

**Distance Learning
Centre
in
Southeast Europe

SELDI**

*Create an indigenous capacity to identify and access
knowledge needed to improve legal development
policies in SEE.*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Name of the Project:** A Southeast Europe Distance Learning Centre
- Project Location:** Southeast Europe (SEE). Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYROM, Greece, Romania, Turkey and where possible Yugoslavia.
- Overall Objectives:** To provide a customised, cost-effective and sustainable training to professional groups in the SELDI countries.
- Project Purpose:** To enable cost-effective provision of top-quality learning opportunities and facilitate the exchange of knowledge, experience and advice between decision makers. Creation of a first node facility for target groups in the SELDI countries for World Bank, IDLI and CSD training programmes.
- Sector:** Training.
- Proposal Philosophy:** *Create an indigenous capacity to identify and access knowledge needed to improve legal development policies in SEE.*
- Activities Planned:** Interactive, multi-channel, multimedia training programmes.
- Beneficiaries:** Private sector representatives, NGO leaders, public officials, parliamentarians and members of the judiciary. In particular, focus will be paid to the training needs of young professionals.
- Sponsors:** International public and private organisations
- Implementing Organisation**
- The World Bank**
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1. PROJECT RELEVANCE

The SEE-DLC will be part of a Global Distance Learning Network (GDLN) currently developed by the World Bank. In this way, the proposed DLC will have instant access to a global knowledge base. GDLN is being created to harness the latest technology for the benefit of development. It will facilitate the simultaneous provision of courses, seminars, and discussions for a variety of global participants, linked by interactive video, electronic classrooms, satellite communications, and Internet facility. This initiative is currently in Phase Two of its implementation. The objective is to establish ten pilot Distance Learning Centres (three of which in Europe and Central Asia) in the period 1999-2001. At this stage, Bulgaria is the only SEE country where the installation of a pilot DLC is considered feasible by the World Bank.

A detailed description of the GDLN initiative is available from the World Bank at www.worldbank.org/gdln

2. BENEFICIARIES

The primary target of the services of the SEE-DLC will be private sector representatives, NGO leaders, public officials, parliamentarians and members of the judiciary in Bulgaria and its neighbouring countries in the region, primarily Macedonia and Albania. Particular attention will be devoted to meeting the training needs of young professionals. At a later stage (in 5-6 years) local DLCs could be established in SELDI countries, but until the installation of local distance learning the focus will be on:

- Countries in SEE where improved knowledge sharing will lead to better development decision-making.
- The participants in distance learning activities who will be able to share knowledge and learn with their colleagues from other transition countries and more developed nations.
- Universities and think tanks active in the area of anti-corruption education, judicial training centres and other disseminators of knowledge who will have access to more cost-effective means of meeting their clients' needs.

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 Principal Objective

The goal of this project is to provide a customised, cost-effective and sustainable training to professional groups in the countries targeted by the Southeast European Legal Development Initiative. It is aimed at establishing a **Southeast Europe Distance Learning Centre (SEE-DLC)** to deliver interactive, multi-channel, multimedia training programs to decision-makers from government and other public institutions, the private sector, and civil society.

3.2 Specific Objectives

The SEE Distance Learning Centre is expected to:

- Enable cost-effective provision of top-quality learning opportunities by diverse partners with a reach that other delivery methods cannot equal.
- Facilitate the exchange of knowledge, experience, and advice between decision makers in the SELDI countries.
- Create a “first node” facility for target groups in the SELDI countries for World Bank, IDLI and CSD training programs.

Create an indigenous capacity to identify and access knowledge needed to improve legal development policies in Southeast Europe.

4. STRUCTURE AND IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Introduction

The Southeast Europe DLC will be located with the Centre for the Study of Democracy in Sofia, Bulgaria. It will be a multi-media learning environment where professionals can attend seminars, participate in special events, take courses and exchange knowledge and experience with colleagues around the world. The task of the centre will be to promote distance learning services regionally, register participants, and provide pedagogical support for videoconferences, Internet course materials, assignments, and print materials.

The DLC will consist of an interactive video classroom (large enough to accommodate 30 to 40 participants), computer lab, reception area, and staff offices. The interactive video classroom will be equipped with personal computers, microphones, and learner-response keypads. The computer lab will have 30 personal computers for individual or small group study of multimedia materials, Internet use, and for email interaction among peer groups and instructors. Printed course materials and central computer equipment will also be located in the computer lab.

Staff at the DLC will include a manager, a public relations expert, technical operator, tutors, coordinators, and local facilitators.

The centre will be connected by voice, video, and data links to other centres in the WB Global Distance Learning Network, including the electronic classrooms at World Bank headquarters in Washington, D.C. GDLN partner organisations (incl. Other multilateral and bilateral donor agencies, foundations and companies) will connect through the WB headquarters and will be receivable by any one of the distance learning centres in the network. Each centre will be able to receive via satellite other distance learning services operating in its region.

4.2 Training content

Content is the key to realizing the benefits of the DLC initiative. The DLC will allow the delivery of a wide variety of training content and the source of this content could be organisations from around the globe.

The World Bank, through its Learning Network will be providing distance learning courses and short seminars, some of which are particularly suited to the needs of decision-makers in SEE. These include a development course offering a holistic approach to the concept of development; intergovernmental fiscal relations and local financial management; urban and city management; health sector reform and sustainable financing, etc. Of specific relevance to SELDI, the World Bank will offer:

- Anti-corruption course, presenting a participatory and integrated anti-corruption program and its design and implementation.
- World Trade Organisation regulation and economic implications, providing information on both the practical and theoretical aspects of trade policy.

4. STRUCTURE AND IMPLEMENTATION

The **SELDI-specific** content will include:

- Coalition Building Training Workshop (Centre for the Study of Democracy)
- Corruption Monitoring Training Workshop (Centre for the Study of Democracy)
- Training Workshops in Anti-Corruption (International Development Law Institute)

Module 1 – Developing Strategies for Combating Corruption

Module 2 – Implementing the Strategy

Module 3 – The Judiciary and Corruption

Module 4 – Selected Governance and Transparency Issues

- Training Workshops in Judicial Reform (International Development Law Institute)
 - Module 1: The fundamental principles of the administration of justice
 - Module 2: The judiciary in a changing society
 - Module 3: The impact of recent developments on the judiciary
 - Module 4: Skills training

WTO Law Training Course (International Development Law Institute)

Module 1: Introduction to the multilateral trading system

Module 2: Basic WTO principles and exceptions

Module 3: Trade in Goods – the Sectoral Agreements

Module 4: Trade in Goods – key Technical Agreements

Module 5: Trade in Services

Module 6: Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights

Module 7: Trade and Investment

Module 8: Regional Trade Arrangements

Module 9: Dispute Settlement under the WTO

Module 10: New and Emerging Issues in the WTO

- Training of Trainers (International Development Law Institute)

4. STRUCTURE AND IMPLEMENTATION

4.3 Implementation

The SEE Distance Learning Centre will be implemented jointly by the Centre for Study of Democracy (CSD) and the Applied Research and Communications Fund (ARC Fund) (www.arc.online.bg). ARC Fund is a technical NGO specializing in development and provision of Internet-based services.

At the end of 1999, CSD completed a distance learning project involving the Sofia University and the Hellenic Management Association (HMA) of Greece. The project, which was funded through the European Training Foundation (ETF), resulted in the development and production of a distance learning course on *General and Financial Management of Non-profit Organisations*. The course will be taught at the Sofia University Faculty of Economics and Business Administration for the first time in 2000.

CSD and ARC Fund create an ideal setting for the SEE-DLC because they combine the right focus and the technical expertise needed to successfully implement this project.

Active collaboration will also be sought from local specialists in distance learning and communications technologies, and local institutional partners, such as the New Bulgarian University (School of Management) and the University of National and World Economics, which have expressed interest and concurrence in this project.