

The *Coalition 2000* Process

Since its inauguration in April 1998, the Center for the Study of Democracy (CSD) has acted as Secretariat to the process of *Coalition 2000* (www.online.bg/coalition2000), a public-private initiative against corruption in Bulgaria. In addition to providing operational support and coordination, CSD also contributes substantively to the implementation of the various pillars of the Coalition process – policy, monitoring and awareness. Below is a summary of the main highlights of the Coalition’s work in 2000 and CSD’s role.

I. A Public-Private Partnership

The third year of the activity of *Coalition 2000* was marked by broadening the scope of the anticorruption efforts in conformity with the main guidelines laid down in the Anticorruption

Action Plan adopted in 1998. What was common about them was the reinforcement and clearer definition of the parameters of the **public-private partnership in counteracting corruption**. A novelty at the time the Coalition was initiated; public-private cooperation is now applied in various national and international anticorruption programs.

Developing partnerships and coalition building are of crucial importance for the success of any anticorruption campaign for the reason that corrupt practices permeate all spheres and activities in the post-communist societies. The experience of the Coalition in Bulgaria shows that the complementarity of the roles, instruments and specific goals of the different social sectors represent not only an argument in favor of a broader coalition, but also emphasize the



The annual Policy Forum of Coalition 2000 – the main instrument of its public-private dialogue facilitation – was held on December 1, 2000

importance of their relative autonomy. As far as civil society is concerned, its anticorruption tools correspond to two basic functions of the NGO sector: independent monitoring and exerting civic control through different forms of advocacy and facilitation.

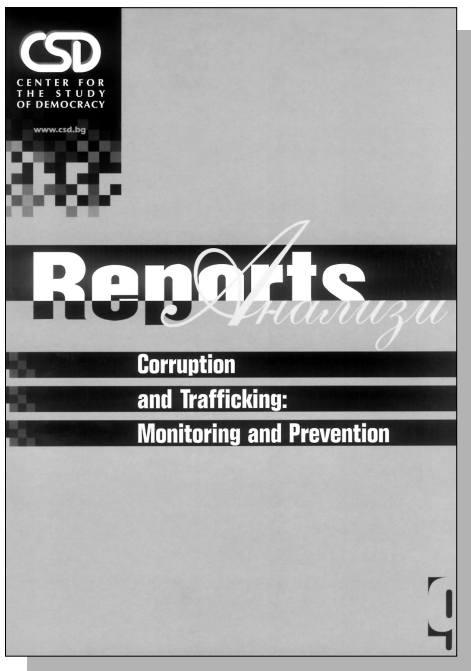
The development of the partnership with representatives of public institutions would not have been possible **without the sustained cooperation at expert level**. A process of continuous consultations in round tables, seminars and working meetings among experts from civic and government institutions ensures that anticorruption reform efforts are coordinated before they reach the policy level. In the framework of this cooperation some new important areas of anticorruption interest have emerged during the year. An example of successful cooperation was the work of the **Expert Group on Corruption and Illegal Trafficking**, which, along with experts from non-governmental

organizations, also involved representatives of the Customs Agency, the Special Investigative Service, and other government agencies. The brochure entitled *Corruption and Illegal Trafficking: Monitoring and Prevention* was an outcome of this activity and shortly went through a second edition.

Published initially in 2000 copies in English and Bulgarian, the brochure was discussed at various workshops, including representatives of the diplomatic community. As a result, a second, updated and revised edition was published at the time of the meeting of the Working Table III of the Stability Pact in Sofia on October 4-5. Distributed during the event, the publication generated considerable interest from various international organizations and regional initiatives.

Public-private cooperation has also been crucial in terms of legislative and institutional reform in the work of the Coalition. In 2000, *Coalition 2000* experts under the leadership of the CSD Law Program completed **the draft law on the parliamentary ombudsman** and local civic mediators and assisted its introduction to the National Assembly. In the framework of *Coalition 2000*, CSD organized a series of discussions, seminars, and conferences with international participation with the purpose of studying foreign experience in this area, as well as the implications of its introduction into the Bulgarian practice (for more information please refer to the Law Program section of this report).

The model of public-private partnership was largely reproduced within the framework of the **local anticorruption structures**. Expanding the work of the Coalition beyond the capital city to include municipal level activities was one of the main achievements of the Coalition in 2000. Through the Small Grants Program of *Coalition 2000*,

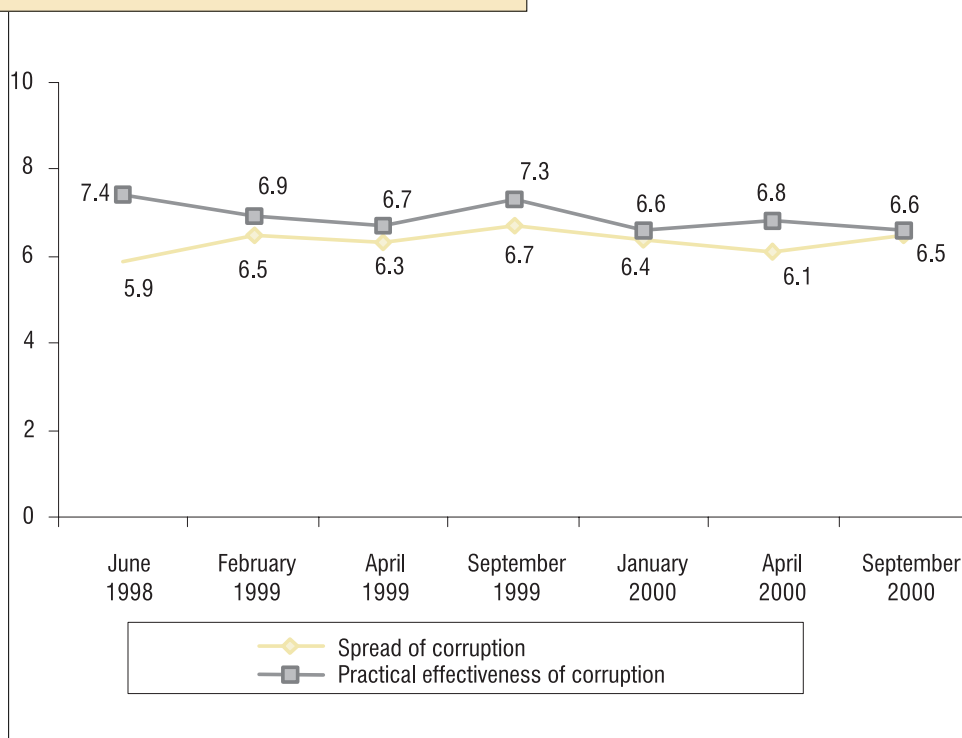


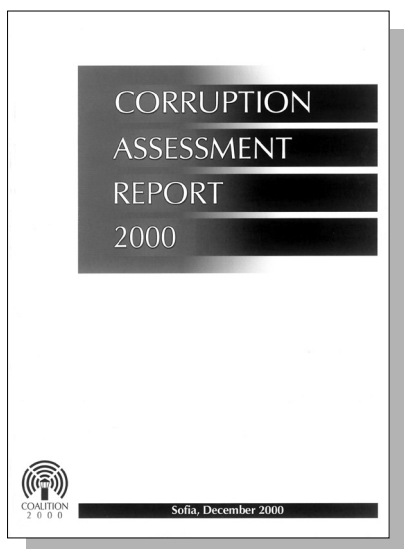
administered by CSD, a number of local anticorruption organizations of a coalition type were created throughout the country. They included representatives of the *Coalition 2000* partner NGOs, as well as heads of district and municipal agencies, journalists, legal experts. In towns such as Shumen, Varna, and Smolyan, the activity of civic mediators, first launched in 1999, acquired a more institutionalized character with the signing of cooperation memorandums between the representatives of local non-governmental organizations and the mayors of the municipalities.

Another landmark of the cooperation with government institutions – both at

expert and policy level – was again the development of the annual Corruption Assessment Report (CAR). Drafted and discussed by experts, it was endorsed by the Policy Forum of the Coalition and then published both in English and Bulgarian. CAR presents a general evaluation of the state and dynamics of corruption in Bulgarian society and the efforts to counteract this phenomenon in 2000. The CAR analyzes the changes, which have occurred in various public spheres and which have brought (or might bring about) changes in corruption dynamics. The CAR was presented to the Third Policy Forum of *Coalition 2000* held on December 1 at the Boyana Conference Center in Sofia.

The Dynamics of Corruption and Public Attitudes towards It since June 1998





In 2000, the Corruption Assessment Report emphasized the need for further anticorruption measures in areas as **funding of political parties, the judiciary, post-privatization control and corporate governance, the link between corruption and smuggling**, and overcoming an institutional “bias” towards the executive branch in the international anticorruption cooperation.

II. A Watchdog and Public Awareness Tool

Throughout the year, *Coalition 2000* continued to implement a number of activities within the framework of its **Clean Future** public awareness campaign. The central and regional/local press, as well as the broadcasts with their participation on the national and local electronic media, were marked by high professionalism and greater focus on specific anticorruption priority areas. *Coalition 2000* experts were also instrumental in initiating the anticorruption media campaign in the spring of 2000, when “corruption at the top” became the number one issue in public debate. Largely under the influence of this public pressure on government, the adoption of certain laws with an anticorruption effect, among which the Law on the Public Register and the Law on the Access to Public Information, was speeded up.

Coalition 2000 Public Awareness Campaign in 2000

Information days	13
Radio broadcasts	27
Clean Future Newsletter/bulletin	3
Round tables	20
Anticorruption readers	3
Monthly electronic newsletter	12

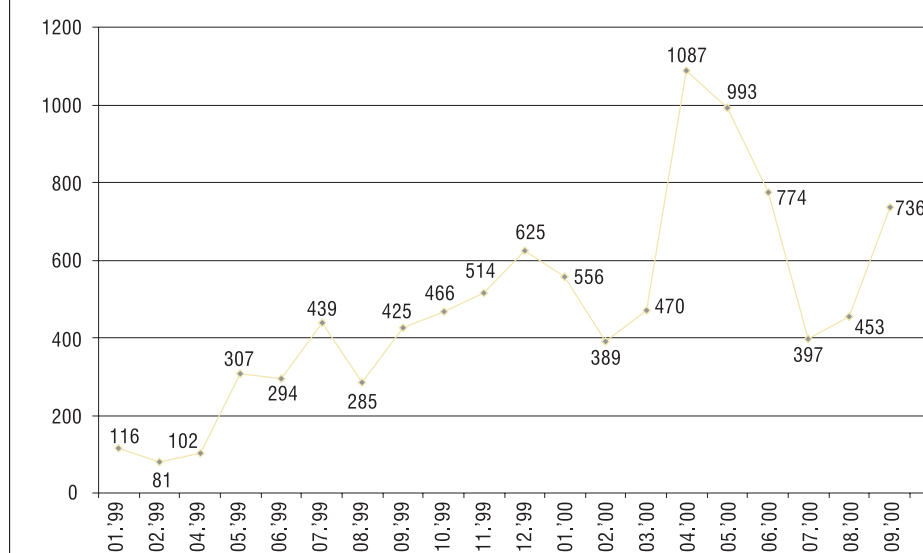
A number of local initiatives included awareness-raising events (information days, public discussions, press conferences, etc.) intended to popularize the concept of civic control and monitoring of local government as an essential part of the efforts to foster greater public intolerance to corrupt practices. The involvement in the anticorruption initiatives of representatives of local government, of the non-governmental sector, as well as of reporters and local and regional media executives, was also of great importance.

The greatest awareness-raising effect was unquestionably produced by the regularly published **Corruption Monitoring Indexes** of *Coalition 2000*. As the main product of the Corruption Monitoring System (CMS) developed and implemented by *Vitosha Research*, they have become an effective instrument for the analysis of corrupt practices in this country and the assessment of the progress made by the anticorruption initiatives.

One of the highlights in the monitoring work of the Coalition in 2000 was the application of its method on a regional scale. CSD, through its agency *Vitosha Research*, conducted a comparative study of corruption in Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia in January 2000. It was prepared in cooperation among the Center for the Study of Democracy, the Center for Economic Studies, Albania, and Forum – Center for Strategic Studies, Macedonia. The study is based on the CMS of *Coalition 2000*, developed by *Vitosha Research*, and marks the start of the introduction of a Regional Corruption Monitoring System. The importance of the comparative analysis is determined both by the obtained empirical data about public ideas and attitudes, and the anticorruption strategies (for further details see *Vitosha Research* section of this report).

A new highlight in the work of the Coalition during the year 2000 was the focus on **educational aspects of public awareness**. In this respect, the publica-

Number of Corruption-related Articles in the Press by Month in 2000



tion of **anticorruption readers** series continued with three new titles including *The Fight Against Violations and Malpractice in Public Administration, Judicial Power and Corruption*, and *Counteracting Corruption in Local Government*. Another title, *Information Technologies against Corruption*, developed by the Applied Research and Communications Fund, is under preparation and will be published in 2001.

Further, addressing the need to provide the Bulgarian education system with adequate anticorruption tools experts with *Coalition 2000* developed an Anti-corruption Educational Manual. Based on it, an experimental course on corruption and anticorruption policies was started as part of the curriculum of New Bulgarian University. Cooperation agreements were also made with several educational establishments, including the University of National and World Economy, the Higher Police Academy, and others. Further, the reference book *Corruption in a 100 Answers*, published by

the CiviLink Foundation within *Coalition 2000*, will be another useful instrument for the popularization of modern standards in counteracting corruption in Bulgaria.

III. International Cooperation

Maintaining regular contacts with the international community is one of the main tasks of CSD as Secretariat to the Coalition. International cooperation is crucial to the work of the Coalition in Bulgaria both in terms of use of technical assistance and expertise in the various activities as well as the introduction to Bulgaria of best international practices.

In this respect, the year 2000 was marked by a positive evolution towards expanded regional cooperation through the popularization of the experience from public-private cooperation within the non-governmental sector in a number of transition countries.



The Vice President of the Republic of Bulgaria Todor Kavaldzhiev (left) and US Ambassador Richard Miles at the Southeast Europe Anticorruption Forum

The principal international event of the Coalition in the year 2000 was *The Southeast Europe Anticorruption Forum*, held in Sofia on February 23-24 with the participation of about 70 representatives of non-governmental organizations from the region, experts and representatives of the USAID, the Council of Europe, the OECD, Transparency International, the US State Department, the U.K. Department for International Development and other international organizations, as well as representatives of Bulgarian state institutions. The countries represented at the Forum included Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Moldova, Slovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania and Hungary.

The Coalition experience was also discussed within two Bulgarian-Ukrainian events: the visit to Bulgaria of representatives of Ukrainian NGOs, USAID and Freedom House-Kiev which took place on April 24-30, as well as the anticorruption conference in Kiev on October 20-21, in which two *Coalition 2000* experts took part as lecturers.

As an acknowledgement of the pioneering contribution *Coalition 2000* has made to the fight against corruption in transition countries, presentation of its experience has been included in many international forums in 2000. Among those, the *OECD Forum 2000* (www.oecd.org/forum2000) held on May 9-10 in Paris, stands out.

In assessing the anticorruption efforts in Southeast Europe, the World Bank noted:

There are some groundbreaking attempts by civil society groups, such as Coalition 2000 in Bulgaria, which has developed a common program of practical actions, with active participation of government and national NGOs.

The Road to Stability
and Prosperity in South
Eastern Europe:
a Regional Strategy Paper,
World Bank,
March 2000,
p.99

Building on the work done by the Coalition, the International Development Law Institute and the Center for the Study of Democracy initiated the **Southeast European Legal Development Initiative (SELDI)**. In 2000, SELDI started work on its anticorruption component which benefits to a large extent from CSD work as Secretariat of *Coalition 2000* in terms of focusing on public-private cooperation and monitoring (for more details see the section of the European Program of this report).