

## LEGAL PROGRAM

### EXAMINATION OF THE ACCESS TO LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN BULGARIA – 2004

#### **Project Objectives**

The project aims to examine the access to lawyers in the system of criminal administration of justice, following the changes in the Criminal Procedure Code in 2000, and to do a comparative analysis on the basis of previous research.

It should also identify the system's shortcomings and collect data about the practical functioning of the legal assistance system. Moreover, the project aims to do an analysis of the legal assistance quality rendered by officially appointed defense lawyers.

#### **Project Implementation Tools**

Studying an excerpt from 900 general criminal legal proceedings, which commenced and finished between 2000 and 2003. Conducting interviews with 680 people incarcerated or kept in preventive custody. Organization of an international conference for discussing the results from the research.

#### **Project Status**

Completed

#### **Project Development**

The research was done in the second half of 2004. A great number of participants had access to the results about the formulation and implementation of a policy on judicial power and the access to justice. The analyzed data from the research contributed to the development of a concept of the legal assistance system concerning criminal legal proceedings and the resultant legal assistance bill.

#### **Results**

Seldom had anyone conducted such a comprehensive and detailed study of the access to justice in Bulgaria. The study itself has resulted in producing the publication "Access to justice: defense of criminal cases, provided by the state".

#### **Experts and Partners**

- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Justice, General Directorate of the places for penalty
- Bulgarian Helsinki Committee
- Justice Initiative, Budapest
- Yonko Grozev

#### **Funding**

Open Society Institute - Sofia  
Open Society Justice Initiative

#### **Contact Person**

Ivanka Ivanova  
[ivanova@osf.bg](mailto:ivanova@osf.bg)

Martin Gramatikov  
[mgramatikov@osf.bg](mailto:mgramatikov@osf.bg)