

**NATIONAL
INSTITUTE
OF
JUSTICE**



According to Article 249 of the Judicial System Act, the National Institute of Justice is entitled to carry out the following activities:

- Compulsory initial training of the candidates for junior judges and junior prosecutors;
- Maintenance and enhancement of qualification for judges, prosecutors, investigating magistrates, state enforcement agents, recordation judges, judicial and prosecutorial assistants, court clerks, inspectors at the Inspectorate with the Minister of Justice and other Ministry of Justice's employees;
- Distance learning, research and study of jurisprudence, including practice in the administration of justice, for the purposes of training needs assessment, all performed by the established Learning and Information Center.





The National Institute of Justice (NIJ or Institute) has been operational since January 1, 2004. It was built on the achievements of the Magistrates' Training Center, a non-governmental organization established in 1999.

Chapter Eleventh (Articles 249 – 263) of the Judicial System Act and the Regulation on the Organization and Activities of the National Institute of Justice and its Administration, adopted by the Supreme Judicial Council (promulgated, SG No. 76 / 21.09.2007, effective 21.09.2007, amended and supplemented, SG No. 65 / 23.08.2011, effective 23.08.2011), provide the legal basis for the functioning of the NIJ.

The main goal of the National Institute of Justice is to improve the efficiency of jurisdiction through quality professional training and enhancement of the qualification of employees, designated by the law.

The National Institute of Justice is an independent legal entity. There is also a functional relationship between the Institute, on one hand, and the Supreme Judicial Council and the Ministry of Justice, on the other. Both institutions are represented on the NIJ Managing Board.

The constitutionally defined function of the Supreme Judicial Council "to organize the continuing education of judges, prosecutors and investigating magistrates", provided in Article 130, para 6, sec. 3 of the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, has been carried out through the National Institute of Justice.



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GOVERNING BODIES

The National Institute of Justice is governed by:

Managing Board

The members of NIJ Managing Board are nominated by the Supreme Judicial Council (five representatives) and the Ministry of Justice (two representatives). The members of the Managing Board have a five-year mandate. The President of the Supreme Court of Cassation is ex officio Chairperson of NIJ Managing Board.



Chairperson



*Prof. Ph.D. Lazar Gruev,
President of the Supreme Court of Cassation*

Members nominated by the Supreme Judicial Council



*Assoc. Prof. Ph.D. Boris Velchev,
Prosecutor General of the Republic of Bulgaria*



*Mr. Georgi Kolev,
President of the Supreme Administrative Court*



*Ms. Radka Petrova,
Chairperson of the "Professional Qualification, Information Technologies and Statistics" Committee, Supreme Judicial Council*



*Mr. Ivan Kolev,
Chairperson of the "Budget and Finance" Committee, Supreme Judicial Council*



Members nominated by the Ministry of Justice



*Ms. Diana Kovacheva,
Minister of Justice of the Republic
of Bulgaria*



*Ms. Neli Kutskova,
Judge, Sofia
Court of Appeal*

Director

The National Institute of Justice is managed by a Director appointed by the NIJ Managing Board.

Mr. Dragomir Yordanov has been Director of the National Institute of Justice since April 1, 2011. The NIJ Director has a five-year mandate.



Mr. Dragomir Yordanov, NIJ Director

Program Council

The NIJ Program Council is advisory body that assists the Institute in its activities related to planning trainings, preparing training curricula and selecting instructors. Program Council's composition is set out by the Managing Board and includes representatives of legal science and practice.





FUNDING

The National Institute of Justice is a second-level spending unit of budgetary resources under the Supreme Judicial Council. The NIJ activities are funded from the budget of the Judiciary, from programs and projects, donations and through its own resources in accordance with Article 251 of the Judicial System Act (JSA).

NIJ ACTIVITY

The National Institute of Justice carries out its activities on maintaining and enhancing the qualification of magistrates and court administration in the following areas:

Initial Training

1. Compulsory initial training for candidates for junior magistrates – nine-months training for the candidates for junior magistrates who have successfully passed the relevant competition exams. The training is organized immediately and prior to their appointment as junior judges and junior prosecutors.

2. Mentor-magistrates – program aimed at assisting junior magistrates upon completion of their initial training and taking up positions in the bodies of the Judiciary.

3. Other activities, carried out by the Initial Training Department

3.1. Compulsory initial qualification – specialized course for judges and prosecutors who are appointed to the bodies of the Judiciary for the first time (except for those under item 1).

3.2. Compulsory continuing qualification – specialized course for judges and prosecutors who have been promoted from regional to district level as per Decision of the Supreme Judicial Council N° 46, dated November 12, 2008.

3.3. Training for judicial and prosecutorial assistants – training course in accordance with Article 249, para 1, sec. 2 of the Judiciary System Act.

Continuing Qualification

1. Continuing training for magistrates – qualification courses for sitting magistrates, on basic topics or current issues related to amendments in legislation.

2. Training in EU law and Human rights – specialized courses aimed at strengthening the capacity of Bulgarian magistrates to apply EU law following the accession of Bulgaria to the Community and gaining experience in applying the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

3. Training for court administration – courses on specialized topics in lieu of the specifics of the various positions in court administration.





Learning and Information Center

1. Organization of distance learning courses

on issues of current interest for magistrates, court clerks and other employees as specified under Article 249 JSA.

2. Publications and Research

Topics of interest to the members of the Judiciary are periodically selected, developed and published under the series "NIJ Library". This publication series was set up in order to meet the growing needs for profound knowledge of Bulgarian magistrates.

Research activity is aimed at improving the efficiency of the administration of justice by studying jurisprudence and analyzing current amendments in national and EU legislation.

3. Library and European Documentation Center

– provide access to training materials and legal information resources, including in EU law.

4. Information services and Statistics

The Learning and Information Center (LIC) maintains and updates periodically the NIJ official website (www.nij.bg). It offers information on NIJ current activities, organizational structure, jurisprudence, useful links, etc.

LIC prepares and maintains the NIJ training statistics as well.

The Learning and Information Center maintains and updates the NIJ electronic system for information exchange, aka "Extranet", developed to serve the needs of the National Network of Judges- Coordinators in EU Law.

INITIAL TRAINING

INITIAL TRAINING FOR THE CANDIDATES FOR JUNIOR MAGISTRATES

Role of the initial training for the candidates for junior magistrates

The nine-month compulsory initial training conducted at the National Institute of Justice as per Article 258 JSA is a professional training designed to develop competent and qualified junior magistrates prepared to fulfil their professional duties in the judicial bodies.

Curriculum

The curriculum of initial training covers the following aspects:

A. Acquisition of professional knowledge and skills

The candidates for junior magistrates who have succeeded in the competition exams have a solid legal background and academic knowledge. For this reason, the compulsory initial training course is focused on the in-depth study of professional practice and mastering of professional



A mock trial in criminal law

knowledge and skills. Its purpose is to support magistrates in attaining a high level of professionalism in order to perform their functions effectively.



B. Familiarization with areas related directly to the exercise of the three magistrates’ professions

The National Institute of Justice’s purpose is to prepare excellent professionals who are clearly aware of their role in the judicial community. Because of this, they need to show good understanding of their rights and obligations, to stand for the rules of professional ethics, and to establish cooperation between the three magistrates’ professions.

The public function of the magistrate requires acquiring basic knowledge on issues directly related to the profession. The National Institute of Justice offers courses in psychology, forensic medicine, accounting and media relations.

In view of Bulgaria’s membership in the EU, the initial training program also includes basic and specialized courses in EU law and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

C. Introduction to the working environment of the judicial bodies

NIJ makes efforts to introduce the candidates for junior magistrates to the professional environment in which they will work.

For that purpose, visits to the judicial bodies and the institutions connected to the performance of magistrates’ duties are organized. The visits aim at familiarizing the candidates for junior magistrate with the practical work of the institutions.

D. Establishment of collegial relations between the magistrates’ professions

The National Institute of Justice works at establishing collegial relations between the candidates for junior judges and junior

prosecutors through assigning joint and interrelated tasks during the training process and the joint participation of the candidates in mock trials, etc.

Teaching methods during the initial training

To ensure the efficiency of the training process, trainees are divided into small groups. This enables the trainer to monitor the progress of every trainee and make suggestions for his improvement, and at the same time encourages each trainee to participate in the training process.

The most effective way of learning professional practices is to employ interactive training methods such as discussions, exercises and role plays. The curriculum includes studying real judicial cases. The cases are selected depending on their educational potential, complexity and relevance to the purpose of the training.



Official closing of the initial training for junior judges



Evaluation

During their training the candidates for junior magistrate are evaluated on the basis of their performance at the daily training activities and written exams. At the end of the training, written and oral exams are carried out. The examinations are conducted by a commission appointed by the Supreme Judicial Council. The Supreme Judicial Council appoints the candidates who have successfully completed the training to the position for which they have been approved.

PROGRAM FOR MENTOR-JUDGES AND MENTOR-PROSECUTORS

Upon completion of the compulsory initial training course at the NIJ, junior magistrates continue their professional development with the assistance of mentor-magistrates (Article 242 JSA). Introduced in 2006 by an amendment to the JSA, the status and functions of mentor-magistrates were set in detail in the Rules on the Status and Functions of Mentor-Judges and Mentor-Prosecutors adopted by the Supreme Judicial Council in 2010.



Training for mentor-judges



Official closing of the initial training for junior prosecutors

The main functions of the mentor-judges and mentor-prosecutors are to advise and support junior magistrates in the fulfillment of their professional duties and responsibilities. For instance, mentor-magistrates introduce junior magistrates to their day-to-day work, facilitate contacts with institutions and people connected to their activities, monitor their professional growth and evaluate them on a regular basis.

The evaluation of junior magistrates' work by their mentors is made in the form of Sample Evaluation Report approved by the NIJ Managing Board.



The assessment made by the mentors could be taken into account during the evaluation of junior magistrates at the end of their three-year mandate.

The National Institute of Justice coordinates the mentor-magistrates' activities and provides methodological assistance for the performance of their functions. The Institute organizes specialized trainings and annual meetings at regional level for mentor-judges and mentor-prosecutors.



Training for mentor-prosecutors (under PHARE Twinning Project implemented in collaboration with the Spanish General Council of the Judiciary and the Judicial Training School in Barcelona, Spain)



Initial qualification of newly-appointed regional judges

COMPULSORY INITIAL QUALIFICATION

Basic characteristics of the course

As per Article 259 JSA, the initial qualification course is designed for those judges, prosecutors and investigating magistrates who are directly and for the first time appointed to the judicial bodies at regional and district levels.

The course is compulsory and is carried out during the first year after the magistrates assume office. It includes seminars of average duration from 3 to 5 days that are periodically conducted throughout the year.

Agenda

The agenda's goal is to complement the knowledge of trainees on certain subjects and address practical skills for the magistrates' profession.

The course is delivered by temporary trainers who are distinguished magistrates, academic professors and practicing lawyers.

The methodological tools that are used include lectures, real case and files' study, preparation and performance of specific procedural actions, court acts drafting, mock trials participation, etc.

COMPULSORY CONTINUING QUALIFICATION

Pursuant to Article 261 JSA, the Supreme Judicial Council has introduced compulsory continuing qualification course designed for judges and prosecutors who have been promoted from regional to district level.

The first course of this kind was delivered by the National Institute of Justice for the first time in 2009 under a training



curriculum approved by the Supreme Judicial Council.

The compulsory continuing qualification programs are focused on complementing the knowledge of trainees on subjects and topics related to the fulfillment of their duties as magistrates at district courts or at district prosecution offices. The course comprises of seminars with an average duration from 3 to 5 days, periodically conducted throughout the year.



Initial qualification of newly-appointed administrative judges

TRAINING FOR JUDICIAL AND PROSECUTORIAL ASSISTANTS

In compliance with Article 249, para 1, sec. 2 JSA, the National Institute of Justice is responsible for maintaining and improving the qualification of judicial and prosecutorial assistants. The training aims at supporting the newly appointed judicial and prosecutorial assistants in facing the challenges of their new job. The programs for this training were developed in 2009 by a

panel of experts, including representatives of judges' and prosecutors' professions. The judicial and prosecutorial assistants' training started in 2010.

CONTINUING TRAINING OF MAGISTRATES

Pursuant to Article 249, para 1, sec. 2 Judiciary System Act, the National Institute of Justice is responsible for maintaining and enhancing the qualification of judges, prosecutors, investigating magistrates, state enforcement agents, recordation judges, judicial and prosecutorial assistants, court administration, inspectors at the Inspectorate with the Minister of Justice and other employees at the Ministry of Justice.

In order to fulfill its obligations under the law and to ensure the continuing qualification of magistrates, the NIJ has developed a sustainable training curriculum for magistrates encompassing EU law and Human rights protection.

The Managing Board and the Program Council of the National Institute of Justice coordinate and set out the priority topics for the qualification courses for magistrates on an annual basis, by taking into consideration the following:

- Practical problems related to the application of the harmonized Bulgarian legislation into the practice;
- On-going amendments in the legislation;
- Recommendations of the European Commission under the established framework mechanism of evaluation and cooperation in the area of the judicial reform, the fight against the corruption and organized crime.



*Training on the newly-adopted
Code of Civil Procedure*

Trends in the Development of the Continuing Training of Magistrates

In relation with the European Commission's recommendations, made in the Report as to the progress of Bulgaria under the framework mechanism of evaluation and cooperation, the NIJ set as a priority in the area of the continuing training of magistrates the organization of practice-based trainings, seminars and discussions on topics, related to the fight against the corruption and organized crime, and the investigation of complex economic and financial crimes.

In order to implement this goal, the NIJ updated the content of its existing training programs in the area of criminal law and procedure, added new modules, focused on the collection and evaluation of evidence and means of evidence, as well as on the tactics for the investigation of economic and financial crimes.

The following programs have been entirely renewed:

- Money Laundering. Crimes against the Tax, Financial and Insurance Systems
- Financial and Accounting Knowledge in the Investigation of Economic Crimes
- Protection of the Financial Interests of the European Union

- Judicial Cooperation on Criminal Matters and European Arrest Warrant

In view of enhancing the capacity of the investigating entities, the above programs are designed for mixed audience composed of judges, prosecutors, investigating magistrates and investigating police officers. The participation of magistrates from the specialized criminal courts and prosecution offices is also envisioned.



*Seminar "Money Laundering, Crimes against the Tax,
Financial and Insurance Systems"*

The NIJ keeps implementing its Regional Training Program for the courts and prosecution offices throughout the country in compliance with the European Commission's recommendations, by organizing practice-oriented seminars



and regional meetings on topics, related to the fight against organized crime and corruption. The Regional Training Program for the courts started in 2007, via the assistance of the Judicial Strengthening Initiative Program of the United States Agency for International Development. The statistics from the completed courses exhibit the high level of interest demonstrated by the judges and prosecutors who participated in the on-site seminars. The main advantage of the regional trainings is that the courts and the prosecution offices define themselves the topic of their training, in accordance with the specific needs of the respective region. At the same time they provide the opportunity to each magistrate to coordinate adequately his participation in the seminar with his daily work in the court or the prosecution



Regional training at the Administrative court of Silistra on “Controversial issues in the subsidiary application of the Code of Civil Procedure to administrative cases”

office. The selection of the seminars, proposed for funding by the courts and the prosecution offices, depends on the level of importance of the topic.

The seminars, listed below, have been developed to respond to the needs for new specialized programs on topics, related to the work of the joint investigation teams and to the unification of the standards for evidence:

- „Joint Investigation Teams” is a training course, designed for magistrates from the specialized courts and prosecution offices, as well as investigating police. This program has been developed in cooperation with the Supreme Prosecution Office of Cassation and there is a possibility for foreign experts from Eurojust to join the training team.
- „Evidence and Means of Evidence in the Criminal Procedure” is a seminar designed for judges, prosecutors, investigating magistrates and investigating police officers.

Another emphasis in the trainings conducted by the NIJ consists in the organization of seminars aiming at increasing the efficiency in the work of the judicial system on cases, pertaining to the securitization and forfeiture of property, acquired from criminal activity. Based on the cooperation established between the National Institute of Justice and the Commission for the Determination and Forfeiture of Illegally Acquired Property, a mechanism was created to conduct on a regular basis meetings and discussions in the appellate judicial regions in the country, where participants discuss problems, established in the court practice.

TRAINING IN EUROPEAN LAW. KEY POINTS AND TRENDS, RELATED TO THE BULGARIAN MEMBERSHIP INTO THE EUROPEAN UNION



The membership of Bulgaria in the European Union (EU) imposed new perspectives in the training of magistrates in European Law. The direct application of this law by the Bulgarian magistrates that became a fact with the Bulgarian membership in the EU led to a **bigger specialization and practical orientation of the EU law training.** In the training programs on EU Law were included topics, such as “Work with the European Judicial Atlas”, “Addressing a Preliminary Inquiry to the Court of Justice of the European Union (former ECJ)” and “Formation of Joint Investigation Teams”. **The necessity arose to organize specialized forums (round tables and expert meetings), during which the magistrates can exchange ideas, discuss issues and suggestions related to the application of specific European acts.** In the first forum of this kind dedicated to the European arrest warrant (EAW), participated judges and prosecutors across the country as well as Spanish and Dutch experts. During this event, magistrates from different judicial districts shared their experience on the implementation of the EAW. Specific practical problems were identified in terms of improving the legislation as well as the judicial practice in its application. More specifically, in order to facilitate the execution of the European Arrest Warrant by the magistrates, upon a joint initiative of the NIJ and the Ministry of Justice in 2008, a specialized section dedicated to the EAW was established in the Institute’s website. This section includes legislation on the implementation of the warrant, the Commission’s reports on its implementation and a detailed bibliography on the topic.



The section on EAW set apart into NIJ official website (www.nij.bg)

The most useful part of this specialized section is the published case law practice on the application of the EAW by the Bulgarian courts that provides a valuable guidance for the Bulgarian magistrates in connection with the issuance and execution of the order. The process of systemizing the Bulgarian case law practice related to the application of the EAW is in the hands by the Supreme Court Judge Ms Pavlina Panova, a longtime lecturer in European law at the NIJ. The overall activity of the Institute for improving Bulgarian magistrates’ qualification in executing the EAW was explicitly stated in the Report for Bulgaria on the assessment of the practical application of the European arrest warrant and surrender procedures between the Member States, adopted by the Council in May 2009. According to the European experts, the training of judges, prosecutors and investigating magistrates by the NIJ on the subject of the EAW is extensive and systematic. The activities of the Institute, including the establishment of a specialized section



within NIJ website with national case law were rated as outstanding.

With the purpose to provide practical training to magistrates on specific topics in European law, the NIJ included as priority topics in its Regional Training Program for the courts and prosecution offices in the country the EAW, the preliminary ruling procedure and the instruments for judicial cooperation in civil matters in the EU.

Strengthening the role of the National Institute of Justice not only as institution whose vocation is to train Bulgarian magistrates, but also to organize public discussions and lectures with the participation of Bulgarian representatives in the European institutions.

The idea for the organization of specialized forums in order to exchange ideas emerged during the training sessions and led to the necessity to provide practical feedback to numerous questions arisen with the application of EU law, using the most appropriate method for the magistrates – in a precise and clear manner with reference to specific provisions and case law.

Since 2008, it has become a tradition to conduct regular meetings between the Bulgarian magistrates and Mr. Alexander Arabadzhiev – the Bulgarian judge with the Court of Justice of the EU, Ms. Zdravka Kalaydjieva – judge with the European Court of Human Rights and Ms. Mariana Lilova, the Bulgarian national representative at Eurojust and prosecutor with the Supreme Prosecution Office of Cassation.



Round Table on the topic “The EU Law and the Contemporary Bulgarian Constitutionalism” attended by participants from the EU Parliament Committee on Constitutional Affairs

EU Law Training Priorities 2012-2013

The priorities of the NIJ training in European law reflect the guidelines of the European Commission, as set out in the Report under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism, as well as in the Commission’s Communication on the new dimensions of European judicial training since September 2011.

Emphasis in the training of magistrates will be the investigation of cases related to corruption, the prevention of conflict of interest and the fight against organized crime. Language training as a necessary element of mutual understanding of the judicial systems in Europe and the basis for the development of mutual trust and cooperation between magistrates in the European Union stands for the first time as a

¹ COM (2011) 551 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council “Building trust in EU-wide justice across the EU. A new dimension to the European Judicial Training”.

priority in the continuing qualification of the magistrates.

The so far developed curricula and practice-based courses in the field of European law will be fully updated with the assistance of foreign experts. The trend is for these programs to include more practical exercises and work with cases and judgments of the Court of the European Union.

Organizing international trainings with participation of experts and magistrates of the EU is another focus of the NIJ program in European law. The participation of foreign experts in programs devoted to the investigation of economic crimes, the protection of EU financial interests and transnational organized crime is also considered a priority.



Training in EU Law for Judges from the Supreme Courts, lectured by Mr. Jan Bergman, a judge at the Administrative Court of Baden-Württemberg, Germany



Protection of Human Rights

Effective implementation of international standards on the protection of human rights is on the basis of the qualification program on human rights developed by the NIJ. In connection with the pilot judgments of the European Court of Human Rights against Bulgaria, the National Institute of Justice, in cooperation with the Council of Europe, has developed training seminars on specific texts of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which were the first forums to discuss issues related to the creation of effective domestic remedies to compensate for damages incurred from delayed justice. The trend is that these workshops are conducted periodically in the appellate districts with the participation of representatives from the Supreme Court of Cassation, the Supreme Administrative Court and experts from the Council of Europe.

Interdisciplinary Training

The Interdisciplinary Training Unit with the NIJ was established upon a decision of the Managing Board in June 2010. Courses were developed within this unit focusing on law-related disciplines that provide new knowledge for the magistrates in areas not necessarily of purely juridical nature, but closely related to their daily work: economics, administrative management, psychology and psychiatry, ethics, interaction with society and media, financial and accounting knowledge etc. The choice for developing these pilot courses was based on the recommendations set out in the Strategy for Continuing Reform of the Bulgarian Judicial System, the practice review of the European training schools and the surveys conducted among the Bulgarian magistrates.



TRAINING FOR THE COURT ADMINISTRATION

The National Institute of Justice has been organizing trainings for the court administration since 2005.

The main goals of those trainings are: 1.) improving the professional knowledge and practical skills of court clerks so that they can perform their duties effectively; and 2.) unification of work practices in courts' administration and building high administrative culture.

The NIJ training activities for the court administration are as follows:



Seminar "Initial Training for Court Clerks"

Initial training

The National Institute of Justice started the implementation of a program for court clerks' Initial training in 2006. In consideration of the specifics in the court administration's activities, the main goals of this training are to provide generic initial training for newly-appointed court officials by covering in detail the basic elements and principles of their day-to-day work and to provide them with a solid ground for future professional development.

The Initial Training course curriculum includes general and specialized topics relevant to the organization and activities of the court administration. Its purpose is to adapt knowledge and skills of the employees to the principles and practice of court activities. The duration of the initial training is eight days. It is divided into two modules and is held twice a year.

On-going training

The court administration training curricula include specialized subjects, relevant to the different positions of the specialized court administration and its specifics, and general subjects, which stress on the knowledge and skills used as criteria for court officials' evaluation. Continuing training's goal is to facilitate a high quality standardized training for as much as possible court officials with professional experience.



Seminar “Court Administration Team Building”

NIJ training programs offered to court administration comprise basic subjects such as:

- ✓ Court administration management;
- ✓ Introduction to the activities of court administration at the prosecution offices;
- ✓ Handling civil cases;
- ✓ Handling criminal cases;
- ✓ Handling administrative cases;
- ✓ Handling company cases;
- ✓ Summoning process;
- ✓ Work at the Conviction records’ office;
- ✓ Judicial cooperation in civil matters;
- ✓ Judicial cooperation in criminal matters;
- ✓ Protection of classified information;
- ✓ Court secretaries. Grammar excellence and record-keeping;
- ✓ Customer administrative service;
- ✓ Team work;
- ✓ Time and stress management.

These trainings last between two and three days. All training modules have their training plans, equipment and detailed scenarios for the trainers, as they were developed in order to ensure the high quality of delivery.

Besides from being generally oriented towards enhancing the professional competencies of

court clerks, the curriculum pays special attention to learning and complying with ethical standards and regulations (incl. anti-corruptional behavior) defined in the Rules for the Professional Ethics of Court Administration.

Train the Trainers

NIJ has built a core faculty of experienced train the trainers for the court administration: court employees, magistrates and experts in specific areas with high professional skills. At the same time, the growing number of training programs and courses provided by NIJ requires the recruitment of new trainers and on-going enhancement of the qualification of the current ones. For this reason, the NIJ organizes a specialized “Train the Trainers” (TOT) workshop as well. The TOT curriculum is orientated towards improvement of pedagogical skills, drafting training curricula and development of presentation skills.



Seminar “Train the Trainers”



LEARNING AND INFORMATION CENTER

The Learning and Information Center (LIC) was established as a separate functional unit within the National Institute of Justice in March 2006. The activities of the LIC are specified in Article 249, para 2 JSA and Chapter Sixth of the Regulation on the organization and the activity of the National Institute of Justice and its administration.

The experience of the French National School of Magistrates (ENM) and the Spanish Judicial Documentation Center (CENDOJ) were used in the formation of the LIC. The Dutch MATRA Program, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), partnership organizations from the United Kingdom,

Germany and other countries provided valuable support for its institutional building and development.

Distance Learning at the National Institute of Justice

In order to organize and manage the distance learning trainings, the National Institute of Justice focuses on the integrity and work with a web-based system. The latter allows effective management of these courses and simultaneous training for many magistrates and court clerks situated at different and remote locations.

While delivering distance learning courses, the NIJ puts substantial emphasis on some of its indisputable advantages, such as: compatibility with participants' professional duties, moderate resources, decentralization, and opportunity for a detailed and profound study of the contents, individual approach and convenient update of training materials. These characteristics make the introduction and development of distance training a priority task for many European institutions specialized in the area of judicial training.



Initial meeting at the distance learning course "Judicial Cooperation in Civil Matters"



Publications and Research

In 2008 the National Institute of Justice started its own series of publications under the title “NIJ Library”. This series is aimed at presenting important legal studies on actual matters of jurisdiction. Training materials from the most interesting and practice-orientated seminars conducted at the NIJ are published in this series as well. NIJ publications are enriched periodically by additional handbooks on topics such as judicial protection of fundamental rights in Bulgaria, preliminary reference procedure, registered pledges issues, the new Code of Civil Procedure, equity companies, securities and corporate governance, investigation and detection of cyber crimes.

Research activities carried out in the sphere of national and EU Law facilitate the update of training materials for each of the training courses, organized by the NIJ, and complement the Institute’s reputation as modern center for professional training of magistrates.

In line with the Strategy for continuation of the reform of the judicial system in Bulgaria under the country’s full membership to the European Union, as developed in the period 2011-2012 (by the Ministry of Justice and adopted with Decision №441 of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria from June 28th, 2010) a Research Unit, specialized in empirical legal research and provision of impartial assessments of the processes occurring within the Judiciary, was established within the LIC.

The LIC plays also an essential role in conducting an experimental training needs assessment among magistrates and court clerks in 2011, as well as in analyzing the results from it.

Library

The NIJ Library has been operational since 2004. Its main functions are:

- to classify, process and provide legal information and thus supplement the training and research activities carried out at the NIJ;
- to provide the judicial authorities with information, necessary for the fulfillment of their duties;
- to implement the NIJ activity as European Documentation Center (EDC).



Cover-page of the first booklet from the “NIJ Library” series on “Preliminary Reference Procedure”



The library's collection comprises of over 3 500 titles organized by subject matter and freely accessible. It covers books, legislation and case-law in the area of national, international and EU law and jurisdiction; NIJ training and information materials; training and information materials and reports of Bulgarian and foreign partnership organizations; specialized reference publications; specialized Bulgarian and foreign periodicals; CDs, DVDs, audio and video materials, as well as access to specialized legal software products. The library on-line catalogue, where a bibliographic description of the available entries could be found, is accessible from the NIJ website. The catalogue allows quick and easy search of information or book title.

European Documentation Center (EDC)

In 2007 a Documentation Center in EU Law for the Judiciary has been established within the NIJ Learning and Information Center. The legal grounds for this act lay in an agreement, signed by the European Commission, under which the National Institute of Justice has been approved to receive the status of EDC and has become a part of the common information services network EUROPE DIRECT. This status allows the NIJ to provide Bulgarian magistrates with a direct, quick and easy access to relevant information about the legislation, case-law and activities of the European Union.

The European Documentation Center is an information service provider that:

- encourages and strengthens the teaching and research activities in the area of European integration;
- supports judges, prosecutors and investigating magistrates in the application of EU Law (*acquis communautaire*) and acquisition of European qualitative justice standards;
- grants access to detailed information about the European Union, disseminated in the form of documents, information materials, CDs and DVDs for the citizens.



Library at the National Institute of Justice



NIJ Library collection has been expanded with publications in EU Law on a regular basis

Information Services and Statistics

The LIC maintains and updates the contents of the NIJ website (<http://www.nij.bg>) through the input of data about the Institute's current activities, news, topics of interest and court practice. The NIJ training curriculum is constantly updated as well. The LIC broadens the scope of topics and court practice in the area of EU law previously published on the website, builds up and organizes the information in order to facilitate its retrieval and better perception by the users.

LIC elaborates information materials and statistical data about the trainings, conducted by the NIJ throughout the year.

Extranet

Within the framework of a project, entitled "Creation of Network of Judges Coordinators on EU Law", funded under the Administrative Capacity Operational Program in the period 2009-2011, the NIJ developed a new on-line platform (Extranet) for storage and exchange of information between the

participants in the national Network of Judges-Coordinators in EU law and their colleagues throughout the country. The Network provides for the effective application of EU law in Bulgaria and enhances the cooperation between the courts in this area.

Extranet is a platform that enables generating information related to court practice, publications and forums and provides for the smooth communication between the participants. The system also allows the publication of information via the assistance of NIJ employees and directly by the registered users of the platform.





INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

The National Institute of Justice continues to enhance the international cooperation started by its predecessor, the Magistrates' Training Center (MTC).

The NIJ international contacts with foreign partners expand in the following directions:

1. Establishment and maintenance of contacts with international organizations, partners and donors; organization and implementation of projects

The international activity is of crucial importance for the institutional building capacity of the National Institute of Justice because the cooperation with international partners as well as the participation in various projects contribute to its funding and strengthening.



One of the main partners and donors of the NIJ was the **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** with which the MTC, and later on its successor, the NIJ, have been working since the autumn of 2000 on the implementation of various programs and projects. In 2006 NIJ began the utilization of a grant provided by USAID and East-West Management Institute under the Judicial Strengthening Initiative for

Bulgaria, which was successfully completed by mid 2007.

The grant supported the further development of the NIJ institutional capacity and included development of training programs, staff qualification and Institute's organizational functions improvement.



The NIJ institutional development during the years of its recognition as a center for judicial training in Bulgaria is due substantially to the cooperation of the Institute with partners from the EU Member States, with whom it jointly implemented Twinning Projects in the framework of **the EU PHARE pre-accession Program**.



Over the years, the NIJ has been successfully collaborating with **the French National School of Magistrates (ENM)** and **the French Agency for International Legal Cooperation (ACOJURIS)**, **the General Council of the Judiciary of Kingdom of Spain** and **the School for Judicial Training in Barcelona**.

After Bulgaria's accession to the European Union on January 1st, 2007, the NIJ beneficial cooperation with international partner organizations and institutions continued in the framework of **the Transition Facility Program 2007**. In the period 2009 – 2010, the NIJ, together with **the General Council of the Judiciary of Kingdom of Spain** and **the National School for Court Clerks in France** worked



on Twinning Project **BG/2007/IB/JH/08** “**A Further Step towards a Higher Quality of Training for the Bulgarian Judiciary**”. The project aimed at improving the qualification of Bulgarian magistrates and court clerks through courses, offered by the National Institute of Justice, in line with the European criteria.

Within the 12 month period for implementation of this project, a sustainable model for distance training, as well as mechanism for the organization of regional trainings for court administration in Bulgaria, have been developed.



T.M.C. Asser Institute, the Netherlands also contributed substantially to the institutional building and development of the Bulgarian judicial training institution. In the period 2005 – 2007, the **NIJ** and **T.M.C. Asser Institute**, in collaboration with the **Netherlands Helsinki Committee**, jointly implemented a project for the establishment of Documentation Center on EU Law, as part of the Learning and Information Center at NIJ. The project was realized with the assistance of the **MATRA Program of the Dutch Government** and aimed at NIJ institutional capacity building by improving the provision of knowledge and information on EU law to the Bulgarian Judiciary, as well as by establishing a new web-based infrastructure for the National Institute of Justice.

DEUTSCHE STIFTUNG FÜR
INTERNATIONALE RECHTLICHE
ZUSAMMENARBEIT E.V.



Another long standing partner of the NIJ is the **German Foundation for International Legal Cooperation (IRZ)**. With its collaboration the Institute

organizes and conducts trainings aimed at enhancing Bulgarian magistrates' awareness in EU law.



In 2006-2008 the NIJ joined the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Bulgaria in a project for Better Judicial Training implemented together with **the British Council and the United Kingdom's Embassy in Bulgaria**, with the main goal to create a policy of transparency and greater efficiency in the justice area in Bulgaria.



On May 11, 2006 in Strasbourg was launched the European Human Rights Training Program for Judicial Authorities, whose contact point for Bulgaria was the National Institute of Justice. In 2007, Program partners started an initiative for the elaboration of website that would support Human rights trainers in Europe with materials and wide range of training tools. The website contains also a database of experts, able to offer professional expertise to judicial institutions in Europe in the area of Human rights. In 2008, four distance learning courses on Human Rights, based on decisions of the European Court of Human rights (ECHR), were conducted. These courses introduced a method of analysis for important facts and legal issues, covered in given ECHR decision.



Since January 1, 2007, after its accession to the European Union, Bulgaria participates in the Cohesion Policy of the EU, for the program period 2007-2013. The main objective of this policy is to support the economic, social and territorial unification through reduction of the differences in the level of development of the regions and the Member States within the EU. The financial instruments for the implementation of those objectives are as follows: **the European Fund for Regional Development, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund of the EU**. The financial resources are to be distributed among the Member States according to criteria, up to their level of prosperity.



Operational Program Administrative Capacity (OPAC) aims at strengthening the capacity of all levels of administration — centralized and decentralized as well as of the structures of civil society and the judiciary. OPAC has to contribute to the professionalism, transparency and accountability of the judiciary. According to the criteria of the Program, the National Institute of Justice is concrete beneficiary along with the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC), the Inspectorate at

the SJC, the Supreme Court of Cassation, the Supreme Administrative Court, the Prosecution Office of the Republic of Bulgaria, the National Investigation Service, the Ministry of Justice and the Recordation Agency.

Within the period 2009 – 2011 NIJ implemented **the project “Establishment of a Network of Judges-Coordiators in EU Law” funded under Operative Program “Administrative Capacity” (OPAC) and co-funded by the European Social Fund**. It aimed at enhancing the capacity of Bulgarian judiciary in the field of EU law and its application.

A national Network for sharing professional expertise in the area of EU law among Bulgarian magistrates, covering all district, administrative and the four biggest regional courts in the country was established under the project. An electronic system for storage and exchange of information among the magistrates, participating in the Network and their colleagues from all over the country (Extranet) was developed as well.



At the end of 2007 a **Memorandum of Understanding** was signed between **the National Institute of Justice, the U.S. Department of Justice and the Prosecution Office of the Republic of Bulgaria**. The term of this Memorandum expired in 2010.

The specified tri-lateral contract aimed at developing and implementing sustainable training programs for prosecutors with the support of distinguished Bulgarian and foreign experts. These programs were developed according to the training needs of the Bulgarian Prosecution Office and the National Institute of Justice. After the

pilot delivery they have become part of the NIJ core curriculum.



The curricula focus on the following topics of priority: organized crime, corruption, money-laundering, trafficking in human beings, drug trafficking and other contraband activities, financial and cyber crimes, environmental crimes, crimes affecting health services, etc.

The selection of trainers was a joint responsibility of the partners as per the Memorandum. The future trainers were trained under the “Train the Trainers” system. During the training, the participants prepared their training materials and made mock presentations.

The joint initiatives with the U.S. Department of Justice ended with the organization of regional trainings on the topic “Leadership and Management in the Prosecution System”.

In 2011 the American partner allocated special funding for the delivery of seminar on “Counteraction to the crime related to illegal trade, encroachment and export of cultural objects as part of Bulgarian cultural heritage” carried out in collaboration with Forum Association. This training has also been included in the NIJ curriculum.



European Judicial Training Network

In 2007 the NIJ became full member of the Network and started taking more active part in its activity.

The European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) was established on October 13th, 2000. It comprises of institutions conducting professional training for the

Judiciary within the European Union. EJTN aims at disseminating training curricula with an EU dimension for representatives of the Judiciary in Europe. The European Commission has authorised the Network to conduct an Exchange Program under which exchange visits to courts, prosecution offices or judicial training institutions are organized in order to provide the participants with an insight into various European judicial systems.

The National Institute of Justice is an executive representative of **the Exchange Program for Judicial Authorities** and has participated in the latter in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011. Bulgaria was visited by magistrates from France, Poland, Germany, Belgium, Romania and other European countries on a reciprocal principle under the Program.

In 2012 the NIJ will continue its beneficial cooperation within the framework of the Exchange Program.

Ecole Nationale de la Magistrature

The active cooperation between **the French School of Magistrates** and the National Institute of Justice continued during the recent years. The two institutions worked together in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 over a project aimed at developing a training module on judicial cooperation in criminal matters, which was delivered with the assistance of **the European Judicial Training Network and the European Commission**. Under this Program, the NIJ was visited by interns and trainers from the French School of Magistrates. On their part, Bulgarian junior judges and prosecutors and their trainers took part in a training on International Cooperation in Criminal Matters held at the School of Magistrates in Bordeaux, France.



Bulgarian junior judges and prosecutors, interns, and a trainer from the French School of Magistrates



Since 2009 the NIJ has become member of the International Organization for Judicial Training (IOJT). It comprises 95 judicial training institutes from 60 countries all around the world, such as USA, Canada, Australia, China, Russia, India, Brazil, etc. NIJ is also represented at the IOJT's Managing Board.

2. Organization and coordination of visits of foreign delegations from Schools and Centers for Judicial Training

As a result of its strengthened institutional capacity and good reputation, the National Institute of Justice stirs the

interest of many newly-established or developing centers for judicial training from countries from the Western Balkans and Southeastern Europe that are willing to visit the Institute and exchange experience with their Bulgarian colleagues. Thus, in 2004, the NIJ welcomed delegations from the centers for judicial training in Georgia, Tajikistan and Serbia.

Within the scope of such visits the NIJ provides expert assistance, by presenting the Institute's institutional development, the organization of its work and its programs for initial and continuing training.

In 2005, the National Institute of Justice received and shared experience with a delegation from Macedonia and representatives from the Judicial Institute of Kosovo.

In 2006, the Institute was visited by a delegation from countries from the Western Balkans, representatives of the training centers for prosecutors and judges in Bosnia and Herzegovina and a delegation from the Ministry of Justice in Slovenia.

In 2010 and 2011 the NIJ has welcomed delegations from the Supreme Court of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Ministry of Justice of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam as well as representatives of the Judiciary of the Republic of Latvia.



PUBLIC EVENTS AT THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE

Since its establishment in 2004, the NIJ hosted many official visits, public lectures, work meetings, international conferences and seminars, which contributed to its recognition as judicial training institution of both European and international dimension.

Here are some of the significant public events that have taken place at the NIJ, listed in chronological order:

1. Official Visits

Visit of Judge Barbara Rothstein, Director of the US Federal Judicial Center

On September 20-21, 2011 the Director of the US Federal Judicial Center – federal judge Barbara Rothstein visited the National Institute of Justice, where she met the Director of the Institute Mr. Dragomir Yordanov as well as NIJ trainers and staff.

Judge Rothstein presented the activities of the Federal Judicial Center (FJC) in Washington – an education and research agency of the United States federal courts, established by an Act of Congress in 1967, at the recommendation of the Judicial Conference of the United States, in order to strengthen the capacity of court administration in the USA. Opportunities for future co-operation between the FJC and NIJ in specific areas of activity were also discussed.

Judge Rothstein's visit to NIJ was part of her four-day visit to Bulgaria, organized upon the invitation of the US Embassy in Bulgaria.



Judge Rothstein's visit at NIJ, September 2011

Official Meeting of NIJ Management with the Special Rapporteur on the Independence of judges and lawyers, Ms. Gabriela Carina Knaul Albuquerque e Silva

An official meeting of NIJ management with the Special Rapporteur on **the Independence of judges and lawyers, Ms. Gabriela Carina Knaul Albuquerque e Silva** was held on May 10, 2011 at the NIJ.

The visit of Ms. Albuquerque e Silva to the National Institute of Justice as part of her weeklong visit to Bulgaria was focused on introducing the functioning of Bulgarian Judiciary. In the framework of her visit Ms. Albuquerque e Silva met also the Minister of Justice of Republic of Bulgaria and the Presidents of the Supreme Court of Cassation and the Supreme Administrative Court.



At her meeting with the NIJ management Ms. Albuquerque e Silva got acquainted with the activities of the Institute. Special attention was paid to the trainings on the NIJ-organized Human rights for magistrates' trainings, their impact on the magistrates' activity in the administration of justice. Ms. Albuquerque e Silva emphasized on the positive effect of the NIJ activities for the strengthening of the Judiciary in Bulgaria.

Visit of Ms. Henrietta Fore, U.S. Department of State Undersecretary

The U.S. Department of State Undersecretary, Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance a.i. Ms. Henrietta Fore visited the National Institute of Justice on October 10th, 2007. Ms. Fore was accompanied by H.E. Mr. John Beyrle, U.S. Ambassador to Bulgaria and by Mr. Michael Fritz, the USAID Director for Bulgaria.

The NIJ was the only Bulgarian institution which the U.S. Department of State Undersecretary visited while in Bulgaria. Ms. Fore visited our country on the occasion of closing the USAID foreign assistance programs.



Ms. Henrietta Fore on her visit at the NIJ, October 2007

Award Ceremony for H.E. Mr. Ives Saint-Geours, Ambassador of the Republic of France

The French Ambassador H.E. Mr. Ives Saint-Geours was awarded the Token of Honor of the National Institute of Justice on April 12th, 2007. The NIJ Managing Board awarded the token to H.E. Ives Saint-Geours for his assistance in applying the French experience in the process of establishing and developing a national training institution for Bulgarian magistrates; for his contribution to the development of partnership between the NIJ and the National School of Magistracy of France; and on the occasion of his definitive departure from Bulgaria.



Ms. Catherine Colonna and H.E. Yves Saint-Geours during their visit at the NIJ, December 2006

Visit of Ms. Catherine Colonna, Delegated Minister of European Affairs of France

Ms. Catherine Colonna, Delegated Minister of European Affairs of France, visited the National Institute of Justice on December 1st, 2006. She met the NIJ management and trainers, as well as magistrates already trained at the Institute. The meeting, attended also by the French Ambassador H.E. Mr. Yves Saint-Geours, was part of the official visit of Ms. Colonna to the Republic of Bulgaria. Ms. Colonna expressed the support of France to the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU on January 1st, 2007.



Visit of H.E. John Beyrle, U.S. Ambassador to Bulgaria

U.S. Ambassador to Bulgaria H.E. Mr. John Beyrle visited the National Institute of Justice on October 20th, 2006. Ambassador Beyrle met with the Director of the NIJ Assoc. Prof. Ph.D. Pencho Penev, NIJ trainers and staff. The NIJ Director expressed his gratitude for the support extended by the United States of America through governmental and non-governmental organizations, for the establishment and strengthening of the administrative capacity of the Institute and for the implementation of a high-quality training for magistrates.



*Assoc. Prof. Ph.D. Pencho Penev and H.E. John Beyrle,
October 2006*

Assoc. Prof. Ph.D. Pencho Penev awarded to the U.S. Ambassador the recently established NIJ Token of Honor in acknowledgement of his support. Ambassador Beyrle stated in his speech that the assistance in setting up the Magistrates' Training Center, followed by the National Institute of Justice, is an investment for a stronger and stable Bulgaria. "The highly-qualified magistrates are important for a genuinely independent Judiciary", Ambassador Beyrle pointed out and shared that he was sincerely proud that the NIJ had become more effective due to U.S. support.

Visit of Ms. Meglena Kuneva, Minister of European Affairs

The Minister of European Affairs Ms. Meglena Kuneva visited the NIJ on the occasion of the official presentation of a CD-collection of materials on EU law at the end of March 2006. The CD-collection was created with the assistance of NIJ trainers on EU law and contained practical materials aimed at helping the Bulgarian magistrates in their new role of Community magistrates after January 1st, 2007.



*Ms. Meglena Kuneva during her visit at the NIJ,
March 2006*

Visit of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria

The President of the Republic of Bulgaria, Mr. George Parvanov, visited the NIJ on July 14th, 2005 and met with the junior judges, prosecutors and investigating magistrates. In his speech, the President emphasized that junior magistrates symbolized the changes in the judicial system as they would take on the responsibility to administer justice in a Member State of the European Union – an entirely new and different responsibility from those entrusted to the previous generations of Bulgarian magistrates. Mr. Parvanov pointed out that the training for junior magistrates at the National Institute of Justice was illustrative of the reinforced attention of the state to the quality of



professional qualification for magistrates. In the President's view, the general university education in Law was no longer sufficient and the new magistrates had to know more and to be more experienced than their colleagues. "Not only this is the right approach, but it is also the only way to ensure that the best legal professionals would work in the judicial system of Bulgaria. In order to be able to demand and expect better results from the judicial system, the state must do its part and provide those necessary conditions of work that the magistrates deserve", the President added.

In his speech, he also touched upon other key issues on the reform of the judicial system.



Bulgarian President during his visit at the National Institute of Justice, July 2005

2. Public Lectures

Public Lecture of Mr. Alexander Arabadjiev, Bulgarian Judge at the Court of Justice of the European Union

On November 2nd, 2011 the Bulgarian representative at the Court of Justice of the EU Mr. Alexander Arabadjiev delivered at NIJ a public lecture entitled

"Bulgarian Cases Brought before the Court of Justice of the EU".

The lecture was attended by NIJ trainers in EU law, members of the Supreme Judicial Council and its Inspectorate, judges, prosecutors, investigating magistrates and NGO representatives.

Public Lecture of Judge Barbara Rothstein, Director of the US Federal Judicial Center

On September 21st, 2011 the Director of the Federal Judicial Center in the USA – federal judge Barbara Rothstein held at NIJ a public lecture on "Scientific Knowledge and the Role of the Expert Witness in Courtroom". Judge Rothstein's vast experience as judge, prosecutor and lawyer contributed to the complex and thorough presentation of the examined matter.

The lecture was attended by representatives of the Judiciary, executive authorities, professional and non-governmental organizations, academics and journalists. The public event held at the NIJ was part of judge Rothstein's four-day visit to Bulgaria, organized upon invitation of the US Embassy in Bulgaria.



Public lecture of Judge Barbara Rothstein at NIJ, September 2011

Public lecture of H.E. Mr. Etienne de Poncins, Ambassador of France

The French Ambassador to Bulgaria H.E. Mr. Etienne de Poncins delivered at the NIJ public lecture entitled "The Lisbon Treaty

and its impact on the European Union” on November 2nd, 2009.



Public lecture of the French Ambassador H.E. Etienne de Poncins at the NIJ, November 2009

**Public Lecture of Ms. Rachida Dati,
Minister of Justice of the Republic of
France**

The French Minister of Justice Ms. Rachida Dati delivered at the NIJ a lecture on judicial training on September 8th, 2008. The lecture was attended by Ms. Miglena Tacheva, then Minister of Justice of the Republic of Bulgaria, members of the Supreme Judicial Council and NIJ Managing Board as well as trainers and magistrates. The event was part of one-day working visit of Ms. Dati to Bulgaria.



Ms. Rachida Dati on her visit at the NIJ, September 2008

**Public lecture of H.E. Mr. Etienne de
Poncins, Ambassador of France**

The French Ambassador to Bulgaria H.E. Mr. Etienne de Poncins delivered a public lecture entitled “The Main Points of Reference for the French Presidency and the Impact of Lisbon Treaty in the Area of Justice” on June 4th, 2008.



**Public Lecture of Mr. Hans Nillson,
Head of Unit on Criminal Judicial
Cooperation in the General
Secretariat of the Council of the
European Union**

In order to support the achievement of the benchmarks envisaged under the Bulgarian Action Plan on the Judiciary Reform and the Fight against Corruption and Organized Crime, a lecture under the title “Bulgarian Justice and the European Area of Justice. Mutual Trust and Mutual Recognition” was held on November 27th, 2007 at the National Institute of Justice. A guest of honour and lecturer was Mr. Hans Nillson, Head of Unit on Criminal Judicial Cooperation at the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union. In the event, organized jointly by the Ministry of Justice and the National Institute of Justice, took part members of the Judiciary, Bulgarian representatives at EUROJUST, experts from the Ministry of Justice, NGOs, etc.

**Public Lecture delivered by Mr.
Franco Frattini, Vice President of
the European Commission and
Commissioner for Justice, Freedom
and Security**

The Vice President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security Mr. Franco Frattini delivered at NIJ a lecture on the topic “The Area of Justice and Security in Europe” on February 16th, 2007.

The event was part of three-day business visit to Bulgaria of Commissioner Frattini and aimed at presenting to Bulgarian magistrates the new challenges in the area of justice in the context of accession of our country to the European Union.



Mr. Franco Frattini on his visit at NIJ, February 2007

Public Lecture of Baroness Scotland

Baroness Patricia Scotland, Minister of State for the Criminal Justice System and Offender Management at the Home Office of the United Kingdom, visited the National Institute of Justice on October 28, 2005. She delivered a lecture on the topic "Why Justice Is Important" before the junior magistrates at the Institute.

The event was attended by Mr. Ivan Grigorov, President of the Supreme Court of Cassation and President of the Managing Board of the National Institute of Justice, and Mr. Margarit Ganev, Deputy Minister of Justice and Member of the NIJ Managing Board.



Baroness Scotland's visit at NIJ, October 2005

3. Work Meetings. International Conferences and Seminars

Round Table on the Problems facing the Application of E-Summoning in Bulgaria, organized under the initiative of the President of the Supreme Court of Cassation Prof. Ph.D. Lazar Gruev

A round table, aimed at discussing the problems and perspectives before the application of E-Summoning in court proceedings in Bulgaria was held on September 28th, 2011 at the NIJ.

Representatives of all concerned entities, such as members of the governing bodies of the Judiciary, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Bulgaria, members of the Legal Committee with the National Assembly as well as representatives of the Legal Bar, the Notary's Office and NGO's took part in this debate.

The results from the comparative legal survey on the E-Summoning Practice in some of the EU Member States, carried out by the Learning and Information Center at NIJ, were also presented at the round table.

The event ended with the establishment of working group composed of representatives from all concerned entities that have to prepare and offer specific changes (incl. legislative, technological, etc.) to achieve effective application of E-Summoning in court proceedings in Bulgaria.

The National Institute of Justice hosted an International Seminar on Combating Illegal Enrichment, organized by the French Embassy

In the period October 19th - 20th, 2009 a seminar on „**Detection and Imposition of Punitive Measures against Illegal Enrichment**” was held at the National Institute of Justice. This event was **jointly organized by the NIJ and the embassies of France, Romania, Serbia, and Moldova to Bulgaria.**

The term “illegal enrichment” covers a wide range of crimes and infringements, varying from misuse of public benefits on behalf of individuals occupying elective positions and state servants, to misuse of social benefits in the enterprises. There is a considerable number of organizations participating in the detection and punishment of these corruption phenomena and this requires very good coordination and cooperation between them on national and international level.

The seminar gathered experts from the police, taxation and judicial authorities, directly engaged in combating the different forms of illegal enrichment. During the event the participants debated over the technical and practical measures for strengthening the coordination among the authorities at national level and over the established instruments for cooperation within the EU, in order to improve the results from the seizure of property of illegal origin.

Working Meeting of the Judicial Training Institutions in Europe

A two-day working meeting of representatives from different judicial training institutions in Europe started on November 29th, 2007 at the National Institute of Justice. The meeting was organized **under the auspices of the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN)** and was attended by the former Secretary General of EJTN Mr. Gille Charbonnier. Representatives of thirteen European judicial training institutions participated in the working meeting. They discussed the options and the methods for harmonizing the training curricula for initial training of newly-appointed magistrates. The National Institute of Justice hosted the meeting in its capacity of a full EJTN member – a status received after unanimous vote of the EJTN General Assembly in June 2007.

International Conference on Judicial Training in EU Law

An international conference on “**Mutual Trust and Judicial Training. Towards a Common Culture in the Judicial Training**

in EU Law” started on October 24th, 2007. The duration of the conference was three days. It was organized under the PHARE Twinning Project BG 2004/IB/JH/05 “Training for Magistrates and Court Administration”, implemented jointly by the NIJ and the Spanish Judicial School in Barcelona.



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