

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2017**



**Foundation for Local Government Reform**

### **Contact Information:**

Foundation for Local Government Reform

Yerusalim str., bl. 51

Office building, office 2

Mladost 1

1784 Sofia, Bulgaria

Tel. + 359 2 976 89 89

Fax: + 359 2 976 89 30

flgr@flgr.bg

www.flgr.bg

### **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

Rositsa Raycheva, expert

Demir Deyanov, expert

Elvira Koleva, accountant

FLGR has established a countrywide network of external experts.



Foundation for Local Government Reform (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, found on democratic values, social inclusion and prosperity.

FLGR was established in May 1995.

FLGR has a 5-member Governing Body.

### **Objectives of FLGR:**

- Short-term objectives: Investment in the social capital at local and regional level, increase of the capacity of citizens and NGOs to effectively participate in the decision making process, regional and local governance based on the 12 principles of good governance.
- Medium-term objectives: Support for effective, partnership-based local and regional development, found on democratic values, social inclusion and prosperity.
- Long-term objectives: Building of vibrant dynamic communities with strong participatory local self-government, with high standards of living, sustainable development and competitive local economy.

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

- Training;
- Participatory Local and Regional Governance;
- Good Governance and Integrity;
- Innovative Practices;
- Increasing the Capacity of the NGO sector;
- Strategic planning.

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

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

FLGR is a founding member of Donor Fund Bulgaria.

## INFORMATION RESOURCES AND COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

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

### [>> Website of FLGR](#)

[www.flgr.bg](http://www.flgr.bg)

The screenshot shows the FLGR website homepage. The header includes the FLGR logo, the text 'Foundation for Local Government Reform', and a search bar. The navigation menu on the left lists: Home, About us, Projects, Publications, E-municipality, Training Center, FLGR Consult, Online Library, European Integration, Municipalities, and Links. The main content area features three articles: '20 years of Innovative Practices Project', 'Meet LIFE Programme in Sofia', and 'International Events in Bulgaria'. The right sidebar contains a '23 years FLGR' graphic and a poll titled 'On 1/1/2018 Bulgaria took over the 6-month rotating presidency of the Council of the EU. Do you know what are its priorities?'. The poll results are: Total voters: 9, Archive of Surveys, The cause of Western Balkan countries to join the EU (11.1%), Progress on Bulgaria's ambitions to join the eurozone (11.1%), Progress on Bulgaria's ambitions to join EU's Schengen zone (33.3%), and All of them (44.4%).

The site is actively used, news are published and databases are updated.

### [>> FLGR e-Weekly](#)

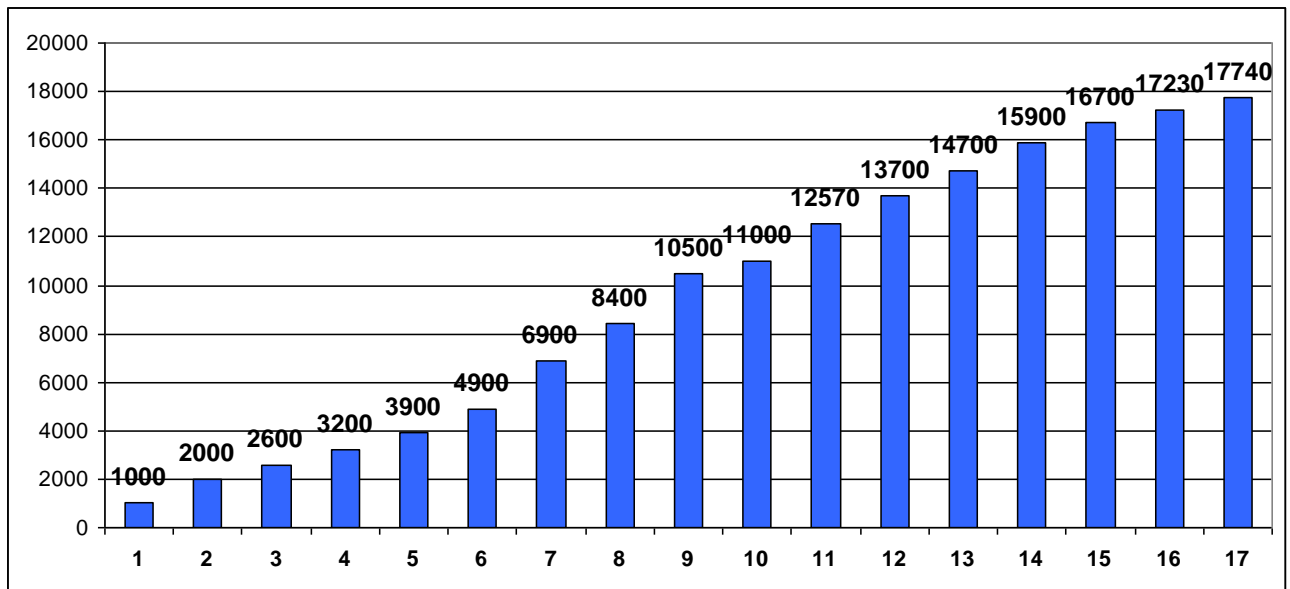
FLGR's e-Weekly bulletin (only in Bulgarian) in 2017 had 49 issues and presented to its subscribers:

- 755 funding opportunities and competitions;
- 389 training opportunities and internships.

FLGR enables subscribers to publish for free announcements about their initiatives and many NGOs, municipalities, community centers, schools and others sent for publishing and disseminating news on their undertakings.

Subscribers of the FLGR e-weekly increased from 17 230 at the end of 2016 to 17 740 at the end of 2017.

### FLGR e-weekly Subscribers 2001 - 2017



#### **Reviews on e-weekly:**

We congratulate you for the great e-weekly! We have been using for years using the information it provides.

*Active Society Association, 2017*

The Foundation's electronic newsletter, which we have been receiving for years, is very useful to us.

*National Students Ecoparliament, 2017*

Congratulations on the devoted work thanks to which the e-weekly is a reality!

*Radost Nikolaeva, Art Director, Art Horizons, 2017*

I read regularly and with interest your electronic weekly and sincerely anticipate your dedicated work to make it so full and useful!

*Yuliya Ivanova, ABLE | We Build Leaders, 2017*

## [>> Online Library](#)

- Online library for 2017 provided access to 69 new publications in electronic form in Bulgarian and English.



The screenshot shows the website for MUNICEPS, the Foundation for the Reform of Local Self-Government (FLGR). The header includes the logo and the tagline "Блог на Фондацията за реформа в местното самоуправление (ФРМС)". Navigation links for Home, RSS, Online library, and Blog are present. The main content area features a post titled "« Пътят към фискална децентрализация – Споделяне на данък общ доход с общините | Main | Правата на човека в България през 2017 г. »" by rraycheva, dated April 27, 2018. A PDF icon is visible next to the article title. The right sidebar contains a search bar, a calendar for April 2018, and an archives section.

The greatest interest provoked publications on topics Civic education; European Integration; Economic development; Social activities.

## [>> Innovative Practices Online Database](#)



20th 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 2017 was enriched with 79 new practices. Every week FLGR in its e-weekly promotes "Best practice of the week".

The total number of published and disseminated good practices since 1998, reached 1627 practices.

## Best Practice in Bulgarian Local Self-Governments 2016/2017



In October 2016 FLGR started implementation of the Best Practice in Bulgarian Local Self-Governments Programme, aimed at identifying, achieving public recognition and dissemination of best practices among municipalities in Bulgaria.

The Programme has been developed by the Council of Europe's Centre of Expertise on Local Government Reform and is implemented in Bulgaria by FLGR in the period October 2016 - May 2017 with the support of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works and the National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The Best Practice in Bulgarian Local Self-Governments Programme applies a systematic approach, under which will be selected the best practices implemented by municipalities in Bulgaria during the last 18 months, in earlier identified thematic areas.

In the first edition of the Programme three thematic areas were chosen:

- I. Municipal support for civic initiatives
- II. New management technologies and solutions
- III. Social innovation and partnerships

The competition involved 29 practices from 19 municipalities and one district, two of the practices competed in two categories.

The criteria for practices evaluation were:

1. Relevance and Impact
2. Openness and transparency
3. Innovation
4. Sustainability

The Award ceremony for best practices, which participated in the first edition of the Best Practice in Bulgarian Local Self-Governments 2016/2017 Programme in Bulgaria, was held on May 23rd, 2017, in Sofia.



The practices awarded were as follows:

**>> In Thematic area 1 „Municipal support for civic initiatives“**

With First place was awarded "With Tundzha in the heart - municipal support for civic initiatives", Practice of Tundzha Municipality.

Second place went to "Let's together fulfil the dreams of the children", Practice of Dobrich Municipality.

**>> In Thematic area 2 „New management technologies and solutions“**

First place won "Complex administrative service delivery, use of Regix-registers for inter-administrative data exchange and VPN connectivity with mayoralties", Practice of Troyan Municipality.

With Second place was awarded "Assisting municipal schools to implement new educational technologies and digitization of the learning process", Practice of Plovdiv Municipality.

**>> In Thematic area 3 „Social innovation and partnerships“**

The First place went to "With care for the elderly", Practice of Veliko Tarnovo Municipality.

With Second place was awarded "Crisis centre at the Ovcha Mogila mayoralty", Practice of the Svishtov Municipality.

The mayors of the nominated municipalities were congratulated and the awards were presented by Mrs Jutta Gützkow, Head of Good Governance Division, Centre of Expertise on Local Government Reform, Council of Europe, Mrs. Rositsa Dimitrova, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy, Mrs. Martina Todorova, Head of Strategies and Plans for Regional Development and Territorial Coordination, Directorate General "Strategic Planning of Regional Development and Administrative-Territorial Structure", Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Mrs. Ginka Chavdarova, Executive Director of National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria, Mr. Lachezar Rosenov, Chairman of the Board of FLGR.





## STUDY VISITS AND EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE

FLGR through organizing and conducting study visits and transfer of Bulgarian experience supported the development of local democracy in other countries:

>> In the period September - October 2017 a training trip to Bulgaria of representatives of the central government, municipalities and non-governmental organizations from Kyrgyzstan was organized and carried out on "Learning the Bulgarian experience and good practices in the field of communal and recreational services provided on municipal level" within the framework of the Public Service Quality Improvement Project, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC);

>> In the period October 2017 - February 2018, preparatory activities were carried out for the organization of a study tour to Bulgaria by representatives of the central government, municipalities and NGOs from Kazakhstan on "Learning the Bulgarian experience and good practices in the local self-governance and mechanisms for participation of citizens and NGOs in the process" within the framework of the project "Stimulating the participation of local stakeholders in East and Central Kazakhstan", funded by EU funds.

## RE-START PROGRAMME: COMPUTERS FOR INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANISATIONS IN SMALL SETTLEMENTS

In 2017 for 5th consecutive year FLGR provided logistical support to the initiative of the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development and the Swiss Embassy in Sofia - Programme Re-Start, phase 11, to provide computers and office equipment to organisations and institutions from small settlements in the country.

In response to the stated needs 68 workstations, laptops, printers and servers were granted to:

- municipal administrations - 5;
- non-governmental organizations - 3;
- municipal rehabilitation center - 1;
- regional library - 1.

## PARTNERSHIPS

- FLGR in 2017 continued its partnership with the University of National and World Economy - Sofia, incl. enabling students' internships.
- For consecutive year FLGR partnered Via Expo in conducting specialized conferences and exhibitions:



- 6th Smart Cities Conference for Southeast Europe;
- 14th Conference on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy for Southeast Europe;
- 9th Conference on Waste Management and Recycling.

### ■ Human of the Year 2016

[www.humanoftheyear.org](http://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 supporting organisation of the initiative.





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**[www.flgr.bg](http://www.flgr.bg)**