



ABOUT PROVIDUS

The Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS was established three years ago and has since become a leading think-tank in Latvia. PROVIDUS mandate and goals, as described in the articles of association and strategic plan are to contribute to the development of Latvia's public policy in the areas of good governance, criminal justice and education, and to become a source of expertise at the international level. This report will look into PROVIDUS activities, organizational development and financial situation in the year 2005.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

One of PROVIDUS major projects in 2005 was the financial monitoring of the municipal elections in March. PROVIDUS also took part in elaboration of new laws on election campaigns and political party financing. PROVIDUS continues to advise and provide training for local governments in the implementation of the Law on Administrative Procedure.

PROVIDUS brought to public attention a number of issues connected with implementation of the EU Structural Funds (SF): for example, project selection criteria, disclosure of information on the recipients SF, qualifications of the experts evaluating the projects and possible conflicts of interest. PROVIDUS gave opinions on national development and policy planning documents and organized public discussions about the next EU SF programming period.

In 2005, PROVIDUS published the first report in a new publication series: "Corruption C°. Report on Corruption and Anticorruption Policy in Latvia." Every six months, an update will be published on the development of anticorruption policy in Latvia. PROVIDUS representative continues to chair the Public Advisory Council of the Corruption Prevention and Combating Bureau.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY

PROVIDUS continued to promote a decrease in the number of persons in pre-trial detention through the establishment of pretrial supervision services with special focus on juveniles as it is usually not possible for them to continue education while in prison and the living conditions are poor. PROVIDUS continued to provide police training in Latvia and abroad, focusing on issues such as human rights, communication with the public and complaints procedure. PROVIDUS actively participated in drafting the Law on a State Compensation for Victims of Crime, which was approved at the end of the year by the Cabinet of Ministers.



EDUCATION POLICY

PROVIDUS actively influenced the public dialogue on the ethnic minority education reform by organising a discussion cycle and contributing opinion to the public debate. PROVIDUS examined the integration process in schools with Latvian as the language of instruction and the extent to which these schools are able to integrate students from non-Latvian families. PROVIDUS carried out a study on cooperation between University of Latvia social and humanitarian sciences departments and international donor organizations, and the effects of such cooperation on democratic discourse within the academic community.

PUBLIC POLICY WEBSITE politika.lv

In 2005, the PROVIDUS public policy website published 71 policy studies and over 200 opinion articles on important public policy topics, including the quality of public administration, corruption in the judicial system, development cooperation and tolerance. In the special section dedicated to the 2005 municipal elections, in addition to an analysis of the political party programs and accomplishments, politika.lv published valuable data that had never before been systematized, such as Latvia's local government Democracy Index. politika.lv remains the leading on-line policy resource in Latvia, with 30,000 unique users per month (a 50% increase compared to the previous year).

OTHER ACTIVITIES

In 2005, PROVIDUS representatives were actively engaged in more than 10 governmental and parliamentary working groups that analyzed and drafted legislation, Cabinet Regulations and policy documents, two advisory councils and two committees dealing with EU Structural Funds. PROVIDUS was invited to comment on a number draft laws, planning documents, Cabinet Regulations and to provide an opinion for a Constitutional Court case.

In 2005, PROVIDUS made public 7 policy studies, and it's staff published 21 articles in the national press. PROVIDUS activities attracted a lot of media interest, as indicated by over 400 articles quoting the views of PROVIDUS experts or included references to PROVIDUS work. Opinions expressed by PROVIDUS often contributed to the development of lively discussion in the media on issues of current public concern.

PROVIDUS staff provided a number of consultations and made presentations in other countries (the Baltics, Southern Caucasus, Central Asia, Central Europe). PROVIDUS clients and cooperation partners in 2005 include the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the OECD and European Union program SIGMA, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Open Society Institute (OSI).



PARTICIPATION IN NETWORKS

Since 2003, PROVIDUS has been a member in the informal regional network of policy institutes, formally established in June 2004 as "PASOS" - Policy Association for Open Society. This network presently includes 23 policy institutes as members from Central and Eastern European countries as well as the Balkans and the Southern Caucasus. PROVIDUS Director Vita Terauda was elected as Chair of PASOS Board.

PROVIDUS has also been active in the informal network of education policy institutes supported by the Open Society Institute. PROVIDUS researcher Maria Golubeva was elected to the provisory council of the Network of Education Policy Centers.

PROVIDUS is also a member of two associations in Latvia: Latvia's Platform for Development Cooperation (an umbrella NGO for organizations involved in development cooperation) and Civic Alliance (an association of advocacy NGOs).

PROVIDUS FINANCIAL SITUATION IN 2005

PROVIDUS budget in 2005 was USD 674,866 (LVL 391,422). The main sources of funding were provided through grants from:

- Soros Foundation-Latvia (USD 396,369)
- Open Society Institute (USD 86,104)
- Social Integration Foundation of Latvia (USD 83,094)
- US Embassy in Latvia (USD 37,890)
- British Embassy in Latvia (USD 8,255)
- other sources (USD 12,957)

Almost 10% of PROVIDUS budget was provided through self financing activities (consulting services in Latvia and abroad).

HUMAN RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT

In 2005, PROVIDUS had 20 employees (16 permanent staff and 4 project-based employees). PROVIDUS Director is Ms Vita Terauda (Ms Agnese Lesinska was appointed Acting Director as of August 2005 during Ms Terauda's maternity leave).

PROVIDUS Board members in 2005 were: Chair of the Board Mr Nils Melngailis (Chief Executive Officer, Lattelekom), Mr Andris Aukmanis (Executive Director of Soros Foundation - Latvia), Mr Guntars Catlaks (Civitas International), Ms Inga Reine (Representative of the Latvian Government before International Human Rights Organisations) and Ms Maria Golubeva (Senior Researcher, PROVIDUS).