
Part Two

Administration and Management

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Institutional Development

CSD is registered as a public benefit organisation with the *Central Registry of NGOs* at the Bulgarian Ministry of Justice. Public benefit organisations are obliged by law to conform to a number of additional financial reporting rules and to submit annual activity reports.

In 2018, CSD continued its efforts to optimise its internal administrative and financial reporting systems. The remuneration procedures, introduced in 2014, were further streamlined in line with the requirements from various financing institutions, and the need to comply with national labour regulations.

In 2018, CSD employed a staff of twenty-eight, of whom twenty-three in professional and management positions, including part-time consultants, and five employees in administrative positions.

Accountability and transparency are guiding principles in the operation of the Center for the Study of Democracy. They are intrinsic to CSD activity and are related to the critical analysis of social processes and trends in Bulgaria and in the EU. 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;
- publications of a wide range of analyses and reports.

The application of good management practices has been critical to the successful work of CSD. In 2018, the Center continued its efforts to diversify its sources of funding in addition to the traditional EU financial instruments: *Horizon 2020*, the European Social Fund, and the financial instruments in the area of justice and home affairs. Some of CSD's activities were funded through the operational programs administered by the Bulgarian government, as well as the Open Society Institute, the Center for International Private Enterprise, and National Endowment for Democracy. CSD took part in tenders through its consulting arms, Vitosha Research and Project One.

In 2018, CSD proved its reputation as a reliable partner and coordinator of EU-wide projects encompassing research in the legal, security and social policy areas. In partnership with leading European think tanks and academic institutions, CSD took part in the European debate on the assessment and development of policies related to the fight against organised crime, the integration of victims of trafficking and other vulnerable groups, public confidence in justice, (de-)radicalisation, and cybercrime.

Internship program

The Center for the Study of Democracy aims to provide internship opportunities for outstanding students from various universities. In 2018, the Center hosted 16 interns from 6 different countries. In addition to Bulgarian students and recent graduates, the Center accommodated interns from Brazil, Canada, Italy, Kazakhstan, Spain, and the USA. In 2018, CSD hosted an intern under the Open Society Internship for Rights and Governance (OSIRG) programme specifically tailored to invest in the next generation of leaders poised to pursue innovative policy ideas to foster and sustain open societies, as well as two interns within the EuGen (European Generation) social promotion association supporting the process of integration in Europe by working with young professionals from all over Europe who share the values subscribed by the EU, such as mobility, technological progress, sustainability and social inclusion.

CSD attempts to match interns' professional aspirations to their assignments. As a minimum, the Center attempts to involve interns in contributing to reports and other outputs (with supervision and feedback where needed) on a topic relevant to the intern's educational background and/or future professional goals.

In 2018, 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. This helped them gain practical skills and in-depth knowledge in areas such as:

- anti-corruption and good governance in Europe; state capture and Russian economic, political and media influence in Central and Eastern Europe; energy security and transition to a low-carbon future; hidden economy and undeclared work; international competitiveness;
- integration of migrants and social inclusion of vulnerable groups, youth employment and education policy for ethnic minorities; prevention of radicalisation leading to terrorism; pro-sociality and improved social inclusion in secondary schools; root causes of asylum trends; women's political rights; overcoming employment barriers for young European citizen;
- countering radicalisation and violent extremism, prevention of radicalisation in prisons, external evaluation of EMCDDA, innovative methods to investigate fraud and corruption in EU funding for agriculture;
- rights of suspects and accused, including of those with psycho-social and intellectual disabilities, migration, reception, integration and social orientation of migrants, legal and social support to victims of crime, diversity charters throughout the EU, business and human rights, stakeholders in the area of counter-ing organised crime and terrorism.

In 2018, interns also assisted in the preparation and conducting of face to face interviews, and the transcribing and processing of collected qualitative data. Notably, they were involved in the project preparation process, gaining valuable experience in developing grant and tender proposals and assisting the

process with technical tasks. They also provided invaluable support in the organisation of CSD's public events.

The Center has a robust, standardised policy for mentoring newly hired interns, which frequently 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. Interns, who are employed for a period of up to six months, undergo a two-stage selection and are provided with complete information to facilitate

their adaptation to the receiving country and the organisation's specificities. In all cases, when interns are hired, CSD uses established templates and procedures for developing intern action plans, as well as mentorship plans to guide the intern's supervisor(s), while clearly identifying the expected timeline(s) and performance indicators that would determine the successful completion of the internship. The action and mentorship plans provide initial assessment of the strengths and opportunities of the internship for both the intern and the organisation.

"My experience working for CSD was a truly wonderful learning experience. During my two months at the Center for the Study of Democracy, as part of a longer internship for SELDI, a network of which CSD is the Secretariat, I worked for the Economic Program. Among the tasks I was assigned were in-depth research, writing, or preliminary research on topics such as Russian influence on the Western Balkans and undeclared work, both very interesting. I was also given the opportunity to take part in high-level conferences as well as a training at another NGO's venue.

The team at CSD is so welcoming, available to answer questions and eager to involve the interns that you feel comfortable since day one. I was lucky to experience first-hand the work of a civil society organisation, especially in the great learning conditions that are laid out for the interns: supervisors, employees and interns altogether participate in the exchange of ideas and a daily forging of opinions. Without a doubt, I encourage students in the field to spend some time at CSD, if possible, longer than I could. Thank you again for everything!"

Eva Juric, Serbia/France, intern at CSD's Economic Program (SELDI),
29 March – 25 May 2018

“Working for CSD has been an important, unrivalled experience. Since day one, I was assigned to the Law Program dealing with human rights, international crimes, practices for migrants and extensive research on trafficking in human beings, and applications for international protection. CSD gave me a chance to put into practice all the skills learned during my academic studies, such as time management, decision-making, planning, stress management, working effectively with others, always leaving room for dialogue, questions, and clarification as a way to improve knowledge and capacities. CSD is a professional operator, and has made meticulousness, punctuality and experience its trademark.

The CSD staff is exceptional. They are well acquainted with problems that young people coming to a foreign country may have and they make you feel comfortable from the very beginning. They are friendly, kind and always available to help you on specific issues or uncertainties you may have. Unfortunately, all good things come to an end. During my career, I have been engaged in several traineeships but, without a doubt, CSD has made this the best experience ever.”

Fabrizio Valerio Bongiorno, Italy, intern at CSD’s Law Program,
1 February – 30 June 2018

“I spent six months as an intern at CSD during which I had the chance to take part in various research projects. Although I was initially assigned to work on a couple of projects related to the energy transition, I was also quickly involved in other research activities such as illegal cigarettes trafficking and media capture, which helped me gain a valuable insight of both the quality and the breadth of the work performed by the Economic Program, while allowing me to grow and improve my research abilities and writing skills. I was able to take part in the organisation of two international conferences delivered by the Centre, as well as international project and consortium meetings.

I was foremost astonished to witness the outstanding quality of both the work performed and the expertise of the staff. Working with the analysts of CSD allowed me to learn every day, while benefiting from their knowledge, experience and guidance. Moreover, I would like to stress the benevolence of the staff and thank them for always including us in their work and activities, for their patience and for always leaving room for opinion and conversation. Finally, I am grateful to my fellow interns for the quality of their company and their support. Working with them made my stay at CSD most valuable, both professionally and personally.

For these reasons, I recommend every student or recent graduate with a direct or indirect background in Political Science to consider an internship at CSD that, I am sure, will be as enriching as mine.”

Christophe Rolland, France, intern at CSD’s Economic Program,
14 May – 30 October 2018

Consulting Arms of CSD: Vitosha Research and Project One

Vitosha Research EOOD and Project One EOOD are wholly owned by CSD and form the CSD Group. Vitosha 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. The General Manager of the company is the Director of Research of CSD.

Project One EOOD was founded after consultations with the auditing company KPMG in order to enable CSD's participation in tenders and consultan-

cy projects on the territory of Bulgaria and the EU. 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.

In 2018, Vitosha Research focused its activities on conducting consulting projects, building upon its expertise in quantitative analysis and social research.

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