

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Bulgaria
Program Title:	Rule of Law
Pillar:	Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
Strategic Objective:	183-0220
Status:	Continuing
Planned FY 2006 Obligation:	\$5,495,000 AEEB
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$1,333,000 AEEB
Proposed FY 2007 Obligation:	\$0
Year of Initial Obligation:	1999
Estimated Year of Final Obligation:	2006

Summary: Bulgaria must implement reforms related to administering justice and reducing corruption or risk delayed European Union (EU) accession date. While Bulgaria made notable progress with its legislative agenda to comply with EU requirements, implementation remains an issue. Thus, rule of law is the top priority for USAID with focus on judicial reform, anti-corruption efforts and anti-trafficking. USAID provides a mix of technical assistance (TA), training, grants and information technology equipment to make court administration/case management more effective, transparent and accountable, improve the legal professionalism of magistrates, court staff and private attorneys, and strengthen the Government of Bulgaria's (GOB) institutional capacity to prevent corruption, enhance transparency and reduce human trafficking.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2006 Program:

Promote And Support Anti-Corruption Reforms (\$1,350,000 AEEB, \$650,000 AEEB carryover). During FY 2006, USAID will provide TA and training to staff at the National Audit Office (NAO), the Public Procurement Agency (PPA), the Internal Control Directorate in the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works to improve internal controls and procurement procedures. USAID will promote the Public Procurement Register through a public awareness campaign targeting the private sector. USAID will also provide specialized training to build the capacity of the PPA, and will target ministries, oversight bodies, and business associations to monitor public procurement. USAID will also address high level corruption by providing TA to the NAO to develop a web-based public register disclosing the assets of high ranking government officials.

USAID will provide training and TA to the NAO to establish an integrated framework to build internal control and audit capacity in target ministries and oversight bodies. USAID will assist in preparing audit reports at participating Ministries to assist in the development of implementation experience in internal controls and provide oversight for procurement and various accounting activities. These units will provide methodological guidelines to ensure a system of checks and balances in budget spending units.

The Center for the Study of Democracy (CSD) will focus on developing the capacity of a national ombudsman by drafting administrative regulations to facilitate implementation of responsibilities associated with the office. CSD will provide specific policy reform recommendations to the GOB to assist in developing anti-corruption and good governance measures. Principal contractor and grantee: DPK International (prime) and the Center for the Study of Democracy (prime).

Reduce Trafficking In Persons (\$145,000 AEEB, \$600,000 AEEB carryover). USAID will support anti-trafficking efforts in conjunction with other USG programs. USAID will provide TA, training and capacity building to the national and local Commissions for Combating Human Trafficking. Efforts are underway to identify additional anti-trafficking activities to fill critical gaps that are not being addressed by other donors. Principal partner: International Organization for Migration (prime).

Strengthen the Justice Sector (\$4,000,000 AEEB, \$83,010 AEEB carryover). As perhaps the weakest component of the judicial sector, the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) is a major focus of USAID

assistance. Through the use of study tours for stakeholders in the reform effort, USAID will build the SJC's capacity to oversee court administration; develop a program-based budget in an independent, transparent and objective manner; adopt needed standards for court administration and judicial recruitment/promotion; and serve as the national court administration office. USAID will support 22 model courts with the implementation of their court improvement plans so as to increase their effectiveness, transparency and independence. By providing software, hardware and technical support, USAID will provide assistance for courthouse automation, and public access. An additional component of the court improvement plans focuses on improving bench-bar relations which will also aid in improving court performance. The best practices pioneered in the court improvement plans used by the model courts will provide guidance for formulating new court standards. USAID will also provide approximately 50 grants to local non-governmental organizations to support judicial reform efforts with courts at the local level.

USAID will assist the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to improve its capacity to function as a training institution for magistrates and court clerks. In FY 2006, a class of 50 incoming judges will attend the NIJ's six month training program. A continuing needs assessment will also identify courses and training programs that will be developed. One thousand judges, court clerks and administrators will receive specialized training. USAID will work closely with the Ministry of Justice to produce amendments to the legal education act to require that law faculties include clinical education in their curricula and thus ensure the sustainability of the USAID's efforts in this area. USAID will support the development of the new civil procedure code or possible revisions to the current one to reduce case delay and expedite resolution of the backlog of court cases. In addition, amendments to the Judicial System Act and possible new implementing regulations will be pursued. Principal grantees: East West Management Institute (prime) and ABA/CEELI (prime).

FY 2007 Program:

FY 2006 is the final year of appropriation for activities under this objective.

Performance and Results: A major USAID achievement in Bulgaria was the establishment of the National Institute of Justice. The Institute delivered almost 8,500 training days in FY 2005. Other achievements made with USAID support include: 1) amendments to the judicial system act pertaining to the appointment and promotion of magistrates and the establishment of the court administrator's position; 2) the attorneys' act, which mandates a rigorous professional qualification exam, continuing legal education, and a modern ethics code; 3) legal clinical education was institutionalized; 4) the Mediation Act established the legal basis for court-referred mediation, a national register of mediators, an ethics code, qualification standards for mediators, and several mediation centers began operations; 5) launching of the GOB's web-based public procurement register; and 6) passage of amendments increasing the NAO's authority to audit political parties' finances and publicize information on the income of high ranking officials.

By program's end, USAID seeks to institutionalize the concepts of integrity, accountability, independence, and proficiency within all aspects of the judicial system with the long-term goal of significantly reducing corruption, incompetence and delay in legal practice. The financial and programmatic sustainability of the NIJ will be good and the reforms instituted by the model courts and bar councils will be firmly in place.

US Financing in Thousands of Dollars

Bulgaria

183-0220 Rule of Law	AEEB
Through September 30, 2004	
Obligations	21,258
Expenditures	13,717
Unliquidated	7,541
Fiscal Year 2005	
Obligations	6,313
Expenditures	6,629
Through September 30, 2005	
Obligations	27,571
Expenditures	20,346
Unliquidated	7,225
Prior Year Unobligated Funds	
Obligations	1,333
Planned Fiscal Year 2006 NOA	
Obligations	5,495
Total Planned Fiscal Year 2006	
Obligations	6,828
Proposed Fiscal Year 2007 NOA	
Obligations	0
Future Obligations	0
Est. Total Cost	34,399