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Chapter 24 – Cooperation in the Fields of Justice and Home Affairs

REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNIFORM NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR COUNTERACTION TO CRIME IN THE PERIOD 1998 – 2001 ¹

The essence of state policy in the field of internal security of the Republic of Bulgaria was defined upon adopting the Uniform National Strategy for Counteraction to Crime according to which internal security is guaranteed with protection of citizens rights and interests, society and state.

On adopting the strategy, the Government's objectives were sharp restriction of the impact of factors causing crime, and reducing the number of offences and violations, safeguarding the constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens, raising the living standard, political and economic stability of the state, strict observation of legal order, civil control over state institutions and special services, efficient and equitable justice.

The increasing crime factors had a complex character – from globalization of worldwide importance, increasing the circulation of goods, services, capital and persons, and transition to information society, to the remains of totalitarianism impeding the radical change in the social and political relations in the country. Persistent criminal factors have been and continue to be the Balkan conflicts, the accompanying economic sanctions, illegal trafficking in drugs and human beings, smuggling of weapons and other goods. Trends of adhesion and internationalization of crime have been firmly established.

Counteraction to crime, particularly after the strategy adoption comprised efficient prevention, timely detection and penalizing criminals, as well as coordination in the interaction between legislative, executive and judicial authorities and local self-government bodies. It is that coordination and interaction, the public intolerance to crime, as well as the need of public consensus in the fight against crime that are defined in the National Strategy (p. 9 – 14) as some of the most important conditions for efficiency of counteracting crime.

The report contains summarized information about counteraction to crime in the part 'Main objectives and tasks' and 'Provision of Resources' (p. 16 – 30), where the specific measures undertaken, the outcomes from their implementation and mistakes made in the course of years are stated.

¹ The Report on the Strategy was submitted within the Council of Ministers' Annual Report on the state of the national security, April 2001.

MAIN OBJECTIVES AND TASKS

General measures for motivating lawful behaviour and increasing the confidence of citizens and economic entities in the ability of the state to protect them against criminal actions

§ Mobilization of the executive and judicial authorities efforts towards strict enforcement of laws and for inevitability of penalties

Measures taken:

- Program for judicial system development in the period 2001 – 2006, drawn up jointly with the executive authority and approved by the Supreme Judicial Council. Based on this program, projects for enhancing the judicial authority capacity, improving the system for selection of magistrates and their career promotion were developed.

§ Further building of the legal basis for transparent privatization and efficient functioning of the market economy

Measures taken:

- For the purposes of assisting the privatization of infrastructure assets, in November 2000 amendments to the Transformation and Privatization of State-owned and Municipal Enterprises Act were adopted. Those amendments are directed towards extending the scope of parliamentary control, increasing the transparency and restricting the privileges of labour and management teams. A Supervisory Council, comprising seven members from various political parties supervises the privatization process, while the National Assembly approval of the strategies for important transactions will be required. The State Internal Financial Control Act (SIFCA), effective from 1 January 2001, regulates the powers in exercising control on privatization revenues, inclusive of those from the bank privatization, and their expenditure. Implementation of control over public procurement procedures has also been provided for.

§ Directing the social policy towards increasing population employment and purchasing capacity and protection of socially vulnerable strata

Measures taken:

- Programs for temporary employment, 'Flexible Forms of Employment' National Programme, 'From Social Services to Employment' Programme and 'Literacy, Qualification and Employment' Programme.
- Regional councils for employment have been set up in districts and municipalities.

Outcomes:

- Under 'Beautiful Bulgaria' Project – 23 600 persons were given temporary employment.

- Relief funds amounting to BGN 286,6 mln have been received under various programs.

Shortcomings/Non-performance:

- The financial state of “Professional Qualification and Unemployment” Fund in 2002 did not allow financing the programmes prepared and planned for implementation.

PREVENTION OF CONVENTIONAL CRIME

Measures taken:

- Conception of the Police in Civil Society has been adopted and is under implementation.
- Regular control is being implemented on sites where explosives, weapons and ammunition are manufactured and stored.
- Legal framework was adopted regulating the powers of the Ministry of Finance control bodies and the size of fines imposed in case of established administrative violations.
- The term and procedure for carrying out inspections in trade outlets were specified.
- Functional specialization of tax authorities was completed.
- The administrative structure and working organization of customs enterprises were optimized.
- Strategy for education and qualification advance of customs officers involved in the fight against smuggling and violations was developed.
- The first stage of the customs information system was completed.
- Instructions on the interaction between the Gambling Supervision Agency, the State Collection Agency and the Mol were prepared, while drawing up of such instructions for the tax administration and ‘Financial Intelligence Bureau’ Agency is forthcoming.
- Programme for introduction of new documents and technologies of registration, identification, marking and accounting of motor vehicles is being applied.
- Program for counteraction to economic crime 2000-2005 was developed.
- Council of Ministers’ Decree No. 12/1999, No. 166 and No. 233/2000 regulate the control on the import, export and transit transport of dangerous substances and harmful waste, as well as transactions with endangered plant and animal species.
- Improvement in the information interaction with mass media.
- Targeted measures for restriction and non-admission of police violence were undertaken. Particular attention was paid to police officers training in efficient application of the European standards for protection of human rights. In the Police Academy-Mol syllabuses important topics related to the problem were included,

among those 'Police and Human Rights', 'Society in Transition', 'Prevention and Police Protection of Children', 'Gipsies and Police Protection'.

- Active counteraction to acts of football hooliganism.
- Implementation of 'Information Campaign for Prevention of Trafficking in Women' Project.

Outcomes:

- As a result of the measures taken in the course of implementing the Uniform National Strategy for Counteraction to Crime a trend of reducing the crime rate was established. The average annual rate (number of offences per 100 thousand persons of the population) from 2200 in 1996 and 2728 in 1997 decreased to 1817 in 1998, 1623 in 1999, and only in 2000 there was an insignificant increase up to 1699.
- There was a significant increase in the detection of goods and currency valuables smuggling – approximately 24 thousand customs violations in the amount of BGN 108 mln were detected in the period 1998 – 2000.
- The number of statements drawn up against customs bodies for established administrative violations, repealed by the law court has decreased.
- Direct surveillance is implemented on controlled tax liable sites with putting the emphasis on the risk groups of taxpayers. 375 thousand inspections were carried out in 2000, control efficiency increased, 35 thousand statements of violations were drawn up, fines amounting to BGN 8,5 mln were imposed, goods in the amount of BGN 700 thousand were seized and 25 sites were closed and sealed.
- 318 gaming facilities were detected and seized due to use without issued license by 36 persons against whom statements of violations were drawn up and who were handed over to the prosecuting authorities.
- No organization of gambling games was allowed to persons that had evaded taxation, had been sanctioned for carrying out gambling activity without license, persons with unproved origin of capital, as well as physical persons convicted for criminal offences.

Shortcomings/Non-performance:

- Insufficient extent of coordination between 'before the event' actions of control bodies.

COUNTERACTION TO ORGANIZED CRIME

Measures taken:

- Customs intelligence structures were created in the customs offices.
- Activities of the Mol services were improved by transforming any duplicating structures in NSCOC, NIS, DNPS, and the functions of the structures for combating organized crime were specified.

- Within NSCOC new structural units were created for counteracting organized crime in the economy, smuggling, violations in the banking and financial and credit systems.

- Direct control is being exercised with respect to the amount of excise deposited and the applications for excise labels submitted.
- An organization was set up for counteracting 'the draining' of sums from the budget.
- Measures Against Money Laundering Act (MMLA) and Rules on the implementation of the act were adopted.
- Instruction on the interaction between the Ministry of Finance and MoI in the implementation of the MMLA has been adopted and is being applied.
- In September 1998 a Financial Investigation Bureau was created as a Directorate in the Ministry of Finance, transformed into Direction from 01.01.2000, and as of 06.01.2001 into an agency under the Minister of Finance.
- A system of interaction between the Financial Investigation Bureau and the national institutions involved in counteracting money laundering was set up.
- A system of inspections was developed at national level following a scheme in direction reversal to the circulation of goods.
- A system of interaction between the Financial Investigation Bureau and relevant international authorities and bodies of other countries was set up
- Electronic information files and registers were created that significantly enhance the analytical capacity of the Financial Investigation Bureau.
- New border measures are applied after having been assigned to the customs authorities for protection of intellectual property.
- New working organization of customs officers at the border checkpoints was established.

Outcomes:

- The criminal activity of organized criminal structures formed in the period 1990-1996 was restricted. Significant results were achieved in limiting the shadow economy controlled by the structures of organized crime.
- The possibilities of transfusing capital from illegal activity to the legal business and privatization and for money laundering were constricted. Criminal mechanisms and channels used for smuggling and illegal transactions with spirits, alcohol, tobacco products, firearms, stolen cars, sugar and pirate compactdisks were intercepted and destroyed.
- Applying the means of tax and auditing procedures, draining of approximately BGN 40 mln was prevented.
- Racketeering of business by criminal group was neutralized, and forced signing of contracts for protection services and coercive insurance was eliminated.

- Bulgaria was removed from the 'Special 301' List of states violating copyrights, also from the USA list of states under priority surveillance for violating rights of intellectual property.
- Over 1500 reports of suspicious operations have been received at the Financial Investigation Bureau (FIB). The Minister of Finance has suspended 28 bank operations in total amount of approximately USD 1,5 mln.
- During the period 1998-2000 the following cases of smuggling of excise goods through the customs were detected: cigarettes – over 164 mln pieces, ethyl alcohol – 1,649 thousand liters, petrol and petrol products – 8,180 thousand kg.
- As a result from the active operation of Mol services, no use of the territory of the country by foreign and international terrorist organizations has been allowed.

Shortcomings/Non-performance:

- Inefficient control on the schemes for VAT 'draining'.
- The information system for indirect surveillance of selected risk groups activity has not been completed (term of development – 2001, term of implementation – June 2002).
- Shortage of resource provision impedes implementation of the Financial Investigation Bureau functions.

FIGHT AGAINST DISTRIBUTION OF DRUGS AND THEIR USE

Measures taken:

- The National Assembly adopted Drugs and Precursors Control Act, which is being implemented.
- Amendments and Supplements to the Penal Code were adopted. As criminal have been qualified actions such as: sowing and growing opium poppy plants or cocaine bushes, also those of the hemp variety containing narcotic substances above the level allowed by law; bank transfer of sums using false documents, where the acting person had known or presumed that such sums had been acquired through illegal drugs trafficking; money laundering with means and property acquired through illegal drugs trafficking; organized criminal activity for the purpose of illegal drugs and precursors trafficking; implementation of any activities with drugs without permission issued according to the terms and procedures established by law.
- Supplement to the Penal Code was adopted as follows: representative samples of drugs duly seized as provided for by law shall be deemed material evidence in the course of the court trial.
- Regulation on the terms and procedure for seizure, safekeeping, destruction and provision of drugs for scientific activity was adopted.

- European Union regulations with respect to the control over precursors were fully adopted.

- Conception of counteracting distribution and use of drugs has been developed and is being implemented, as well as 'Development and Implementation of 'Antidrugs' National Strategy' Project, financed by the national budget and the National Phare Programme.
- Drug Addiction National Center was established.
- Active participation in international operations against drugs trafficking.
- Bulgaria joined the UN and EU Regional Project for fight against drugs trafficking.
- With the support of the British Know-how Fund a trial project is under implementation in the regions of Plovdiv and Sliven for restricting the distribution of drugs among students.

Outcomes:

- Records were achieved in the fight against illegal drugs and precursors trafficking, with the country ranking first in Europe in intercepted quantities of heroin – 1861 kg along the so called 'Balkan route' in 2000.
- For drugs trafficking and drugs distribution, 938 persons, of which 121 foreign nationals were arrested just in 2000.
- Preliminary investigations were initiated against 747 persons, and preventive measures were taken against 1035 persons distributing drugs.
- Over 170 drug traffickers in total were handed over to the prosecuting authorities during the period 1998-2000.
- A number of attempts at illegal production of opiates and psychotropic substances and cultivating drug yielding crops were prevented. The activities of 4 laboratories for illegal production of psychotropic substances and precursors were intercepted.

RESTRICTING ILLEGAL MIGRATION

Measures taken:

- The Budapest Process recommendations on counteracting illegal migration were introduced in the national legislation.
- The national visa policy was brought into alignment with the Schengen standards.
- The Action Plan for taking measures in the field of visa policy, border, customs, veterinary and phytosanitary control is being implemented.
- 'Mol Programme for counteracting illegal migration' has been approved and is under implementation.

- Bulgarian Identity Documents Act was adopted.

- The Unemployment Protection and Employment Promotion Act adopted ensures protection of the national labour market and regulates the labour migration processes.
- The Regulation on the terms and procedure for performing mediation activity with respect to the supply of information and recruitment of employees ensures protection of the rights of Bulgarian citizens.
- The Regulation on the terms and procedure for issuing working permits to foreign nationals in the Republic of Bulgaria regulates the recruitment of foreign nationals at the request of an employer in Bulgaria.
- An interdepartmental working group was created for drawing up measures of enhancing border surveillance efficiency and reducing the migration pressure from and through the Republic of Bulgaria.
- Phare Programme Project 'Creation of modern Center for training and qualification of the Bulgarian Border Police for the purpose of introducing efficient state border surveillance system' was implemented.
- Center for specialization and professional training of border police officers was opened in the town of Pazardzhik.
- Conception of restructuring the National Border Police Service and Schedule-Programme for modernization of material and technical equipment of border crossing checkpoints.
- Reform is being implemented in the Border Police Service: 3000 members of the armed forces are being replaced with 1900 police officers. In a great part of the border police stations units entirely consisting of professional police staff were created. The crews of border police vessels are also formed by border police officers.
- From the beginning of 2001 the introduction of the new Bulgarian visa sticker will start. It is in full harmonization with the format prescribed by ISO 7810, containing all data and protection required by the European/Schengen acquis.

Outcomes:

- In implementation of the strategy, work continues on the introduction of the computerized system for control on the issue of visas and passing permits and extending the validity of foreign travel passports. The system was set up in the Bulgarian Embassies in Peking, Delhi, Tirana, Thessaloniki, Athens, Budapest, Prague, Bratislava, Vienna, Edirne, Istanbul, Ankara, Paris, Brussels, Munich, Bonn, Berlin, Moscow, Sanct Petersburg, Helsinki, Pretoria, Harare, Luanda, Nicosia, Baghdad, Tunisia, Tripoli, Accra, Lagos, Islamabad, Hanoi, Warsaw, Minsk, Rome and Bern.
- A connection between the Visa Center at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the border-crossing checkpoints of the Republic of Bulgaria was set up.

- The EU found out the Bulgaria has a modern visa control system at the same level as that of the member states, which is compatible with theirs, and even superior with respect to the connection with border control system. In this connection a proposal was made to remove the country from the Schengen visa list.
- Visa-exemption regime with the EU member states and visa regime for risk states was introduced.
- The traffic capacity of border-crossing checkpoints at the airports improved by organizing the establishment of 'green' and 'red' corridors for taking passengers and cargo through them.
- Migratory pressures through Bulgaria to the Western European countries were reduced.

COUNTERACTING CORRUPTION

Measures taken:

- Organizational structures are being optimized and clear administrative procedures are introduced.
- Responsibilities and inter-relations under the scheme 'selection, choosing a case for audit, audit, issue of audit statement' are differentiated – each stage is carried out by different officials with separate responsibilities – dependency on a single person only is being limited.
- Sector Strategy for combating corruption in the Customs administration was drawn up.
- Contract was signed between the Bulgarian and the French and English Customs administrations for counteracting corruption in the Customs administration.
- Efficient and comprehensive measures were adopted for internal control in the Customs administration.
- Impact of criminal factors creating conditions for corruption is being limited. The recommendations of the European Council experts on MoI activity are implemented in stages. Efforts are focused on prevention and blocking the possibilities for the organized crime to use the current environment for expanding their financial positions. The situation by regions is being analyzed and the factors causing the corruption phenomenon are specified.
- Measures for detection and counteracting corruption in the Customs, municipalities, tax authorities, judicial administration and jurisdiction, health care and administration involved in privatization are increased.
- Draft Amendments and Supplements to the Administrative Violations and Sanctions were adopted at first hearing, which introduce administrative liability of legal persons

for corruption and other offences committed in their interests by senior managing employees of such legal persons.

- A law was adopted obliging persons occupying senior government post to make statements on their property for public release, and a Public Register was created.

Outcomes:

- Functional work organization was established for counteracting corruption – there is a responsible official for each activity related to servicing or control. The principle of ‘openness’ and equal terms of the system with respect to the rights and obligations of taxpayer and tax authority was imposed.
- Orderly systems were introduced for internal control and precise nomination of the official responsible in the process of carrying out specific customs activity.
- The rights of taxpayers and responsibility of administration in case of violation of such rights were regulated by a legal act (DPC). Uniform forms and procedures for implementation of the tax administration activities throughout the country were introduced.
- The rights and obligations of taxpayers contained in each document issued by a tax authority were made available, clearly written and circulated.
- Broad access of the citizens to considerable volume of public information and services was provided via INTERNET.
- Active daily control on the activity of officials is exercised through following up the documents movement, as well as public control on the administration’s activity.
- Clear rules on providing services to the citizens by the central and local administrations were adopted.

Shortcomings/Non-performance:

- Need of Uniform strategy for fighting corruption, relying on the efforts of the whole society was established.
- Bringing the software used for providing services to the taxpayers up-to-date is lagging behind.
- The law on property statements by persons appointed to senior governmental posts for public release is not comprehensive – no sanction is provided for persons that do not submit the required affidavit.

COUNTERACTION TO JUVENILE DELINQUENCY**Measures taken:**

- Protection of the Child Act was adopted.
- Implementation of the Government Strategy and Action Plan on protection of the rights of children in the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2001-2003 commenced.
- Long-term and short-term regional programmes for prevention of juvenile delinquency were drawn up.

- Project for 'Increasing the welfare of children in Bulgaria' has been drafted whose financing is waiting for the approval of the World Bank Board of Directors.
- The measures for providing information and increasing the knowledge of children, parents and public concerning their rights and obligations form an integral part of the Action Plan.
- The preventive activities with juvenile offenders together with state institutions working on children's problems became more intensive.

Outcomes:

- Legal basis for the protection of child's rights and interests was created in compliance with the European legislation and international agreements.
- Institutions responsible for protection of the child were structured – State Agency for Protection of the Child and departments for protection of the child at the municipal social assistance services.
- New forms of socializing and raising children were regulated – daycare homes, consulting centers, foster families, and homes for children deprived of parental care or persons, substituting them.
- The municipal social assistance services together with Mol authorities take measures for police protection of children in risk.

Penal Policy and Reform in the Judicial Authority

Measures taken:

- In implementation of the Amendments and Supplements to the Judicial Authority Act (1998) the procurator' office structure was brought into alignment with that of the law courts, and Special Investigation Service was established.
- A programme for initial training of officers carrying out police investigation is under implementation.
- A Principle of teamwork was introduced for the investigation, procurator's office and police in complex and socially important preliminary investigations.

Outcomes:

- The judicial system structure and in particular, that of the units involved in criminal justice, were brought in compliance with the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria and the European standards. Legislative changes created possibilities of setting up practically new structural units in the Court and Procurator's Office.

- The state penal policy was brought in alignment with the European standards with respect to the legislative safeguards for the protection of human rights.
- Higher efficiency of the process of detection and proving crimes is ensured, including the actions of organized crime and complicated criminal activity.

REFORM IN THE SUBSTANTIVE PENAL LAW (PC)

Measures taken:

- Amendments to the Penal Code – more severe punishments were specified for all types of bribe. New basic and qualified types of *corpus delicti* were introduced, reflecting the new forms of criminal activity and special characteristics of the mechanism of their realization.

Outcomes:

- Legislative measures are directed towards ensuring conformity with OECD Convention for fight against the bribing of foreign officials involved in international trade transactions and the European Council Penal Convention for corruption. Those measures created possibility of prompt ratification of the latter.
- Conformity of internal penal legislation with the international standards and with the European legislation in that sphere.
- Progress was made in bringing the penal legislation in line with the new criminal activities by ensuring wider scope of the substantive penal law.

REFORM IN THE PENAL PROCEDURE LAW (PPC)

Measures taken:

- Amendments and Supplements to the Penal Procedure Code were adopted (1998) – three-instance proceedings were introduced in the penal procedure, and reviews as a means of extra-institutional control were canceled.
- New Amendments and Supplements to the Penal Procedure Code were adopted (effective from 01.01.2000) – the court was entrusted with powers to rule on bails in the stage of pre-court proceedings.
- PPC Amendments (effective from 01.01.2000) introduced judicial control on acts and actions of the procurator's office and investigating authorities thus guaranteeing exercise of the main rights and freedoms of citizens.
- Ceasing the penal procedure, which until the amendments was traditionally performed by the Procurator's office, was also placed under judicial control.

- The instrument of police inquiry was introduced to a wide range of crimes, and summary trials were adopted for a great part of crimes.

Outcomes:

- Police inquiry in its two forms simplified the penal procedure in the preliminary stage of cases for lesser offences.
- With the judicial control on all actions of the Procurator's office, investigating authorities and police bodies that restrict main human rights and freedoms, the international standards with respect to the protection of the human rights were met, thus bringing the country's legislation in conformity with the European Convention and the practice of the European Court of Human Rights.
- The ex-officio principle in the court work within the penal procedure was limited thus enhancing the guarantees of equality of the parties to the suit. The adversary principle became the guiding principle in the work of the criminal court.
- The range of sittings of a single judge was extended; some legal procedures were simplified, while the procedural periods of others were shortened.

Improvement in civil justice aimed at restricting property, financial, tax and other violations

Measures taken:

- With the changes in the Civil Procedure Code in effect since July 1999 some new instruments in the civil legal proceedings were introduced: summary proceedings for certain categories of trials (claims arising from loan agreements, lease agreements, deposit agreements, contracts of manufacture, alimony agreements, actions to exercise parental rights, possessory actions and delineation actions, etc.), complaints against delay, as well as a series of changes in first instance proceedings, in cassation review and in some of the special claims proceedings.

Outcomes:

- The State Internal Financial Control Act extends the scope of seeking material liability in case of maliciously inflicted damage, from sums missing where the damage is inflicted not in the course and in connection with the performance of functions.
- In 1998, 346 statements of charging 555 persons with deficiency in accounts amounting to BGN 5 839 698 were drawn up. In 1999, 444 statements of deficiency in accounts were drawn against 593 persons in the amount of BGN 3 297 000. For 2000 the statements were 394 against 519 persons for deficiency in accounts amounting to BGN 135 443 332 or the sum has increased by 76% as compared to 1999.

- The procedure of licensing insurance brokers, completed in 2000 did not allow the admission of persons performing security or similar activities and persons with criminal records to the insurance market.

Shortcomings/Non-performance:

- Slow hearing and ruling of the court and prosecutor's office on statements of deficiency in accounts.
- The payment of sums under statements of deficiency is being impeded.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Measures taken:

- The efforts of the Bulgarian Government were directed towards binding to the international anti-corruption instruments adopted within the European Council, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and UN, participating in the process of monitoring fulfillment of obligations under such instruments, and in the international programmes for regional co-operation in combating corruption, and towards undertaking legislative measures for applying the international anti-corruption standards.
- On 22 December 1998 the ratification document of the Convention for fight against the bribing of foreign officials involved in international trade transactions adopted within OECD was delivered. The Republic of Bulgaria became the first OECD non-member country ratifying the document.
- On 26 January 1999 the Republic of Bulgaria notified the CE Secretary General of our country's intention to participate in the Group of states against corruption GRECO within which monitoring is implemented on measures taken by the countries in effecting international instruments for fight against corruption.
- On 27 January 1999 our country, together with other 20 states signed the Corruption Penal Convention.
- On 4 November 1999 the Republic of Bulgaria signed the Council of Europe Civil Convention on Corruption as well, with the National Assembly ratifying it on 10 May 2000. This Bulgaria became the first Council of Europe member-state to have ratified this international instrument obliging countries to adopt efficient internal legal procedures for compensation of citizens for damages inflicted by acts of corruption.
- Participation in the Second Joint Programme of the European Commission and the Council of Europe 'Octopus II' whose objective is providing assistance in the combat against organized crime and corruption to 16 countries in transition.
- Bulgaria also participates in the initiatives for enhancing the regional co-operation for counteracting corruption under the Anti-corruption Initiative of Southeastern Europe Stability Treaty.
- On 13 December 2000 our country signed the UN Convention against trans-national organized crime and the three protocols to the said Convention.

- Ministry of Interior Programme for Euro-integration 1998-2000 with main objectives as follows: support to the Governmental programme, adoption of normative acts in compliance with EU Acquis, regulating matters related to the powers of Mol, administrative capacity enhancement, meeting of concrete requirements in connection with the cooperation and implementation of international conventions, directives, regulations and recommendations in the sphere of the EU Treaty 'Third Tier'.
- Protocol of cooperation between Bulgaria, Greece and Romania in combating crime was signed, also Agreement against terrorism, organized crime, drugs trafficking, weapons and money laundering between Bulgaria, Turkey and Romania, Agreement of counteracting organized crime between the Governments of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation Member States and the International Center for Migration Policy Development.
- Together with the Southeastern European countries and Hungary and through the Ministry of Interior and the Customs Agency, Bulgaria participates in the setting up of a common standardized information network for combating organized crime, drugs trafficking and terrorism.
- Exchange of information about suspicious operations that could possibly result in tax evasion is carried out. Checks and audits are implemented of persons qualifying as local in each country.
- 9 agreements for co-operation and mutual assistance have been signed with customs administrations, among which agreements with all states neighbouring Bulgaria.
- The Customs Agency participates in the 'Facilitation of Trade and Transport in Southeastern Europe' Project, supported by the World Bank through a credit amounting to EUR 7,73 mln, as well as in the Project for Cross Border Co-operation with Greece, Romania and Macedonia, supported by the EU Phare Programme.

Outcomes:

- Joining the above mentioned international instruments and participation in the regional co-operation programmes stimulate the adoption of modern legal framework for prevention and penalizing organized crime and corruption, thus creating conditions for efficient criminal prosecution of those crimes.
- Information exchange and operational and investigating interaction with foreign police services in counteracting organized crime has significantly increased. New police statistics system has been designed and implemented according to a methodology in conformity with the European standards. Conditions are created for integration with international structures for combating trans-border crime.

PROVISION OF RESOURCES

Provision of Information

Measures taken:

- Conception and Strategy for the information activity in the Mol (1998-2000) – Mol is developing its information system taking measures to ensure its compatibility with the ЕИСПП Model.

Outcomes:

- The system and communications environment where the automated information files and systems of Mol are designed, developed and operated was replaced. At central level in the Mol over 10 AISs are operated, among which 'Bulgarian Identity Documents', 'Central Population Register', 'Border Control, and other special information systems with over 160 servers and more than 3000 computers. Just for needs of 'Bulgarian Identity Documents' AIS, in 1999 over 100 servers and 13400 automated workstations equipped with personal computers were installed throughout the country.

PROVISION OF STAFF

Measures taken:

- Internal normative documents on the discipline and disciplinary practice, on working with candidates for taking employment with the Mol, on the professional qualification advance.
- Efficient forms of staff training (modular education, tests, exams, etc.)
- Programme for improving the staff policy of Mol
- Center for training of magistrates was established as a foundation, whose institutors were the Ministry of Justice, the Union of Judges and the Alliance for Legal Interaction. Its transformation to a public institution as part of the Judicial System Development Plan is forthcoming.

Outcomes:

- The first serious forms of magistrates qualification based on preliminary developed training programmes have started. Professional training of judicial staff is being advanced and knowledge of European law is being acquired.

Financing

Measures taken:

- Implementation of the strategy is financed through the current budgets of the ministries and departments directly involved in maintaining the security and public peace in the country.

Shortcoming/Non-performance:

- So far no uniform financial expert forecast on the strategy realization has been discussed. No group of experts has been formed and no separate financial forecasts by the ministries and institutions have been prepared.
-