

Sociological program

2009 Highlights

Since mid-2009 the Sociological Program has resumed its activity as an autonomous unit within the Center for the Study of Democracy focusing its activities on research projects of a more academic nature and the analysis of socio-economic phenomena at the national and/or European level. In this context, in its activities the Sociological Program has emphasized several key priorities:

- **Evaluation of public policies and programs.** Development of a methodology and indicators for monitoring and evaluating policies and practices in several key areas of socio-economic life: justice and home affairs, public procurement, tenders for EU structural funds, etc. Publication of a manual *Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies and Programs*.
- **Policies for the integration of immigrants and refugees.** CSD has completed an analysis of the information needs related to the policies and measures for the integration of third country nationals and proposals for their optimization. The study included the development of a methodology and indicators for the evaluation and impact assessment of the results of policies for the integration of immigrants as well as conducting evaluations and social impact assessments of integration policies and their effects upon third country nationals and society as a whole.
- **Science communication in society.** Conducting research in the field of science communication and technological development. Theoretical and practical training of Bulgarian and European scientists in the field of science communication conducted by CSD experts.
- **Enhancement of the methodological and expert capacity of the Sociological program in several fields:**
 - ◆ Monitoring and estimating the hidden economy;
 - ◆ Conducting victimization and criminological research;
 - ◆ Foresight methods;
 - ◆ Advocating civic activism and responsible social policies;
 - ◆ Promoting human rights and the protection of vulnerable groups.

I. Evaluation of Public Policies and Programs

The Sociological Program of the Center for the Study of Democracy has been building its methodological and expert

capacity for carrying out social impact assessments and evaluations of public policies and programs at the national and EU levels. Over the past couple of decades, the theory and practice of program evaluation and impact assess-

ment has been developing very dynamically in a variety of territorial and institutional contexts. Conducting social impact assessments and program evaluations has become well established and prestigious type of consulting service and has been informed by a growing body of theoretical and methodological research literature. International institutions and organisations (the European Commission, OECD, IBRD, UNDP and UNICEF, etc.), national governments and civic organisations more and more actively utilize program evaluations and impact assessments of a variety of types and scope.

The manual *Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies and Programs* (Methodological Guidebook: Part I) was prepared for publication in 2009.

The evaluation of public policies and programs and their social impact is an instrument of good governance in the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority at all levels. It needs to be considered an indispensable component of the process of decision-making and management of the whole cycle of designing, implementing and evaluating of public policies and programs. This enhanced role for social impact assessments and program evaluations as key features of good governance, and their embeddedness in the whole process of implementing public policies and programs, will present CSD's Sociological Program with the opportunity to offer high quality consulting services. This is also complementary to the activities of the Economic Program as they relate to research into the theory, challenges and practice of good governance, as well as to the Law Program's efforts to design indicators evaluating levels of trust in the judicial system and progress in achieving key national objectives in the field of justice and home affairs.



II. Policies for the integration of immigrants and refugees

In 2009, the Sociological Program, with funding provided by the European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals, developed a methodology for the monitoring and evaluation of integration policies and practices in the country as well as a model for an integrated information system for immigrants, third country nationals, and their integration. In this manner, CSD contributed to the successful implementation of Bulgaria's National Strategy on Migration and Integration for the 2008-2015 period, and the practical introduction of the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union. A review of existing tools for monitoring policies and practices relating to third country nationals and current methods for their evaluation was completed. Suggestions are being made regarding enhancing capabilities for collecting adequate (in volume and quantity) information on integration measures and their effects on beneficiaries and the society as a whole. A qualitative survey was con-

ducted which aim was to determine, analyze and evaluate the needs, problems, expectations and fulfillment levels of the immigrant population.

A quantitative survey was also completed the aim of which was to inquire as to the extent to which Bulgaria's society is informed regarding the integration of third country nationals, as well as regarding attitudes and reactions towards the integration policies being implemented in the country. The results of the survey demonstrate the recipient society strongly differentiates among various groups of immigrants on the basis of their ethnic origins.

Policies enjoying widest support are those aiming to encourage immigrants to adopt societal values as they relate to the country's linguistic, cultural and historical heritage. The overwhelming

majority of respondents give positive responses when asked whether attending Bulgarian language courses and becoming acquainted with Bulgaria's history and culture constitute appropriate integration measures with respect to immigrants, while they also approve of immigrant children attending Bulgarian schools. There is a need for information campaigns popularizing policies and measures promoting the rights of immigrants and protecting them from discrimination.

A model for an integrated information system and database was developed, which contains specific indicators regarding the target group of the country's integration policies with respect to immigrants from third countries, taking into account the needs of the interested parties in charge of implementing policies and measures with respect to



Group discussion with immigrants

Table 2. Do you tend to approve or disapprove of accepting immigrants from the following regions?

	I tend to approve	I tend to disapprove	No answer
Russia	80.7%	15.3%	4.0%
Other former Soviet republics (Ukraine, Moldova, Kazakhstan, etc.)	76.3%	18.5%	5.2%
The Western Balkans (e.g. Macedonia, other countries from the former Yugoslavia, Albania)	61.4%	33.3%	5.3%
North, Central and Latin America	56.4%	34.8%	8.8%
Asian countries (China, Vietnam, etc)	46.2%	47.8%	6.0%
African countries (Kenya, Nigeria, Angola, etc)	38.5%	54.3%	7.2%
Turkey	38.1%	58.6%	3.4%
Arab countries (Iraq, Syria, Palestine, etc)	33.1%	60.3%	6.7%

third country nationals. Putting this model into practice would contribute to ensuring an information environment which would serve the purpose of optimizing and periodically updating Bulgaria's integration policies, as well as of monitoring compliance with and the effects of integration measures.

As a continuation of its efforts in this priority field, the Sociological Program is working on the project Developing Indicators and Methods for the Evaluation of Goals and Measures Related to the Integration of Third Country Nationals. The project aims at developing indicators for evaluating integration policies and practices, taking into account European best practices and the needs of national and local institutions charged with for-

mulating and implementing integration measures in the country.

III. Science communication in society

In an environment of globalising and fast-developing knowledge economies and societies, the creation, exchange and dissemination of knowledge has become a priority for social science research. In this context, the Sociological Program has been active in research and education initiatives with respect to the communication of developments in science and technology. Other factors have been conducive for adopting this priority, such as CSD's practical experience in the field and established partner contacts in the largest network of experts

Table 3. Do you tend to approve or disapprove of the following forms of integrating immigrants (citizens of foreign countries that are not EU members) into Bulgarian society?

	I tend to approve	I tend to disapprove	No answer
Attending Bulgarian language courses	92.4%	5.2%	2.4%
Becoming acquainted with Bulgaria's history and culture	92.0%	4.0%	4.0%
Attending Bulgarian schools (immigrant children)	88.9%	7.0%	4.0%
Marrying Bulgarian citizens	64.8%	25.4%	9.9%
Implementing special municipal programmes for the integration of immigrants	61.5%	25.9%	12.6%
Having the opportunity to practice their own religions and cultures	61.2%	30.4%	8.3%
Being able to work under equal terms as those of Bulgarian citizens	53.7%	41.0%	5.3%
Having access to social assistance programmes	46.7%	45.2%	8.2%
Having access to municipal housing	40.1%	49.0%	10.8%
Having access to financial assistance from the state	39.9%	51.6%	8.6%

and institutions active in the field, as well as its participation in several international initiatives:

- Training for European scientists (ESConet Trainers – Science communication training for Europe's scientists);
- Training seminar for young scientists Science and Society in Dialogue: Popularizing Scientific Results;
- European Science Communication Workshops;
- Changes in labor organization and social restructuring in knowledge society (WORKS).

IV. Enhancing the Methodological and Expert Capacity of the Sociological Program

In partnership with Transcrime, an Italian NGO, the Sociological Program conducted a research project, funded by the European Commission, to design a European business victimization survey. The project's goal is to design a unified EU-wide methodology to evaluate the levels and effects of crimes against businesses. In this manner, the project aims to create a



Participants in a consultation meeting with Bulgarian citizens under the CIVISTI project

reliable instrument for the collection, analysis and comparison of information on economic crime and business victimization in the European Union (all 27 EU Member States as well as the Candidate Countries – Macedonia, Turkey and Croatia). The project methodology contributes to the following:

- Meeting the needs of EU policy making, and in particular as it relates to implementing the EU Action Plan and the task of measuring the spread and structure of crime victimization in the business sector;
- Comparing data from crime victimization in EU Member States as well as the Candidate Countries;
- Standardizing the process of analysing the characteristic features of economic crime in the EU, where specificities in business structures and practices, as well as cultural and linguistic differences, are of great significance;
- Proposing methods and indicators for measuring the costs and consequences of crime victimization in a variety of contexts.

The Sociological Program provides expert advice (primarily of a methodological and analytical nature) in designing research methodologies and instruments, the collection and analysis of data, and applying state-of-the-art research methodologies and instruments. In 2009 the Sociological Program provided such expertise in the implementation of several research projects.

Specific focus of the cooperation between the Sociological program and the Applied Research and Communications Fund was the development and implementation of foresight methodologies with respect to social impact assessment of policies and programmes in the field of science and technological innovation.