

Strengthening Democratic Institutions in the Balkans: Ombudsman Service Reform in Kosovo and Montenegro

Objectives

This project aimed to improve the effectiveness of both the “Ombudsperson Institution” in Kosovo and the “Institution of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedom” in Montenegro. The project consisted of three main parts that ran simultaneously in Kosovo and Montenegro. In the first phase, local and Hungarian experts studied the legal environment and the effectiveness of the ombudsman service in Kosovo and Montenegro. At the same time they had also assessed local needs through a series of broad-based consultation with civil society organizations and governmental officials.

Key Achievements

Relying on the findings of the consultations, a Task Force was formed in the second phase of the project., The main aim of the Task Force was to offer recommendations for drafting of the

- new ombudsman law in Kosovo,
- new ombudsman law in Montenegro, and
- relevant part of the new Constitution of Montenegro.

Since ombudsmen in developed countries mostly rely on the influence of public opinion, it was considered to be as important as a tool of the Ombudsman Institutions. A well-developed communication strategy seemed to be essential both in case of raising awareness and keeping the public informed about the activities of the ombudsperson’s. For this reason, the ICDT organized a communication training for the staff of the Ombudsman Institutions and also assisted the development of effective communication strategies. Besides the communication training, the ICDT organized workshops in Berlin and Strasbourg in October and a Final Conference in the Hague is scheduled for January 2008. As a long term goal, the ICDT aims to assure permanent consultation between the staff of the Kosovar and Montenegrin Ombudsman Institutions, and the leading figures of the European Union, and the Council of Europe on the field of human rights.

Based on our findings, and observations, the ICDT is planning to launch a new project aiming to facilitate and assist a better and more effective co-operation among the Ombudsman Institutions of the Western Balkans.

Donor: Fully funded by the Dutch Government



International Centre
for Democratic Transition
(ICDT)
Árvácska u. 12
1022 Budapest
Hungary

Phone: +36 (1) 438 0820
Fax: +36 (1) 438 0821
E-mail: info@icdt.hu

www.icdt.hu

István Gyarmati,
President and CEO
E-mail: i.gyarmati@icdt.hu

Anita Orbán,
Executive Senior Vice
President
E-mail: a.orban@icdt.hu

Sandor Köles,
Senior Vice President for
Programs and Development
E-mail: s.koles@icdt.hu

Attila Komlós
Senior Adviser
E-Mail: a.komlos@icdt.hu

Gábor Palinkas
Project Manager
E-Mail: g.palinkas@icdt.hu