
Part Two

Administration and Management

Institutional development

CSD is a not-for-profit organisation acting for the public benefit. Up to 2017, CSD was registered at the Sofia City Court and the *Central Register of Not-for-Profit Legal Entities* at the Bulgarian Ministry of Justice. In 2018, following amendments to the relevant national legislation, CSD was re-registered in the public *Commercial Register and Register of Not-for-Profit Legal Entities* at the Registry Agency under the Minister of Justice. Not-for-profit legal entities acting for the public benefit are obliged by law to conform to a number of additional rules, *inter alia*, to draw up and submit annually an activity report and financial statements for entry in the public Register.

During the year, CSD employed a staff of forty-five, of whom thirty-seven in professional and management positions, including part-time consultants, and eight employees in administrative positions.

Accountability and transparency are guiding principles in the operation of the Center for the Study of Democracy. 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.

In 2022, CSD adopted a *Gender Equality Plan 2022–2024* (GEP). The GEP was developed in continuation to and in compliance with CSD's Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct. The Plan is built upon five pillars of equality: achieving pan-organisational gender balance; promoting gender equality in recruitment and career progression; optimising work-life balance; integrating a gender dimension in research, as well as preventing harassment and bias.

In 2023, women make up 49% of all employees, and 46% of researchers. Female employees with a PhD constitute 42% of all employees with a doctoral qualification. Women are well represented and recognised as senior and top-level researchers. Women led various research endeavors in 2023, and numerous initiatives contained a substantive gender element, including gender impact assessments. Female employees took part in public dissemination events, such as international conferences, media appearances, policy roundtables, and expert workshops.

The organisation continued implementing its fair recruitment policy, welcoming candidates from various backgrounds and of diverse traits. A fair and inclusive parental leave policy operates in the organisation, offering a standard of protection and benefit to all employees on an equal basis and in compliance with national legislation. Accommodating the needs of the staff remained a priority for CSD, realised through a flexible working policy.

Communications

Events

Throughout the year, CSD hosted a total 22 in-person events, including a number of high level international policy forums that engaged policy-makers in European capital cities in a constructive dialogue on the necessary anti-corruption and democratic resilience agenda for the Western Balkans, the steps towards safeguarding Europe's digital landscape, enhancing energy security and strategic decoupling.

The utilisation of streaming platforms and virtual conferencing tools allowed for the successful engagement of over a thousand experts and policy-makers

from both sides of the Atlantic in the course of these events.

Social media impact

Broadening the social and policy impact of CSD work through strategic online communication has been among the priorities for CSD's communications team. Continuous work in building up CSD's social media portfolio across various platforms and networks expanded the deployment and visibility of research and key policy recommendations. Developing new creative formats and strategically promoting them across channels has resulted in 76% increase in CSD's digital audience.



U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Resources Geoffrey Pyatt addressing the audience at the policy roundtable "The Future of Natural Gas in Southeast Europe", Sofia, March 2023



CSD | Podcast

UNMASKING HYBRID THREATS: Ukraine's Battle Against Disinformation

Paul Massaro

Senior policy advisor at the US Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

Goran Georgiev

Analyst, Economic Program, CSD



Creative content

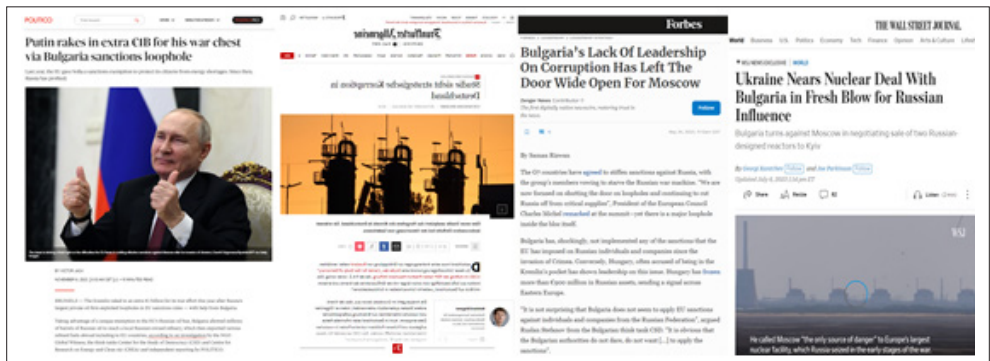
CSD continued to develop formats such as interactive reports, short documentaries, explainer videos and blog posts, which serve to capture the essence of research and make key policy recommendations accessible to a wider audience. Utilising formats such as podcasts, reels and short animations helped for reaching out to wider on-line audiences and providing policy insights in real time.

In addition, over the year, CSD published 16 reports and 20 policy briefs under its brand outlook, complemented by a number of joint publications with

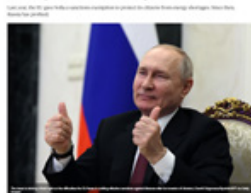
key partners from Europe and the U.S. The brand uplift, executed during the pandemic, is already bearing results, contributing to an improved, well recognisable social presence.

Media coverage

Effectively engaging journalists in Europe and beyond has been among the top priorities throughout 2023. CSD's research was featured in numerous media outlets among which *The Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*, *ABC News*, *CBS News*, *Politico*, *Forbes*, *Deutsche Welle*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, *Die Presse*, *BBC World Service* and more.



Putin rakes in extra €1B for his war chest via Bulgaria sanctions loophole



Bulgaria's Lack Of Leadership On Corruption Has Left The Door Wide Open For Moscow



Ukraine Nears Nuclear Deal With Russia In Fresh Blow for Russian Influence



Internship program

The Center for the Study of Democracy provides internship opportunities for outstanding students from across the world, who, especially in recent years, have worked both remotely and on-site. In 2023, the CSD team supported in-person interns logistically, familiarised them with the local milieu, involved them in all public and social events, and offered city and country day trips. Remote interns were made part of the CSD program teams' virtual office modes, striving to keep them engaged via frequent virtual contacts and involvement in webinars and other online events.

In 2023, the Center hosted 31 students and recent graduates from 14 countries: Argentina, Austria, Bulgaria, Colombia, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Panama, Sweden, the UK, and the USA. Among those who interned on a rolling basis in 2023, there were four Princeton undergraduates as well as students from Columbia Uni-

versity, the Blavatnik School of Government at Oxford University, Bocconi University, Groningen University, The Hague University and many more.

In 2023, all CSD programs actively engaged interns in their core activities such as desk research, data collection, literature reviews, collection and review of information and good practices and drafting parts of research and policy papers. A number of communications interns were also hired to assist and invigorate the communications team. This helped the young people gain practical skills and in-depth knowledge in a number of areas.

The Center has a robust, standardised policy for mentoring newly hired interns, which leads to extending offers for permanent positions as researchers and experts at CSD or at other institutions, offers of admission to elite graduate schools, or to funding schemes for additional employment and/or education.

"After four months at the climate department at the CSD, I can honestly say that I am surprised by how engaging and varied my tasks and experiences have been. I was expecting this internship to be like most, where interns are given the boring tasks that none of the full-timers want to do, but instead I was given genuinely compelling and challenging tasks that furthered my interest in the field. I was also invited to assist with several exciting events, conferences, and meetings, which besides being rewarding in themselves gave me something to brag to my family about.

At the same time, the social atmosphere in the library where most interns work was wonderful. It gave us interns the opportunity to socialise with each other while also intermingling with the other colleagues, all in what I somewhat biasedly would say is the most beautiful room in the building. Additionally, the CSD accomplishes being one of the most influential think tanks in Bulgaria while maintaining a healthy and flexible attitude to work, something I particularly appreciated as a Swede. I can wholeheartedly recommend the CSD, and the climate department in particular, to anyone seeking an interesting, enjoyable, and rewarding internship."

Hugo Axelsson,

Sweden, intern at CSD's Energy and Climate Program,
August 14 – December 15, 2023

"In a world full of insufferable corporate taglines, such as Nike's 'Just Do It' and Boris Johnson's 'Get Brexit Done,' few institutions manage to live up to the mantras they preach, especially if they are in Latin. However, it is fair to say that the Centre for the Study of Democracy does not fall victim to this ignominious trend, and instead stands out as an organisation that does exactly what it says on the tin: 'Building Bridges Between Scholars and Policy Makers.'

Now I cannot claim to be a scholar, but as a graduate student who has become engrossed in the world of academia, I always thought policy makers were unthoughtful and without due diligence, hoping most of them could be locked away in a damp basement in Brussels. Thus, leaving academics to apply real scientific processes to the problems of our modern world, even if it did mean those problems being resolved at a snail's pace. However, who knew that my road to Damascus, would in fact be a flight to Sofia, where a third way (not Colonel Gaddafi's) was presented to me beyond the Danube and in the beating heart of the Balkans. A liminal space where the world of academic rigour meets the real-world practicality of policy making. A magical dojo where I was trained to speed up the processes of scientific evaluation, and with my findings curate a beautiful patchwork of policy proposals which sought to address Europe's most pressing difficulties with immediacy.

Under my lauded Sensei Dr Todor Galev, my training manifested through a breadth of interesting projects. For example, an extensive literature review and theoretical framework proposal on media capture, which allowed me to apply the theoretical clarity required of a field struggling to keep up with the machinations of Russian malign influence and ever-changing technology and algorithms. My research skills were further embellished with the task of having to collate fiscal data on nine Balkan countries, a task I wouldn't wish on my worst enemy. Moreover, I learned the subtle art of formulating policy papers which seek to influence those in power under the pretences of formality, which I have evidently failed to apply to this piece of writing.

Yet, no slightly ridiculous pros, can ever truly capture my experience at the CSD. While being brief, I have felt I have been here for a lifetime, a lifetime anyone would consider worth living. The people here have made a former North Korean embassy a home. A home full of some of the most talented and interesting people I have ever met, and who I can comfortably say are like a family. If it isn't Vladislav's crude comments, Tommaso's intriguing Italianisms, Connor's insanely good bar recommendations, or Dr Shentov's groundbreaking knowledge of every film ever put to screen, the CSD still has something for you. So, step aside Oxford, there is a new jewel in the crown of Europe's intelligentsia, and it sits heavy in the heart of Bulgaria."

Aymen Aulaiwi,

UK, intern at CSD's Economic Program,

August 14 — September 21, 2023

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 and social research.

Project One EOOD was founded after consultations with the auditing company KPMG in order to enable CSD's participation in tenders and consultancy projects. 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 share 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.

List of staff

Governing Board

Ognian Shentov, PhD, Chairman
Vladimir Yordanov, Executive Director
Ruslan Stefanov, Program Director, Chief Economist

Law Program

Dimitar Markov, Director
Maria Yordanova, PhD, Senior Fellow
Tatyana Novosiolova, PhD, Research Fellow
Maria Doichinova, Analyst
Maria Stoyanova, Analyst
Iliana Boycheva, Analyst

Economic Program

Ruslan Stefanov, Program Director, Chief Economist
Todor Galev, PhD, Director of Research
Daniela Mineva, Senior Analyst
Vanya Petrova, PhD, Senior Analyst
Tihomira Kostova, PhD, Senior Analyst
Goran Georgiev, Analyst
Kristina Tsabala, Analyst
Connor O'Kelley, Analyst
Svetoslav Malinov, Analyst
Nicola Yankov, Senior Associate Fellow
Miroslav Zafirov, Senior Associate Fellow
Todor Yalamov, PhD, Associate Fellow

Energy and Climate Program

Martin Vladimirov, Director, Energy and Climate Program
Kostantsa Rangelova, Senior Analyst
Mariya Trifonova, PhD, Senior Research Fellow
Marius Koeppen, Analyst
Remina Alexieva, Analyst
Kalina Tcolova, Analyst
Anna Filipova, Analyst
Boyko Nitzov, PhD, Senior Associate Fellow
Radostina Primova, PhD, Senior Associate Fellow
Anja Sivakova-Kolb, PhD, Senior Associate Fellow
German Rueda Orejarena, Associate Fellow

Security Program

Atanas Rusev, PhD, Director
Chavdar Chervenkov, Lieut. Gen. (ret.), Senior Fellow
Emil Tsenkov, PhD, Senior Fellow
Mois Faion, PhD, Senior Fellow
Tihomir Bezlov, Senior Fellow
Stefan Ralchev, Research Fellow
Mariyan Sabev, Analyst
Tommaso Comunale, PhD, Analyst
Nadya Stoyanova, Analyst
Vladislav Krastev, Analyst
Rumiana Bachvarova, Senior Associate Fellow
Rositsa Dzhekova, Associate Fellow

Sociological Program

Alexander Gerganov, PhD, Director
Lilia Yakova, PhD, Research Fellow
Alexander Politov, PhD, Analyst
Victoria Bogdanova, Analyst
Gergana Tzvetkova, PhD, Associate Fellow
Mila Mancheva, PhD, Associate Fellow

Communications

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Galina Sapundzhieva, Communications Officer/Content Coordinator
Gloria Trifonova, Communications Officer
Penu Kiratzov, PhD, Communications Officer/Graphic Designer
Yana Kaludova, Communications Officer
Graham Griffith, Senior Fellow & Fullbright Scholar

Financial Department

Milena Momchilova-Boyadzhieva, Financial Director
Petar Lozanov, Financial/Project Officer

Administration

Mariana Yankova, Administrative Secretary
Milena Yordanova, Executive/Research Assistant
Dimitar Stamenov, IT and Data Officer

Technical Support

Boyko Tasev