

Sociological program

The work of the Sociological Program in 2018 focused on integration of migrants, social inclusion of vulnerable groups, monitoring of migration, and prevention of radicalisation leading to terrorism.

- **Integration of migrants and social inclusion of vulnerable groups.** Effective policy solutions to facilitate the inclusion of vulnerable groups in Bulgarian society and at EU level were identified and evaluated. A training module for social and cultural orientation of beneficiaries of international protection and migrants focused on the needs of women was developed; gaps in the access to and uptake of Youth Guarantee measures by Roma youth in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania were identified; and the situation of same-sex couples with recognition in other EU Member States who travel and reside in Bulgaria was explored. Measures for the implementation of activities in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain to promote social inclusion within secondary schools by way of establishing educational communities involving teachers, students, parents and local communities were designed.
- **Prevention of radicalisation leading to terrorism.** An initiative was launched aimed at comparing current religious diversity governance models in Europe, Asia and Australia to bring insights into preventing and countering radicalisation.
- **Monitoring of migration.** Unified standards for independent monitoring of forced return in Bulgaria were developed and tested.

I. Integration of migrants and social inclusion of vulnerable groups

In the context of increasing refugee inflows in Europe it becomes highly relevant to propose and implement practical actions responding to existing gaps in migrant/refugee integration across the EU. In response to this challenge and based on a study that identified the training needs of beneficiaries of international protection, CSD coordinated the development of *Training Modules for Social and Cultural Orientation of International Status Holders and Migrants in Bulgaria, Greece and Malta*. The modules were developed following a wide

consultation with national stakeholders working in the field of refugee protection and service provision in the three EU countries. The draft modules were tested through trainings for beneficiaries of international protection and asylum seekers. The trainings in Bulgaria were conducted in cooperation with CVS Bulgaria, Caritas Sofia and the Bulgarian Red Cross.

The initiative is a joint effort of seven research and service providing institutions from five EU Member States (Bulgaria, Greece, Malta, Italy and Spain) and has effectively involved exchange of knowledge and experience at cross-



Workshop on Cultural and Civic Orientation of Beneficiaries of International Protection, Sofia, 25 April 2018

national EU level in the sphere of integration training.

Between 2013 and 2016, EU Member States started implementing the *Youth Guarantee* scheme targeting NEET (not in employment, education or training) youth across the EU. In Bulgaria, as well as in Hungary and Romania, a substantial part of NEET youth originate from Roma communities. To understand the outreach and uptake of the EU-funded Youth Guarantee among Roma youth in Bulgaria, field research was conducted in 10 locations across Bulgaria. The progress results of the research were summarised in the report *The Youth Guarantee in Bulgaria and the Uptake among Roma Youth* and provided grounds for the formulation of recommendations that CSD presented at three matchmaking workshops (Stara Zagora, Vidin, and

Sliven) between Youth Guarantee stakeholders to advocate for change in relevant administrative and policy practice in Bulgaria. Similar activities have been conducted by partner organisations in Hungary and Romania.

Homophobia and unequal treatment for LGBTI people remain widely spread across the EU. While indicators vary in the different Member States and the situation seems more favorable in some compared to others, data show that no country has achieved full equality. Bulgaria is among the countries where the situation remains rather unfavorable. A national study was conducted on the situation of same-sex couples with recognition in other EU Member States who travel and reside in Bulgaria. The results of the research provided grounds for the development of an awareness-



Workshop in Stara Zagora, 12 September 2018



International Conference on the Rights of Recognized Same-Sex Partners Moving Across the EU, Sofia, 8 November 2018

raising campaign and a series of community events. The problems faced by same-sex families residing in Bulgaria were put under discussion during a national stakeholder round table, as well as during an [international conference](#) in Sofia which gathered experts in the field of marriage equality from the Netherlands, Ireland, Malta, the Czech Republic, Romania and Bulgaria.

At the beginning of 2018, CSD joined a team of research and educational organisations from Greece, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain to experiment educative and social pedagogic practices related to the concept of pro-sociality and aiming at involving local communities in the promotion of social inclusion of students at secondary schools. The concept of pro-sociality refers to behaviours intended to benefit others, and implies a series of voluntary actions for the development of skills for mutual help and empathy and the formation of a sense of belonging to a community. A comparative [research](#) was launched to study the pro-social attitude and skills of students at secondary schools in the five participating countries to feed recommendations on how schools can structure tools for promoting pro-sociality.

II. Radicalisation leading to terrorism

In the last decade, countering radicalisation that turns to terrorism has become an issue of particular concern for many European governments. Alarming trends relating to Islamist radicalisation and far-right extremism call for a **policy response to identify and reverse the radicalisation process** which often precedes the use of violence. In 2018, CSD took part in the development of an analytical framework to study models of religious diversity governance across countries in Europe, North Africa, the

Middle East, South Asia and Oceania to identify practical lessons for prevention of religious radicalisation in Europe. The comparative research exercise will take place in 2019 and 2020, aiming to assess the relative success of various religious governance regimes in integrating minorities and migrants, and to provide evidence-based recommendations to European policy-makers.

CSD took part in the establishment of a network in Central and Eastern Europe for the prevention of intolerance and group hatred as a way of preventing youth radicalisation. Through evidence-based research and advocacy activities the network will be joined by relevant stakeholders in Bulgaria, Germany, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

III. Monitoring of migration

In partnership with CVS – Bulgaria, the pilot initiative on developing and testing unified standards for monitoring of forced return was finalised. CSD assisted the Bulgarian government in applying common standards and procedures for the return of illegal third-country nationals in compliance with the fundamental rights of returnees and in line with *Directive 2008/115/EC*. In the course of implementation of 15 monitoring missions, CSD and CVS – Bulgaria worked jointly on the development and enhancement of mechanisms for cooperation between the government and the civil sector in the sphere of independent monitoring of forced return. In addition, they tested and finalised the pilot *Standards for Monitoring and Ensuring Respect for Fundamental Rights and Freedoms of Third-Country Nationals*. The key observations from the implemented pilot forced return monitoring missions and policy recommendations for the establishment of a national system for



*Unified Standards for Forced Return Monitoring Round Table,
Sofia, 19 December 2018*

monitoring of forced return operations were summarised into a *National Analytical Report*.

A **round table** was organised to present the finalised *Unified Standards for Forced*

Return Monitoring to representatives of the Migration Directorate within the Ministry of Interior, the Ombudsman, UNHCR, the Bulgarian Red Cross and other NGOs working in the field of legal advice and protection of migrants.