

Information Centre on the Council of Europe in Sofia

The Center for the Study of Democracy has been hosting the Information Centre on the Council of Europe in Sofia since 1993. The Information Centre provides the Bulgarian public and institutions with information on the activities and supports Council activities in priority areas. Below are some of the highlights for the 2001. Additional information is available at www.cid.bg

Releases in 2002

Translations

- Manual on Local Authorities and Urban Crime Prevention [CPL (8)2]
- Info-brochure “Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities”
- Explanatory Report on the Criminal Law Convention on Corruption
- Explanatory Report on the Civil Law Convention on Corruption

Publications

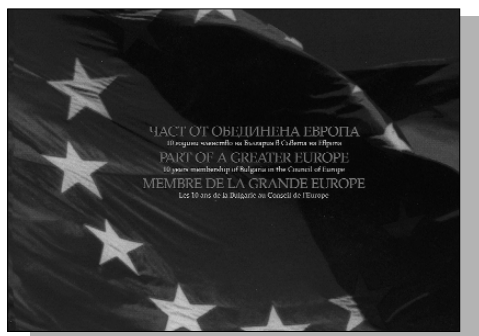
- Policing in a Democratic Society
- Is your Police Service a Human Rights Champion?
- Human Rights and the Police. A Workbook for Practice Oriented Teaching
- The Council of Europe – 800 million Europeans
- Europe is more than you think
- Part of a Greater Europe – Bulgaria’s 10th anniversary in Council of Europe.
- reprinting of European Convention on Human Rights
- Evolution of European Court of Human Rights’ jurisprudence on Article 2 and Article 3 of ECHR

Celebrating Bulgaria’s 10th anniversary in the Council of Europe

On May 7, 1992 Bulgaria signed the Statute of the Council of Europe. Its membership in the Council was among

the first crucial acts of recognition of the nascent democratic reforms. In 2002 the Information Centre in Sofia celebrated ten years of achievements and successful cooperation with the Council of Europe.

On May 8th a concert dedicated to the 10th anniversary of Bulgaria's accession to the Council of Europe was organized with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The concert was under the patronage of the Bulgarian President and with the assistance of the Ministry of Culture and the Atlantic Club. The concert was attended by the Bulgarian Prime Minister, the Chairman of the Parliament and other state officials as well as representatives of foreign embassies in Bulgaria. The Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs greeted the guests. A letter from the Secretary General of the Council of Europe was read by the Director of Sofia Information Centre.



One of the major initiatives of the Information Centre for commemorating the 10th anniversary of membership was the publication *Part of a Greater Europe – Bulgaria's 10th anniversary in the Council of Europe*. The book summarizes the political, legal and parliamentary cooperation of Bulgaria with the Council since 1990 and highlights the impact of the membership on the democratic institutions in the country. The publication includes contributions from Bulgarian diplomats, prominent legal experts, parliamentarians, etc.

In May 2002 Council of Europe Secretary General Walter Schwimmer paid an official visit to Sofia to mark the

country's ten-year membership of the organization.

Mr. Schwimmer held talks with President Georgi Parvanov, Prime Minister Simeon Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and Foreign Minister Solomon Passy and spoke before the National Assembly. He also met National Assembly Chairman Ognyan Guerdjikov and party leaders. Top-level discussions covered current political topics, including stability in the region, the fight against terrorism, future EU and NATO enlargement and relations with the Council of Europe.

Together with the Director of his Private Office and other Council officials, the Secretary General visited the Information Centre and the Center for the Study of Democracy. He underlined the contribution of the Information Centre to the provision of assistance to Bulgaria by the Council in a number of areas, including anti-corruption, human rights, social cohesion, etc.



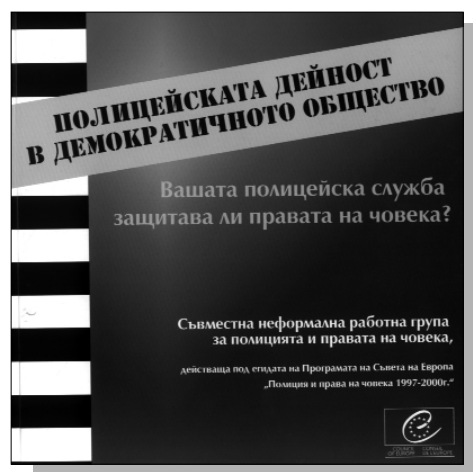
Secretary General Walter Schwimmer (second from left) and his Private Office Director Jan Kleijssen (first right) during their visit at the Information Centre

Southeast Europe Regional Seminar to promote employment opportunities for Roma

In October 2002, the Information Centre co-organized a Regional Seminar as part of the Southeast Europe Regional Project to Promote Employment Opportunities for Roma. With the support of the Austrian Government, the Council of Europe was organizing a series of regional seminars and local training workshops for the representatives of employment services and Roma organisations in Southeast Europe. This activity was a sub-project of the joint OSCE-Council of Europe project on Roma/Gypsies within Working Table I of the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe. The specific objectives of the project were to improve the role of local employment services in the job search for Roma, develop regional networks, and promote capacity building. The seminar in Sofia considered and commented on proposals for a training and guidance memorandum similar to the memorandum on equal opportunities but dealing more specifically to the employment problems of the Roma community in Southeast Europe, and aimed at the representatives of both employment services and Roma organisations.

Police and human rights

In 2002, continued its work on popularizing best international human rights instruments. As part of its work, it translated into Bulgarian and published two key practical books on human rights in the police: *Human Rights and the Police: A Workbook for Practice-Oriented Teaching* and *Policing in a Democratic Society – Is your Police Service a Human Rights Champion?* The latter was produced by the Joint Informal Working Group on Police and Human Rights, operating under the auspices of the Council of Europe's program "Police and Human Rights 1997-2000".



The essential purpose of these publications was to provide police trainers with a human rights teaching resource based on concrete examples of typical human rights problems, or case studies, which can be used in practice-oriented teaching on the European Convention on Human Rights and other relevant human rights standards.