



**FOUNDATION FOR LOCAL
GOVERNMENT REFORM**

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

Contact Information

Foundation for Local Government Reform

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FLGR is an independent professional resource centre, supporting local democracy.

Mission of the Foundation for Local Government Reform is to support local democracy and promote effective, partnership-based local development, based on democratic values, social inclusion and prosperity.

For 20 years of existence the Foundation has successfully implemented projects and programmes contributing to the democratization and modernization of local government in Bulgaria and enhancement of public awareness on local government issues.

FLGR has a 5-member Governing Body.

The **main spheres** of expertise of FLGR are:

- **Training**
- **Participatory Local Governance**
- **Good Governance and Integrity**
- **Better Administrative Services**
- **Innovative Practices**

FLGR through study tours and exchange of experiences supported the development of local democracy in Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, Georgia, Kosovo, Romania, Kaliningrad Region, Kazakhstan.

FLGR was part of the European network of local authorities for exchange of experiences LOGIN since its creation in 1999 until its closure at the end of 2011.

FLGR is a founding member of Donor Fund Bulgaria.

FLGR was part of the Mayors Making the Most of EU Funds for Roma Inclusion Network (MERI), 2013-2014.

FLGR Governing Body

Lachezar Rosenov, Mayor, Municipality of Dobrich (1995 - 2003), Chair of the Board

Deni Kamenov, Mayor, Municipality of Vidin (1991 - 1995), Vice-Chair of the Board

Ginka Kapitanova, Mayor, Municipality of Zlatograd (1991 - 1995), Executive Director of FLGR (1995 - 2007), Board Member

Roumen Draganov, Director, Institute for Analyses and Assessments in Tourism, Board Member

Zdravko Sechkov, Executive Director of FLGR, Board Member

The Team of FLGR

Zdravko Sechkov, Executive Director of FLGR

Gergana Stavreva, expert

Alexander Mihailov, expert

Yani Dimitrov, expert

Rossitsa Raycheva, expert

Demir Deyanov, expert

Elvira Koleva, accountant

The organization works with a network of over 30 experts from across the country that join the team of FLGR in implementing projects related to their area of expertise.

■ INFORMATION RESOURCES AND COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Over the years FLGR developed effective and recognizable communication channels to communicate with customers and partners:

- **www.flgr.bg – the site of the organization;**
- **wp.flgr.bg – FLGR blog;**
- **e-Weekly Newsletter**

Information resources are user friendly and continually enriched.

■ FLGR website www.flgr.bg

In the FLGR website one can find:

>> e-Weekly

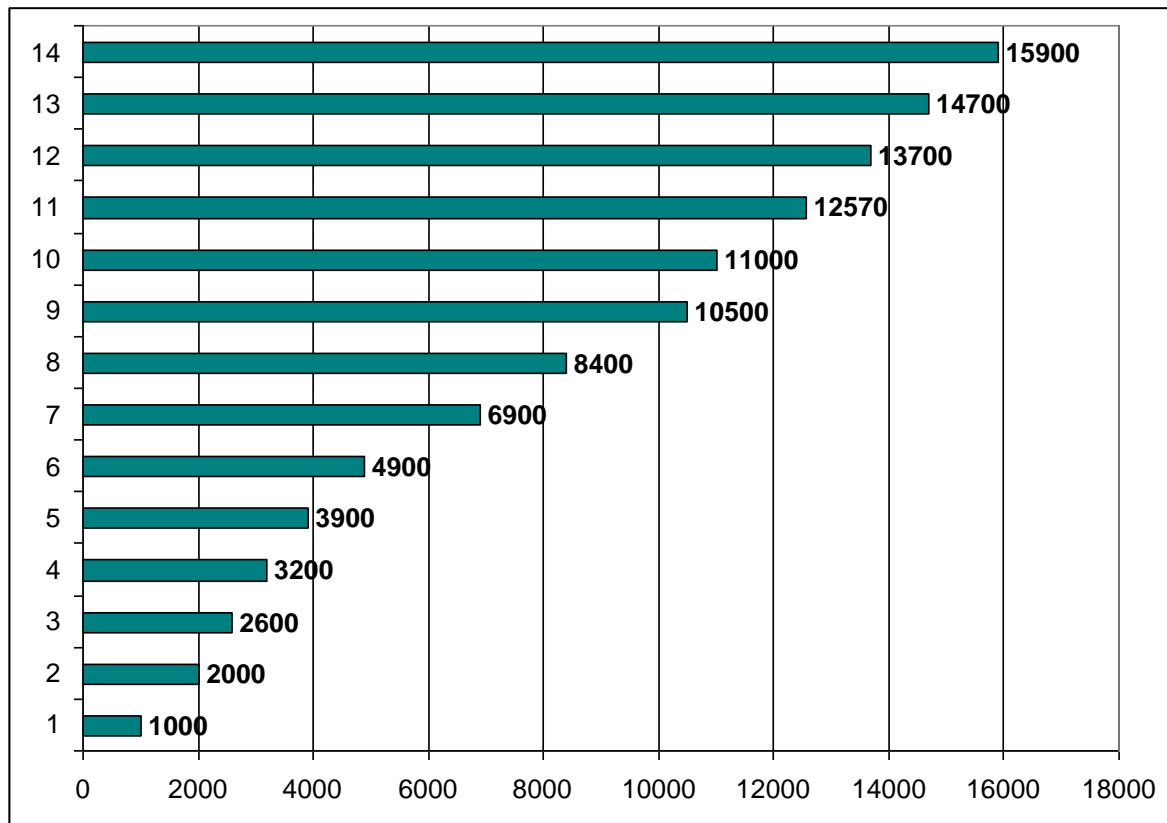
FLGR's E-Weekly in 2014 had 49 issues and presented to its subscribers:

- - 636 funding opportunities and competitions;
- - 370 training opportunities and internships.

Subscribers to the weekly FLGR increased from 14,727 at the end of 2013 to 15,985 at the end of 2014.

FLGR provides its subscribers the possibility to disseminate their initiatives through publication in the e-Weekly and more and more municipalities, NGOs and others use this chance.

e-Weekly Subscribers



>> Online Library

In Online library in 2014 64 new publications were published in electronic form in Bulgarian and English, of which the greatest interest arose:

- National Plan for Implementation of the European Youth Guarantee, 2014 - 2020 years - 672 downloads
- State of the World's Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2014 - 578 downloads
- When in my class there is a child with special educational needs - 431 downloads
- Methodology for the improvement of work processes for providing administrative services and Manual for its implementation - 391 downloads
- Knowledge is protection! - What you need to know to work successfully in Germany? - 315 downloads
- Handbook for teachers: Young people between the real and virtual - 292 downloads

- Practical guide for the development and management of projects under the program "Europe for Citizens" - 271 downloads
- Education for Roma: the potential of inclusive, curriculum-based innovation to improve learning outcomes - 261 downloads
- Notebook 2014: What is the average success of the state in child care? - 246 downloads
- Media and democracy: freedom, pluralism, law - 242 downloads
- IME: Review of Bulgaria Progress under the Europe 2020 strategy: Employment - 163 downloads
- Sofia - city of Wisdom - 153 downloads
- Report on the problems faced by NGOs in Bulgaria - 137 downloads
- National Strategy for Lifelong Learning 2014-2020, - 137 downloads
- Analysis of social entrepreneurship in Bulgaria - 124 downloads
- Handbook for Parents of fifth graders - 114 downloads
- Bulgaria museums fundraising - 111 downloads
- Regular Economic Report for the EU11 (EU11 RER) - 106 downloads
- Handbook for Parents of first graders "Welcome to school, parents!" - 98 downloads
- Corruption continued to impede economic freedom report confirms - 95 downloads
- Review of best practices of interventions for Roma inclusion - 93 downloads
- Indicators of transparency and integrity in public procurement - 92 downloads

>> Online database of best practices



16th year in a row FLGR consistently promotes, collects, publishes and widely disseminates innovative practices that foster ingenuity and exchange of experience among Bulgarian local governments and NGOs through its project "Innovative Practices in Bulgaria". Launched in September 1998, the project creates a sustainable model for the collection and dissemination of innovative practices in local government. Since the end of 2001 FLGR awarded local governments for being innovative in different

thematic areas, in the period of 2002 – 2009 – with the annual award “Innovative Municipality”.

Online database of good practices in 2014 was enriched with 47 new practices.

The total number of published good practices since 1998, reached 1342 practices.

■ TRAININGS

The Centre for Training and Qualification within the Foundation for Local Government Reform was established in 2003 aiming at institutionalizing the training activities offered by FLGR.

>> Distance Learning

In 2014 the team of FLGR conducted 4 Internet-based training courses as part of the program MERI:

■ **Combating poverty at the local level**

The course consisted of three lectures and tests to them. The topics are as follows: Theme 1. Measures for social protection and assistance to individuals and families with low and / or no income. Social services; Theme 2. European and national policies for combating poverty and social exclusion; Theme 3. Policies for promotion of social entrepreneurship in the European context.

48 participants joined the course - 35 participants successfully completed it and were certified.

■ **Integration of Roma in Bulgaria in the field of education**

The course consisted of five lectures and tests to them. The topics were follows: 1. Introduction to human rights; 2. Legal basis for the integration of Roma in Bulgaria; 3. Access to education for Roma in Bulgaria; 4. Strategies and Policies for educational integration; 5. Institutions at local level that define and enforce policies for education.

Out of 67 participants in the course successfully completed it 57 and were certified.

■ **Citizen participation in local government. Development of partnership with Roma NGOs and activating the local community**

The course consisted of three lectures and tests them. The topics were follows: 1. Development of partnership with NGOs and strengthening community; 2. Principles of good governance at the local level; 3. Roma NGOs working in cooperation with local authorities to resolve the problems of Roma communities.

Out of 56 participants 43 successfully completed the course and were certified.

■ **Planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of comprehensive integration policies**

The course consisted of two lectures and tests to them. The topics were follows: 1. Planning of comprehensive integration policies; 2. Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of comprehensive integration policies.

Out of 98 participants 72 successfully completed the course and were certified.

Participants in the courses were local municipal experts, representatives of municipal institutions, community centers, academics from across the country. Successful graduates of the courses received certificates.

■ **MERI Bulgaria**

Mayors Making the Most of EU Funds for Roma Inclusion Network



FLGR participated in the realization of MERI Bulgaria 2014. The initiative Mayors Making the Most of EU Funds for Roma Inclusion Network (MERI) aimed to promote social inclusion and Roma integration through sharing of best practices and training in European countries, as well as highlighting the achievements at local level.

Partners of MERI Bulgaria were the Open Society Institute, Sofia, the National Association of Municipalities in Bulgaria and the organization of European cities Eurocities.

The successful MERI Bulgaria 2013 was extended in 2014. In the framework of the initiative there was an exchange of experience between Bulgarian municipalities and European cities with large number of immigrants from these communities, study tours, trainings, issuing information materials and holding of thematic informational events,

Responsibility of FLGR was the information outreach, creation and maintaining an active facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/MeriBulgaria>, online library, a regular section in the e-Weekly, as well as holding four distance online trainings (see above).

■ COMPUTERS FOR INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN SMALL SETTLEMENTS

In 2014, similar to 2013, FLGR logistically supported the initiative of the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development and the Swiss Embassy in Sofia to provide computer and office equipment to organizations and institutions from small cities in the country.

In response to the stated needs 268 workstations, laptops, printers and servers were provided to municipalities, NGOs, community centers, kindergartens, academic institutions, hospitals.



■ PROMOTING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES FOR REGIONAL AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT



In November 2014 FLGR in cooperation with Mysya Regional Association for Development and Innovation started work on the project "**Promoting citizen participation in the formulation and implementation of policies for regional and local development**".

Inclusion of civil energy in the formulation and implementation of the policies for regional and local development is key to the improving the quality of life, poverty reduction, social inclusion

and access to basic services.

The objective of the project is to ensure the effective involvement of citizens and their organizations in the process of formulation and implementation of policies for regional and local development.

Specific objective of the project is to improve citizen capacity and create well functioning forms for real participation of citizens and their organizations in the process.

Realization plans include the achievement of more citizens' knowledge and skills, creation of appropriate legislative and institutional framework for civic participation and securing of support of all levels.

The main results of the project will be an analysis of the obstacles to the citizen participation in regional and local policy, elaboration of recommendations for legislative and institutional changes, creation and verification of a mechanism for citizen participation in policies for regional and local development, thematic training, supportive public campaign.

Target groups of the project are decision-makers in the sphere of regional and local development at national, regional, district and municipal level, public officials and civil society organizations.

■ PARTNERSHIPS

>> For consecutive year FLGR partnered Via Expo in conducting:

- **Forum for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EE & RE)**, which presented the best international practices in Southeast Europe
- **Exhibition on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy for South East Europe**
- **Conference and Exhibition "Waste Management and Recycling"**



>> **Human of the Year**

www.humanoftheyear.org

"Human of the Year" is an annual award recognizing contribution to human rights in Bulgaria.

The award was initiated by the



Bulgarian Helsinki Committee in 2008 and since then FLGR acts as a media partner of the BHC.

>> Municipalities, public organizations, NGOs publish on their websites and in their publications information from the section "Opportunities for Financing and Training" from the FLGR e-Weekly.

■ **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

In 2014, team of FLGR participated in:

- Preparation of subsequent evaluation of the implementation of the North-East Region Regional Development Plan for the period 2007 - 2013 and related activities. The evaluation was commissioned by the Ministry of the Regional Development and Public Works;
- Monitoring of the categorization of the administrative-territorial and territorial units in the Republic of Bulgaria. The monitoring was commissioned by the Ministry of the Regional Development and Public Works;
- Elaboration of strategic documents for local development, tools for monitoring and control of strategic documents on municipal level and their consultation for the period 2014-2020 for several municipalities in the country.



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