

**A PILOT PROJECT IN BULGARIA
SUPPORTED BY PHARE PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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ABSTRACT

A Pilot Project for Information System for Cadastre and Land Registration, supported by PHARE Programme of the European Union has already been completed.

The pilot area is Dobrich region with 8 municipalities and 5 regional courts, located in the Northeastern Bulgaria.

The Project started in December 1995 (actively in June 1996) and was completed in May 1998. It involved 4 ministries, one university, 3 notary offices, 8 municipal authorities, 2 companies for technical assistance and equipment supply, 27 surveying consortiums for the cadastral survey of 214 settlements (including 7 towns) in the pilot region with a total area of 16 044 hectares.

A concept and proposal for nation-wide implementation of the information system for cadastre and land registration has been developed within the Project on the basis of evaluation of its results and achievements. The total Project cost jointly contributed by the partners is ECU 3.48 million, broken down as follows:

- Input from PHARE ECU 3.08 million (1.55 MECU for technical assistance and training, 0.45 MECU for equipment, hardware and software, 1.08 MECU for cadastral survey).
- Input from the Bulgarian Government ECU 0.4 million in cash and in kind (salaries of local experts, operational costs, maintenance of the system).

RESUME

Le projet pilot "Creation d'un systeme informatique du cadastre et d'enregistrement du foncier" avec le support du programme PHARE de l'UE est deja effectuee.

Le projet a ete realise dans la region de Dobritch, situe au Nord-Est de la Bulgarie et englobait 8 communes et 5 tribunaux locaux.

Le projet a demare en decembre 1995 (reelement au mois de juin 1996) et a ete definitivement realise au mois de mai 1998. Dans le projet ont ete engages 4 ministeres, un universite, 3 etudes de notaire, 8 administrations communales, 2 entreprises fournissant l'assistance technique et l'equipement, 27 societes de travaux d'arpentage, 214 localites (y compris 7 villes) sur une surface d'environ 16 044 hectares.

Dans le cadre du projet, a la base de l'evaluation des resultats obtenus une conception et une proposition d'implantation au niveau national du systeme informatique du cadastre et d'enregistrement du foncier ont ete developpees.

Le cout total du projet est au montant de 3.48 mln ECU repartis comme suit:

- Support financier par le programme PHARE - 3.08 mln ECU (l'assistance technique et la formation - 1.55 mln ECU, les logiciels et l'equipement - 0.45 mln ECU, les travaux d'arpentage - 1.08 mln ECU).
- Apport financier du Gouvernement bulgarie - 0.4 mln ECU en argent et en nature (salaire des experts locaux, depenses operationnelles, entretien du systeme).

KURZFASSUNG

Das Pilotprojekt fuer Katasterinformationssystem und Grundstueckseintragung, das von PHARE-Programm der EU unterstuetzt worden ist, ist schon beendet.

Das Pilotfeld ist die Region von Dobritsch in Nortostbulgarien mit 8 Gemeinden und 5 regionalen Gerichtsaeemten.

Das Projekt begann im Dezember 1995 (aktiv erst im Juni 1996) und wurde im Mai 1998 vollendet. Bei der Arbeit nach diesem Projekt waren 4 Ministerien, eine Universitaet, 3 Notariate, 8 Gemeindeaeemter, 2 Gesellschaften fuer technische Unterstuetzung und Ausruestung, 27 Vermessungskonsortionen fuer Grundstueckvermessung von 214 Ortschaften (einschl. 7 Staedte) in der Pilotregion mit Gesamtflaeche von 16 044 Ha involviert.

Im Rahmen des Projektes entstand Konzept und Vorschlag fuer nationale Anwendung des Katasterinformationssystems nach Einschaeztung der Ergebnisse.

Der Gesamtwert des Projektes (Beitrag der Partners) is 3.48 MECU, aufgeteilt wie folgt:

- PHARE-Beitrag - 3.08 MECU (1.55 MECU fuer technische Hilfe und Ausbildung, 0.45 MECU fuer technische Ausstattung und Software, 1.08 MECU fuer Grundstueckvermessungen).
- Beitrag der bulgarische Regierung - 0.4 MECU cash und in Natur (Belohnung hiesiger Experten, operative Kosten, Instandhaltung des Systems).

1. INTRODUCTION

The changes in Bulgaria since the end of 1989 have influenced strongly the economy of the country. Economic structures are being changed, the participation of the state in economic life is reduced, its relations with the private initiative in trade, crediting and banking are decreasing.

The economic changes are running mainly in four directions:

- Restitution of private ownership on state-owned city properties.
- Privatisation of public companies.
- Restitution of private ownership on agricultural land.
- Restitution of private ownership on forests.

The above actions are ensured by implementation of seven laws (Katzarsky, 1998; Katzarsky & Genkova, 1998):

- Law on ownership and use of agricultural land (1991).
- Law on restitution of ownership of shops, workshops, stocks and ateliers (1991).
- Law on restitution of ownership of nationalised immovable properties (1992).
- Law on restitution of ownership of confiscated in 1953 immovable and movable properties of the Catholic Church (1992).
- Law on restitution of ownership of immovable properties of Bulgarian citizens of Turkish origin who left for Turkey and other countries during the period May-September 1989.
- Law on restitution of ownership of forests from the Forest Fund (1997).
- Law on cadastre and property register (2000).

Bulgaria's territory is 111 thousand sq.km, with 58% of them being agricultural land (44% arable land), 33% forests, 4% urban areas, 2% waters, and 3% other areas. The country is divided administratively into 28 districts (including the separate district of the Capital Sofia), of 262 municipalities consisting of 4615 lands (rural settlements territories). The population of the country (8.2 million) inhabits 5340 settlements (including 237 towns).

2. PRINCIPLES OF THE PILOT PROJECT

On 13 December 1995 in Sofia was signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Commission of the European Union, concerning the principles and modus operandi of the Pilot Project for Information System for Cadastre and Land Registration (Memorandum, 1995).

2.1. Development Objectives

The objectives of the Project were to clarify in the pilot region of Dobrich the following:

- The technology for establishment of an uniform cadastral information system through integration of the digital maps data for all related pilot territory (urban, agricultural and forested lands), and the organisational structure of the Bulgarian Cadastre.
- The technology of establishment and the future organisation of title land registration.
- Links and interaction between the above two objectives.
- The necessary resources for functioning of the integrated system for cadastre and land registration in the pilot region.

A concept and proposal for nation-wide implementation of the information system for cadastre and land registration has been developed within the Project on the basis of evaluation of its results and achievements.

2.2. Immediate Objectives

In particular, the Pilot Project aims at:

- Establishing an integrated digital cadastral map of all land in the pilot municipalities (including urban, agricultural, and forested lands).
- Establishing of an organisation and system for maintaining of updated digital cadastral map.
- Establishing of title land registration system for the notary offices in the pilot region courts.
- Linking the digital cadastral map to notary's land registration system for creating the pilot land information system of the related area.
- Training personnel to effectively operate the new system.
- Setting up a proposal for spreading the system on the whole territory of the country.
- Proposing the appropriate legal framework for the nation-wide extension of the Project.
- Raising public awareness of the benefits of the new approach to title land registration.

The digital information about the rural area of the pilot region is available as a result of the land reform. New cadastral survey is executed in the urban area of the pilot region.

3. BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1. Pilot Area, Participants and Time Schedule

The region of Dobrich with eight municipalities and five regional courts (including three permanently operating notary offices), being representative of the country, was selected as a pilot area. The region is located in the Northeastern Bulgaria.

The participants in the Project were the following:

- The Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works.
- The Ministry of Justice.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Forests.
- The Ministry of Finance.
- The University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy.
- The three pilot notary offices in the pilot area.
- The eight pilot municipality authorities.
- The sub-contracting companies for the development of the necessary software.
- The surveying sub-contracting companies for updating and digitising the cadastral maps.

The Project started in December 1995 (actively in June 1996) and was completed in May 1998.

3.2. Technical Implementation

3.2.1. Project Organisation. The Project was managed by a Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Deputy Ministers of Regional Development and Public Works, of Agriculture and Forests and of Justice, and comprising one representative of the same ministries plus of University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy, as well as Pilot Management Unit of PHARE, and the Dobrich, Balchik and Kavarna municipality administrations.

In particular, the Steering Committee had to:

- Provide the general management and co-ordination of the Project.
- Clarify individual institution responsibilities and activities of the participants in the Project.
- Provide the methodological guidance related to the Project preparation criteria.
- Agree and approve the necessary manpower resources to be provided and deadlines for their provision, including recruitment or transfer of additional staff, and review if these agreements on regular basis.
- Co-ordinate the Project funds.
- Control the time schedule for the Project progress and accept the reports on the project.
- Propose the appointment of the Project Manager.
- Supervise and guide the activity of the Project Working Group.

A Bulgarian Project Manager was in charge of the Project implementation. He guided the Project and was in charge of the Project Working Group.

A Project Working Group consists of experts from the Bulgarian participating institutions and was in charge of designing, developing, installing and commissioning of the Information System for Cadastre and Land Registration within the pilot area.

The development of the necessary software for the title land registration system and the information system of cadastre was assigned to European and Bulgarian companies through the PHARE tendering procedures. Bulgarian companies were assigned the preparing and/or updating digital cadastral maps in the pilot area following the PHARE tendering procedures.

3.2.2. Recipient Institutions. The Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works established a State Cadastral Office in the city of Dobrich, and put it into operation together with its bureaux in the towns of Balchik and Kavarna. The main responsibilities of the Office was to provide the citizens and relevant institutions with maps, cadastral and other technical services related to providing or modifying real estate ownership rights.

The main technical activities of the State Cadastral Office was the following:

- Receiving and storing materials and data provided by various institutions and municipal administrative bodies - participants in the Project.

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The main technical activities of the State Cadastral Office was the following:

- Receiving and storing materials and data provided by various institutions and municipal administrative bodies - participants in the Project.

- Offices at the disposal of the Steering Committee, Working Group and Project personnel.
- The necessary initial and operational data and documentation for the implementation of the Project.
- The administrative control of its staff who works as the Project counterpart, of its implementing bodies and collaboration with its pilot site officers.
- Financial contribution through payment of the counterparts made available to the Project, out of the budget of the respective institutions.
- The necessary public relations support - all participating institutions support through the mass media the public awareness initiative as part of the Project implementation.

4.2. Contribution and Commitment of PHARE

The contribution of PHARE is through financing of the implementation of the following sub-projects:

4.2.1. Technical Assistance. An international tender was held in which eight European consultant companies were initially interested, but only four of them took part. The tender was won by the Italian company TECNIC in co-operation with the Agency for Cadastre and Public Registers, The Netherlands. A Dutch Team Leader was responsible for the work of the consultants. The active technical assistance started in June 1996.

4.2.2. Supply of Equipment. Sixteen European and Bulgarian companies participated in a tender which was won by ExpressConsult. Appropriate servers, working stations, software and peripheral devices were delivered.

4.2.3. Cadastral Surveys. After a tender with 69 Bulgarian consortiums, of which 26 are preparing new maps and updating the existing large-scale cadastral maps in digital format for 214 settlements in the pilot region with a total area of 16 044 hectares. The consortiums include 120 Bulgarian surveying companies with about 1200 surveyors participating in the cadastral surveys.

5. FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

The total Project cost jointly contributed by the parties is ECU 3.48 million, broken down as follows:

5.1. Input from PHARE

ECU 3.08 million Project total, allocated as follows:

- 1.55 MECU for technical assistance and training,
- 0.45 MECU for equipment and software,
- 1.08 MECU for cadastral surveys.

5.2. Input from the Bulgarian Government

The total sum (in cash and in kind) estimated is ECU 0.4 million.

This includes: the salaries of the participants and Project personnel, operating office outlay, operating costs for the maintenance of the system and the information placed of the disposal of the Project.

6. CONCLUSION

The Pilot Project for Information System for Cadastre and Land Registration, supported by the PHARE Programme of the European Union was focused on developing a computerised cadastral system among local authorities in Dobrich region which can be connected with the land registration activities in courts and within which the maps of the various land reform activities in agricultural, forest and urban areas are integrated (Final Report, 1998).

The PHARE Pilot Project is followed by a Project for Implementation of Operational Cadastral and Land Registration System in Dobrich Region as a grant from The Netherlands within MATRA Programme of Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It started in July 1998 and was completed in March 2000. The MATRA Project was assigned to the Agency for Cadastre and Public Registers, The Netherlands, and was executed by a team of Dutch and Bulgarian experts.

The Project supported by MATRA Programme continues in a form of consultancy and monitoring by the Agency for Cadastre and Public Registers, The Netherlands, financed out of the Agency budget.

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