

Sociological program

2010 Highlights

In 2010, the Sociological program, which in 2009 resumed its function as an autonomous structural unit within the Center for the Study of Democracy, established itself in the development and implementation of research projects in key socio-economic fields at both the national and European levels. In its activities, the Sociological Program has focused on the following key priorities:

- **Policies for the integration of immigrants and refugees:** Throughout the past year the Sociological Program consolidated its position as a department with research potential in the fields of migration studies and the integration of immigrants and refugees at the national and European levels. The program developed methods and indicators to assess the results and impacts of policies for the integration of immigrants. Social impact assessments were also conducted with respect to the integration policies and their effects on both third country nationals and the host Bulgarian society. A methodology was developed for the identification and evaluation of good practices in the educational integration of refugee and asylum-seeking children.
- **Evaluation of public policies and programs:** The Sociological Program has enhanced its capacity to develop methods and indicators for the monitoring and evaluation of public policies in several key fields – migration and integration, justice and home affairs, violence against children, and others. The methodological handbook entitled “Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies and Programs” was published.
- **Development of civil society in Bulgaria:** In 2010, the Sociological Program focused its efforts on strengthening governance in the NGO sector in Bulgaria and preventing the phenomenon of ‘civil society capture’. Five seminars and round tables were carried out in relation to the topic, along with the preparation of the report entitled “Development of Civil Society in Bulgaria: Trends and Risks”.
- **Development of expertise in the Sociological program and institutional cooperation:** Experts from the Sociological program have provided methodological support and have collaborated with external organizations in several key areas:
 - Research on the grey economy and undeclared employment;
 - Public trust in the judicial system;
 - Social policy and the protection of vulnerable groups;
 - Protection of human rights and civic activism.

I. Policies for the Integration of Immigrants and Refugees

Integration of third country nationals

In 2010, the Sociological program successfully completed a project on the topic of *Development of Indicators and Methods for the Evaluation of the Objectives and Measures for Integration of Third Country Nationals*. Several systems for the evaluation of policies and measures to integrate immigrants used by the EU Member States and outlined in international research papers were studied as part of this project. Methods and techniques for the monitoring and evaluation of measures for the integration of third country nationals relevant to the suggested indicators for assessing the achievement of integration policy objectives were proposed. Indicators were developed to assess the implementation of the objectives of integration of third country nationals in accordance with best practices in

Europe and the needs of national and local institutions working on integration policies and measures. The final output of the project was the development of a total of 147 indicators for evaluating the implementation of the integration objectives of third country nationals.

Several factors have been taken into consideration in the development of methods and indicators for the evaluation of immigrant integration relevant to Bulgarian circumstances:

- Integration measures and policies are a new phenomenon in Bulgaria. Legislation and policies in this area will undergo significant changes. Therefore, the proposed indicators relate not only to current policies and practices of integration, but can also be used to develop new integration policies and measures.
- The results of the previous projects of the Center for the Study of

Purpose of the system of methods and indicators

The system of indicators, methods and techniques for the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of objectives and measures for the integration of third country nationals had several main functions:

- assessing the size and the basic characteristics of the target group, subject to the policies set out in the Bulgarian National Strategy on migration and integration in accordance with national legislation and EU regulations;
- accounting for the actions and steps taken and the resources spent in accordance with the targets in the Strategy Priorities and Targets, and the extent of their implementation;
- providing information for analyzing the effectiveness of the implementation of the policies being carried out for integration of third country nationals;
- making available the informational database for taking timely measures and policies as well as making amendments in the priorities and tasks in accordance with ongoing changes in the immigration situation in the country.

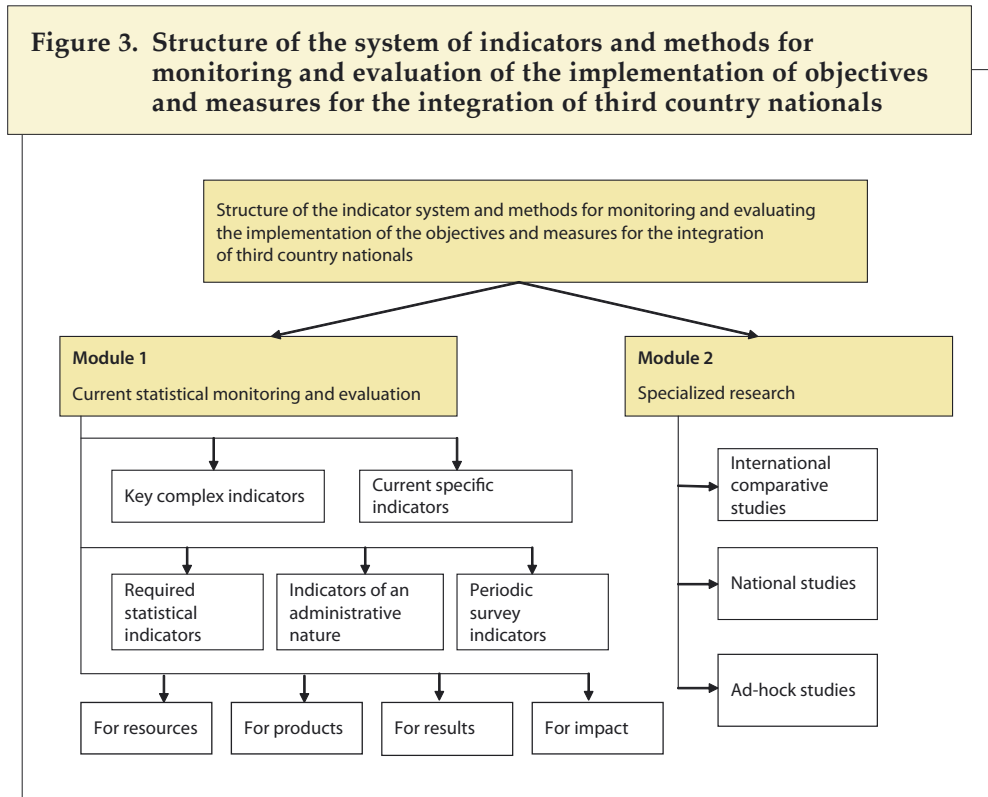
Democracy have revealed serious shortcomings in the institutional setting and rules with respect to acquiring legal status in Bulgaria and in the social integration of third country nationals – access to education, health, social services and others. The proposed indicators allow for the monitoring of the country’s progress in these areas.

- The structure of indicators for the monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation and integration activities of third country nationals is presented schematically in the figure below.

Department of the Ministry of the Interior, Social Assistance Agency, Ministry of Culture), NGOs, representatives of immigrant associations and individual immigrants in attendance. The moderator of the discussion was Professor Andrey Nonchev and among the speakers were Professor Yordan Kalchev, Dr. Sonia Chipeva, Svetla Encheva and legal expert Valeria Ilareva. Elizabeth Todorova from the Migration Directorate at the Interior Ministry, legal expert Diana Daskalova of the Voice in Bulgaria Legal Aid Center and third country nationals also participated in the discussion.

The interim results of the project were publicly discussed at a roundtable event held on April 28, 2010, with representatives of state institutions (Migration

The results of the project *Development of Indicators, Methods and Techniques for Monitoring and Evaluating the Implementation of the Objectives and*





Round table on Development of Indicators, Methods and Techniques for Monitoring and Evaluating the Implementation of the Objectives and Measures for the Integration of Third Country Nationals, April 28 2010

Measures for the Integration of Third Country Nationals were presented at a press conference held on May 19, 2010, at the Bulgarian News Agency.

European Social Survey on the attitudes toward foreigners

Experts from the Sociological program participated in analyzing the results of the European Social Survey and published an article entitled *The Attitude Towards Foreigners: European Variants of (In)Tolerance*, which were presented in the publication *Well-being and Trust: Bulgaria in Europe? Comparative Analysis on European Social Survey (ESS) 2006-2009*. For this purpose, an index on tolerance toward immigrants was developed. The index is based on data from the European Social Survey which has most recently included Bulgaria as well. This synthetic index is designed to assess

the attitudes and tolerance of European communities toward foreigners. Three main aspects to the objective of constructing such an index can be identified:

1. Reducing the multidimensionality of the interactions between host society and foreign nationals, which facilitates the understanding and interpretation of data, its public representation and the promotion of public debates.
2. Setting the stage for building up time series that would allow for the analysis and assessment of trends and changes in attitudes over time.
3. Facilitating the international comparability of research regarding tolerance of the various European societies towards foreigners.

The Tolerance toward Foreigners Index assesses two key aspects of the atti-



Press conference for presenting the findings of the project Development of Indicators, Methods and Techniques for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Implementation of the Objectives and Measures for the Integration of Third Country Nationals, May 19, 2010

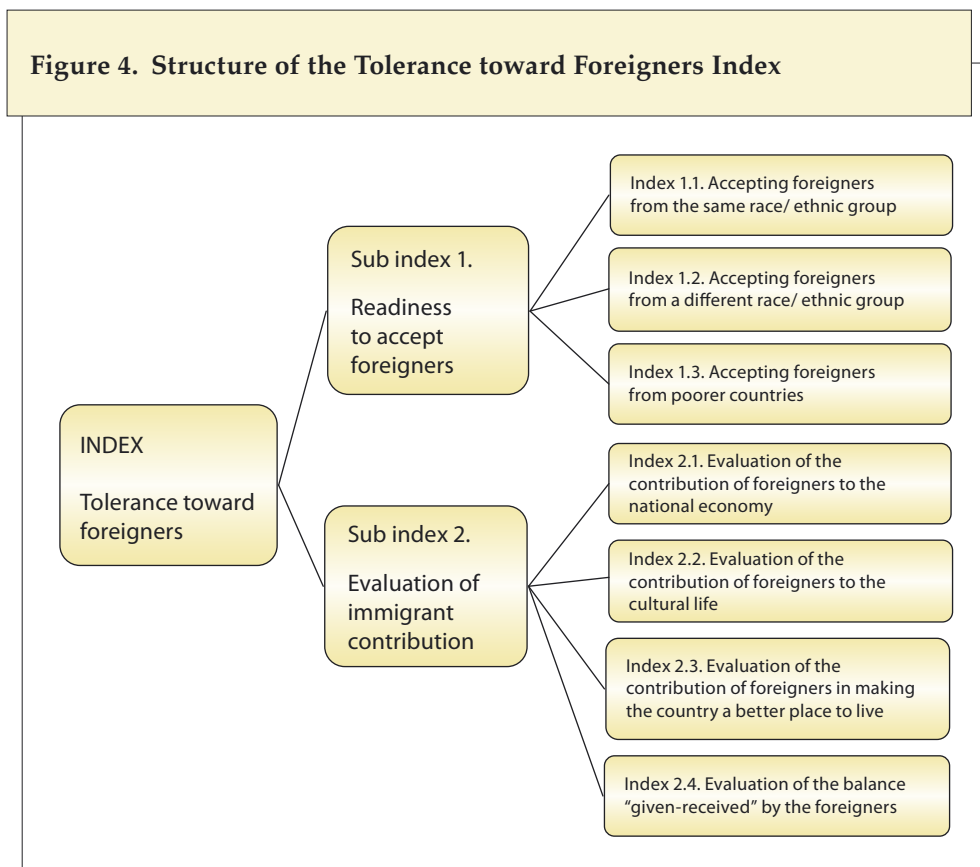
tude of the host society toward foreign nationals:

- Preparedness for accepting immigrants;
- Contribution of immigrants to the host society;

These two areas contain two sub-indexes on whose basis the overall Tolerance toward Foreigners Index is calculated. Each of the indexes is constructed based on the values of several indicators included as specific questions in the ESS.

Tolerance toward Foreigners Index

The indexes are presented in a normalized form and their values range from -3 to 3. The closer the index or sub index value is to -3, the more pronounced is the intolerance towards foreigners. Conversely, the closer the index/sub-index value is to 3, the higher is the level of tolerance towards foreigners, the willingness to accept them in the host society, as well as the evaluation of their contribution to society's wellbeing.



The values of the Tolerance toward Foreigners Index and its sub-indices outline the profile of the attitudes toward foreign citizens both in the separate countries researched within the European Social Study and in general.

The index makes it possible to trace some typical structures relating to attitudes towards foreigners in various countries. For example, the declared readiness to accept foreigners (sub-index 1 with a value of 0.25) is generally greater than the estimated contribution of foreigners to host societies (sub index 2 with a value of 0.02). This is valid for most of the countries except Finland, Spain, Estonia, Cyprus, and Portugal. In addition, positive attitudes prevail over negative ones

and have higher values. There were no cases of very high degrees of tolerance (with an index above 2) or intolerance (below -2). The highest index values are recorded in Sweden and Poland, while the lowest – in Cyprus and Russia.

Educational integration of refugee and asylum-seeking children

The sociological program has commenced work on the project entitled *Integrating Refugee and Asylum-seeking Children in the Education System in the Member States of the EU: Evaluation and Promotion of Good Practices*, in which the Center's partners are the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute, Austria, CENCIS – Italy, the Peace Institute – Slovenia and

Table 1. Value of the Tolerance toward Foreigners Index and its sub indexes

Country	General index: Tolerance toward foreigners	Sub index 1: Readiness to accept foreigners	Sub index 2: Evaluation of the contribution of foreigners
Sweden	0.97	1.41	0.53
Poland	0.64	0.89	0.40
Switzerland	0.52	0.58	0.46
Norway	0.47	0.70	0.23
Bulgaria	0.35	0.58	0.12
Denmark	0.34	0.45	0.24
Germany	0.32	0.61	0.03
Finland	0.26	0.09	0.43
Belgium	0.15	0.38	-0.09
France	0.03	0.15	-0.09
Slovenia	-0.01	0.27	-0.29
Spain	-0.09	-0.22	0.03
Great Britain	-0.20	-0.05	-0.36
Estonia	-0.22	-0.26	-0.17
Portugal	-0.30	-0.56	-0.04
Cyprus	-0.30	-0.42	-0.19
Russia	-0.39	-0.10	-0.68
Average value:	0.13	0.25	0.02

Source: European Social Study 2009

Halmstad University, Sweden. As of this moment, the Sociological program has prepared a methodology for the identification of best practices in educational support for refugee and asylum-seeking children. Country reports and situation analyses will be prepared on the basis of this methodology for all Member States of the EU, as well as for four countries from the Western Balkans (Bosnia

and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, and Montenegro).

II. Evaluation of policies and programs

Over the past two decades, theory and practice for assessing policies and programs has developed dynamically



in a variety of territorial and institutional contexts. International institutions and organisations (the European Commission, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development,

the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program, UNICEF, and others), national governments, and civil society organizations increasingly use the practice of social evaluation of policies, programs, and projects of varying nature and scope. In this context, the Sociological Program has been building up its expertise and methodological capacity for carrying out social impact assessments of public policies and programs at the national and European levels. In this context, a Center for the Study of Democracy publication that recently came out of print is *Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies and Programs (Educational Methodological Handbook. Part One)*. Its author, Dr. Andrey Nonchev, is Director of the Sociological Program. The Handbook presents the general theoretical, methodological and institutional framework in which the monitoring and evaluation of public policies and programs is carried out. The nature, general



The participants in the public discussion Transparent Governance: Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies, February 9, 2010

principles, objectives and functions of the monitoring and evaluation of public policies and programs are discussed, as well as the key methods and techniques in carrying these out. The assessment of the Strategy and Program for Transparent Governance and for the Prevention and Combating of Corruption (2008 – 2008) was used as an illustration of the practical application of the methods presented in the report.

The publication emphasizes that the systematic and thorough use of comprehensive tools for the monitoring and evaluation of public policies and programs has yet to be established in Bulgaria. Underestimating the complexity of or need for these practices is one of the reasons for the relatively low level of preparedness of the country in adapting to the demands and challenges of EU membership. The strengthening of social assessment as a key component of good governance and embedding it in the entire cycle of implementation of public policies and programs is an important task to be accomplished. This

is in unison with the activities of the Economic Program which are related to researching the theory, practices and challenges of good governance, as well as in unison with the work of the Legal Program toward the development of indicators for assessing public trust in the judicial system and achieving key national objectives in the field of justice and home affairs.

The Handbook was presented during a public discussion on the topic of *Transparent Governance: Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies* held on February 9, 2010. The event was organized by the Center for the Study of Democracy in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

III. Development of Civil Society in Bulgaria

One of the priorities of the Sociological program in 2010 was to strengthen the non-government sector in Bulgaria, along with the prevention of the 'civil



Participants in the seminar on Conflicts of Interests and Good Governance: Interaction between Local Authorities and Civil Society, held on May 14, 2010



Participants in the round table on Preventing and Revealing Conflicts of Interest, held on June 17, 2010

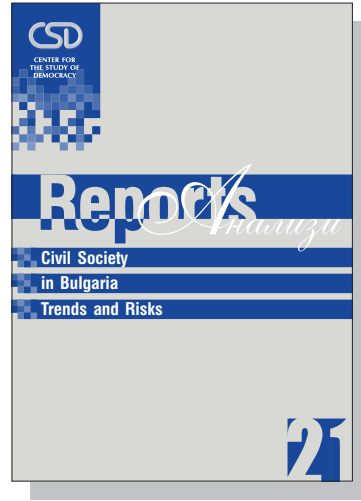
society capture' phenomenon. The goal was to raise public awareness about the risks associated with the capture of civil society, to mobilize citizens, to increase the capacity of local media and NGOs for taking countermeasures, and to make recommendations for improved management of civil society.

May 2010 marked the beginning of a series of public discussions and activities conducted by the Center for the Study of Democracy in support of good governance of the interaction between public institutions and civil society. The Center, in cooperation with Mrs. Maria Nedelcheva, member of the European People's Party in the European Parliament, organized a seminar entitled *Conflicts of Interests and Good Governance: Interaction between Local Authorities and Civil Society* (May 14, 2010). The seminar focused on the legal framework governing conflicts of interest and its application in the area of public-private partnerships between municipalities and NGOs. In order

to encourage discussion on practical challenges facing local authorities, the seminar took place at the European Information Centre in Hadjidimovo. Over thirty people from the region participated, including municipality officials and councilors, representatives of NGOs working together with municipalities, and local media representatives. The municipalities of Gotse Deltchev, Razlog, Blagoevgrad and Hadjidimovo, all from the region, were represented at the event. Municipal councilors from Bansko and Sofia that demonstrated their interest in the topic under discussion also attended the seminar.

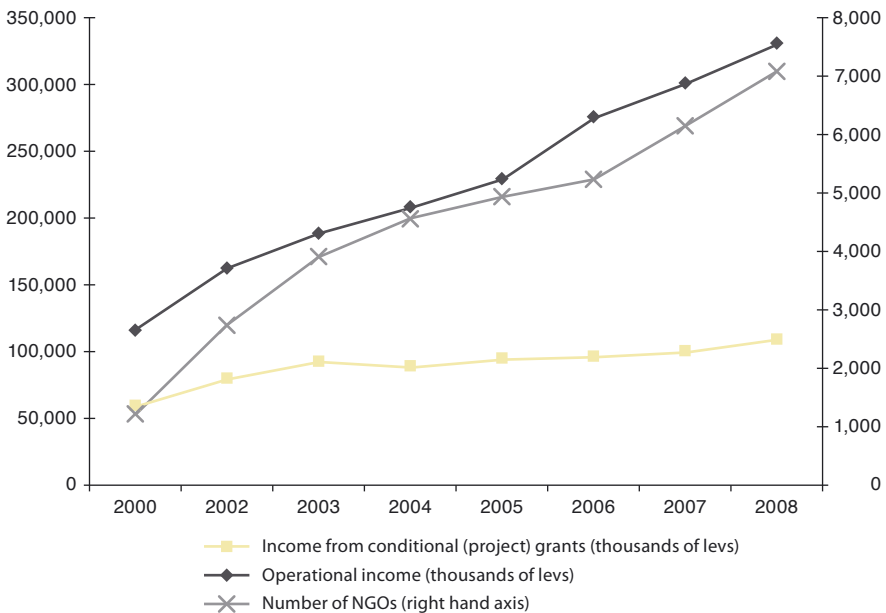
The Centre for the Study of Democracy organised a roundtable discussion on the topic of *Preventing and Revealing Conflicts of Interest* (June 17, 2010) on the suggested changes in the 'Law on preventing and revealing conflicts of interest and its application'. The discussion involved representatives of the legislative, executive and judicial authorities, experts from NGOs,

and business associations. During his opening speech, Dr. Ognian Shentov, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Center for the Study of Democracy, emphasized the political significance of the problematic legal framework on conflicts of interest. He stressed that legislative acts, along with regulations on the issue, are particularly important in order to control public resources, including EU funds, through the mechanism of public-private partnership. Thus, public debate is necessary not only on the legal framework, but also in the regulation of conflict of interest in the public administration at both local and central levels. In this regard, it is extremely important to create a mechanism for preventing conflicts of interest.



The series of events continued with a seminar entitled *Discussions on the*

Figure 5. NGO dynamics and income (2000 – 2008)



Source: Development of Civil Society in Bulgaria: Tendencies and Risks; Center for the Study of Democracy, 2010

Necessary Changes to the Legal Framework on the Activities of Non-profit Legal Entities (April 2, 2010). The seminar participants discussed the legal framework on non-profit legal entities as it applied to the activities of the local NGOs. The seminar took place in Gabrovo and was attended by 13 members of local NGOs.

In a follow-up discussion on the draft law amendments in the *Law for preventing and revealing conflict of interests* the Centre organized a roundtable discussion *Civil Society in the Loops of Power* (June 15, 2010). It became clear during the discussion that the nature of NGOs has changed and they have

become increasingly involved in business activities, thus resembling business enterprises. In some cases, the status of non-profit legal entity is used for avoiding the ban on commercial activities by public officials. The Center for the Study of Democracy presented its report entitled *Development of Civil Society in Bulgaria: Trends and Risks* on September 30, 2010. It included an analysis of the existing challenges to the development of civil society in Bulgaria and identified three key risk areas:

- Conflicts of interests related to the accomplishment of public-private partnerships;
- The capture of civil society by politi-

The risks of civil society capture

The abuse of NGOs by those in positions of power is facilitated by the imperfections of the legal framework regulating the “third sector”: the lack of mandatory procedures for transparency in the sector, the low levels of civil control and self-control, the excessively bureaucratic and inefficient procedure for the registration and re-registration of NGOs, as well as the inadequate regulation of public-private partnerships. This allows NGOs pursuing illegitimate interests to function with impunity.

The otherwise inexplicable rise in the number of newly established NGOs in recent years is an indirect confirmation of the tendency to capture “the third sector”. The number of NGOs in Bulgaria has increased 8 times in the 2000 – 2010 period, reaching a total of 8,500, considering the fact that their number has increased by 40% from 2008 to mid-2010, or by as many NGOs as their total number in 2002. Politicians and the administration have found in NGOs a tool for ostensibly legitimate supplemental income; for substitution of their prohibited involvement in the management of companies and property ownership in limited liability companies; for enrichment of their circles of friends and political partners and for a secure eventual exit from power. To illustrate, at the end of 2008, 76% of both the MPs in the 40th National Assembly and ministers and chairmen in state and executive agencies in the coalition government in the period 2005 – 2009 and over 90% of mayors participated in the boards of directors of NGOs in Bulgaria.

Source: Development of Civil Society in Bulgaria: Tendencies and Risks; Center for the Study of Democracy, 2010

cians and high-ranking officials from the central government and local authorities, including the mechanisms of EU funds management;

- Business activities carried out by non-profit organisations, which are not adequately separated from their main functions.

Legislative changes and measures have been proposed in state and municipal bodies along with measures intended at self-regulation and greater transparency in the “third sector”.

IV. Development of Expertise in the Sociological Program and Cooperation with Other Civic Institutions

The Sociological program has been providing sociological expertise (mainly of a methodological and analytical

nature) in the development of research methods and instruments, the collection and analysis of data, the application of advance research techniques and tools. In 2010, the Sociological program provided such expertise in conducting qualitative research (in depth interviews and focus group discussions) as well as the accomplishment of cognitive interviews for testing tools for determining the level of trust in the judicial system.

Experts from the Sociological program took part in a number of government, civic and academic initiatives and forums, among which were:

- The initiative to pass amendments to the Law on Foreigners in Bulgaria;
- The development of a strategy for the Sofia Regional Administration in the field of social services;
- Participation in the Advisory Board



Round table on Civil Society in the Loops of Power, held on June 15, 2010

to the Minister of Regional Development and Public Works – a body for consultations, cooperation and dialogue for the purpose of achieving transparency in public policy;

- Participation in a panel discussion

on *Migration processes and the integration of immigrants* in the Academic Forum for Social Science 2010, organized by the University of National and World Economy.