completion of the internship. The action and mentorship plans provide an initial assessment of the strengths and opportunities of the internship for both the intern and the organisation.

CSD always attempts to match interns' professional aspirations to their assignments. Having developed over the past two decades into a major think tank with expertise in a number of diverse fields, CSD is able to attract diverse talent. As a minimum, the Center always guarantees interns the ability to produce policy briefs (with supervision and feedback where needed) or policy notes on a topic relevant to the intern's educational background and/or future professional goals.

In 2014, all CSD programs actively engaged interns in their core activities such as desk research, data collection, literature reviews, and drafting of reports on policy events. This helped them gain practical skills and in-depth knowledge in areas such as:

- anti-corruption, good governance, energy security, competitiveness, informal economy and innovation;
- migration, Roma and trafficking in human beings, integration and social inclusion of vulnerable groups;
- financing of organised crime activities, special investigative tools and border security;
- witness protection, provision of services to vulnerable groups, surveillance and data retention, measures against racism and xenophobia, prevention of and fight against cybercrime.

Interns also assisted in preparing and conducting face to face interviews, transcribing and processing collected qualitative data, and illustrating the results of quantitative research.

CSD has also developed its capacity to manage large-scale international projects, sometimes taking place in all 28 EU Member States and requiring the publication of reports for each of the countries involved. It is thus often possible to match the skills of incoming interns to tasks which are part of such projects. Therefore, interns based in countries other than Bulgaria are frequently given the option to conduct research in their country of origin or current residence. In 2014, all interns were involved in the project preparation process, gaining valuable experience in developing grant and tender proposals and assisting the process with technical tasks.

In 2014, the diversity of the educational backgrounds of the interns provided the programs' teams with a variety of perspectives on their respective fields of research. The interns, on the other hand, had the opportunity to find out about policy and program evaluation, to learn from leading researchers, policy analysts, investigative journalists, and advocacy leaders, and, depending on their interests and background, to participate in events organised by the programs and to familiarise themselves with the ongoing research activities.

"Vibrant work atmosphere, opportunity to work with very learned supervisors and reasonable flexibility of working conditions, comprise few of the many good reasons for interning with the Centre for Study of Democracy in Sofia. ... The research I undertook specifically on the issue of rights of vulnerable prisoners allowed me to gain a better understanding of the gravity of this issue and also allowed me to learn more about the ethos and functioning of European law. I felt no dearth of encouragement and support from my supervisors who gave me timely feedback on my work. The office was also a great place to come to, for it would always be brimming with international interns in different programs, thereby allowing for a great cultural exchange of thoughts and ideas amongst other things. All of this enabled me to work professionally in an environment very friendly and for that I am indeed grateful to the CSD family for allowing me the opportunity to be a part of this experience. Thank you CSD! :)"

Paridhi Singh, India, intern at CSD's Law Program, January – February 2014

"My time with CSD greatly improved my knowledge of the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region. I enhanced my analytical skills while working on dynamic issues affecting the CEE region - energy security and NATO collective defense. I will always remember my time with CSD and the excellent researchers that I worked with."

William Lamping, USA, intern at CSD's Economic Program, June – August 2014

“During my time at the CSD I was part of the Sociological program. It was a privilege working as intern in an international and intellectually stimulating setting amongst other interns coming from all over the world and professionals with expertise. Through my internship experience I had the opportunity to reflect upon pertinent issues in the field of human rights and to develop a deeper understanding which I will apply towards my future career. I believe that my internship with CSD ideally complemented my education and experiences in the field of human rights and provided me a strong foundation for my profession.”

Anna Sassu, Italy, intern at CSD’s Sociological Program, July – September 2014

Donation of books and other publications

In 2014, CSD donated books and educational materials to the following institutions: Association of Prosecutors in Bulgaria, Bourgas Free University, Ministry of Interior Academy, National Legal Aid Bureau, National Institute of

Justice, National Revenue Agency, New Bulgarian University, Plovdiv Economic Library, Supreme Bar Council, Supreme Judicial Council, University of National and World Economy.

Consulting arms of CSD: Vitoshka Research and Project One

Vitoshka Research EOOD and Project One EOOD are wholly owned by CSD and form the CSD Group. Vitoshka Research EOOD had started as one of the programs of CSD dealing with sociological issues and in 2000 was set up as a separate commercial company aiming to support the long term financial sustainability of CSD through involvement in marketing research. The General Manager of the company is the Director of Research of CSD.

Project One EOOD was founded after consultations with the auditing company KPMG in order to enable CSD's participation in tenders and consultancy projects on the territory of Bulgaria and the EU. Project One is also in charge of the management of CSD investment activities. The Manager of Project One EOOD is the Executive Director of CSD. The three organisations use interchangeably their facilities, human and financial resources in order to better achieve their goals, while observing distinct separation of CSD Group's commercial and non-commercial activities.

In 2014, Vitoshka Research carried out ten social, economic, and marketing research projects. More than ten thousand face-to-face, telephone and online interviews were conducted with population and businesses.

As part of CSD's annual monitoring of the grey economy and corruption in Bulgaria, Vitoshka Research conducted national representative surveys of the

population and the business sector. Other social and economic surveys, commissioned by Bulgarian and international organisations in 2014 include:

- Gallup Europe: World Poll Survey – Bulgaria
- Bulgarian Ministry of Labour and Social Policy: Net Effect of Active Policies on the Labour Market
- Bulgarian Ministry of Economy and Energy: Reducing the Administrative Regulations in the Economy
- Bulgarian Academy of Sciences: Young people in Bulgaria: Transition from Education to Employment

Vitoshka Research and Project One EOOD are among the founding members of the Bulgarian Association for Policy Evaluation (BAPE). The mission of BAPE is to establish the evaluation of public policies as a tool for good governance in Bulgaria, to develop policy evaluation capacities and to promote the best practices of monitoring of public policies at the local, regional and national levels. In 2014, Vitoshka Research and Project One EOOD hosted a round table and two seminars of BAPE.

Project One EOOD continued its efforts to secure funding for an office building to be constructed at 3, Zhendov Str., a site adjacent to the building currently occupied by CSD. The office building is designed in full compliance with the standards of the Bulgarian Green Building Council. Through this project CSD will contribute to the implementation of best energy saving practices.

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