

HUMAN SETTLEMENT COUNTRY PROFILE

BULGARIA

Decision-Making

Programmes and Projects

- A. Providing Adequate Shelter for All
- B. Improving Human Settlement Management
- C. Promoting Sustainable Land-Use Planning and Management
- D. Promoting the Integrated Provision of Environmental Infrastructure: water, sanitation, drainage and solid waste management
- E. Promoting Sustainable Energy and Transport Systems in Human Settlements
- F. Promoting Human Settlement Planning and Management in Disaster-Prone Areas
- G. Promoting Sustainable Construction Activities
- H. Promoting Human Resource Development and Capacity-Building for Human Settlement Development

Status

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising

Information

Research and Technologies

Financing

Cooperation

Decision-Making: Currently, there is no competent state authority in Bulgaria dealing with the models of sustainable consumption and production. The Government considers that the Ministry of Economy (ME) should be the leading authority on the issues of changing consumption patterns. Meanwhile, short-term strategies for the period 1999-2001 were developed for certain branches of light industry. A peculiarity in the development is to guide substantially the production facilities on the basis of the state of production, range stability, empty niches, etc. There are no legal or other regulations for encouraging sustainable consumption and production in light industry. The Ministries of Transport and Communications (MTC), and Regional Development and Public Works; “Roads” Executive Agency under the Minister of Regional Development and Public Works, Executive Agency “Sea Administration,” and Executive Agency “Port Administration” are the government ministries and agencies responsible for making decisions in the management and improvement of the transport system.

The transport policy of Bulgaria is governed by the principles for development of the country, adopted by the government and achieved as a result of a national consensus. These policy directions that are primarily geared towards membership in the European Union and NATO, development of free market relations, democratization of the processes in the political, economical, cultural and social life of people. Bulgaria’s regulations and legislation in the transport sector include: Civil Aviation Law (in force since 1.01.1999); Law on Maritime Spaces, Inland Waterways and Ports of the Republic of Bulgaria (in force since 14.02.2000); Road Traffic Law (in force since 01.09.1999); Road Transport Law – approved and in force since 17.09.1999; Railway Transport Law (in force since 2002); and Law for amendment of the Merchant Shipping Code - draft submitted for approval to the National Assembly. Priorities in the transport sector include: harmonization of the national legislation and transport regulations with those of the European Union member states; development of transport infrastructure; and implementation of a structural reform and privatization in transport.

Strategy for the development of transport infrastructure for the period 2000-2006 includes the following: development of transport and transport infrastructure is one of the priorities, set in the Programme of the Bulgarian Government; implementation of Bulgaria’s main objective – the accession to the European Union (EU), NATO and the other Euro-Atlantic structures, highlights the necessity for a national transport system, comparable to a European one; and combination of an advantageous geographic location and Bulgaria’s determination to achieve its objectives in joining the EU has committed the Government to complete a number of projects along the routes of five of the ten Pan-European Transport Corridors. The strategic objectives for the period 2000-2006 include: ever greater opening of Bulgaria to Europe and neighbouring countries, as regards transport infrastructure; and two key priorities anticipated for attaining this strategic objective over the 2000 to 2006 period. Responsibility for human settlement development in Bulgaria is within the Ministries of: Environment and Water (MoEW); Health (MH); Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW); Regional Inspectorates on Environment and Water (RIEW); municipalities; the Directorate “National State Control on Construction” within the MRDPW; and the Commission on Land. Closer coordination between the MRDPW, the Ministry of Education and Science (MES), Ministry of Economy (ME), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), Ministry of Transport and Communications (MTC) and MoEW is required, as well as a distribution of responsibilities and powers with local municipal governments.

A number of regional, national, and local environmental projects are under implementation. Since 1992, the procedure for environmental impact assessment has been mandatory for urban infrastructure plans. Through this MoEW exercises preventive control for the environmental protection of human settlements. Regional environmental policy focuses on priority measures in specific regions or zones, which are highly urbanized with high health risk, and exclusive significance for the country (the Bulgarian part of the Black Sea coast, the Danube river basin, and protected territories). The Minister of Regional Development and Public Works conducts the implementation of the Government policy in spatial/territorial development, coordinates the activities of the central and territorial units of the

executive power, as well as of the regional/local authorities, provides guidance and controls the entire activities in the territorial development.

The Law on Territorial Development – 2001 and its amendments – the last one in December 2003 (State Gazette No 1/2001 and No 107/2003) defines the state territory as of a national treasure and its development should ensure sustainable development and favourable living, labour and recreational conditions for the population. It regulates the public interrelations in territorial development, investment design and construction, as well as the ownership restrictions in concern with territorial development. The territorial development is determined through development schemes and plans according to the legislation in force. The territories under specific protection, defined with other laws could be a subject of specific development schemes and plans establishing regimes in compliance with respective requirements, corresponding to the character of the territory. The development schemes are complex when they cover global territorial development issues and specialized when they treat specific territorial problems. The interdependency between Territorial development/spatial/urban planning and the sustainable social - economic development is regulated by Articles 100 and 101 of the Territorial Development Law and Article 10 of the Regional Development Law. Regional development policy in Bulgaria has been instituted in legislation with the adoption of the Law on Regional Development, (adopted in 1999), which establishes the framework for planning and implementing regional development policy. New Law on Regional Development was adopted by the Parliament on February, 5th 2004 (State Gazette No 14/20.02.2004). The Law, as a working legal framework, harmonized with the Acquis Communautaire, creates conditions for the effective absorption of the EU Funds. The main objectives of the Law are: Establishing conditions for sustainable and balanced development of the regions in the Republic of Bulgaria; Establishing basis for reducing inter-regional and intra- regional disparities in the economic development of the regions.

To improve the process of regional development planning and programming in the future, the legal regulations of the national legislation should be elaborated in conformity with the requirements of the European legislation and the new Law on Regional Development. Strategic Planning of Regional Development regulates the system of planning documents for the formation and implementation of the regional development policy, in compliance with the spatial development for the respective territories according to the Law on Spatial Planning, thus creating conditions for forming a long-term and sustainable policy in the corresponding area. Strategic planning of the regional development shall be conducted through National Regional Development Strategy and District Development Strategies, while planning and programming of the regional development shall be conducted through Regional Development Plans, which will be structural elements of the National Regional Development Operational Programme, and Municipal Development Plans, that shall be drawn out in compliance with the provisions of the District Development Strategies. The National Regional Development Strategy, as an important strategic document of regional development, will be elaborated to set out long-term objectives and priorities for the regional policy of the Republic of Bulgaria. The regional development is a process of formulating and implementing a policy, aimed at balanced and sustained socio-economic development of the national territory performed through integrated measures, directed to the planning regions and the areas for targeted intervention.

Six Planning regions are established in the Republic of Bulgaria with a view to the efficient implementation of strategies, plans and programs for their economic and social development, which correspond to the NUTS II Eurostat level. The planning regions consist of a definite number of administrative regions (districts), depending on their geographic location. Within the borders of the planning regions, areas for targeted intervention shall be formed. Defining these areas, as territories for implementing regional development measures by State aid, the specific problems are settled and possibilities are established for target assistance to problematic lagged areas or such of considerable intra-regional disparities, so as to restrict and overcome the unfavourable process and to achieve sustainable

growth of socio-economic development. The areas for targeted intervention shall cover the territory of one or more municipalities and shall be: areas for economic growth; areas of industrial decline; lagged behind border, rural and mountain areas; municipality of Sofia – city. The programming and the resource providing of the regional development shall be performed within the framework of the National Regional Development Operational Programme. The National Regional Development Operational Programme is an integrated expression of the development policy of the planning regions and shall be developed in compliance with the National Development Plan's objectives and priorities. The National Operational Regional Development Program will cover the whole territory of the country and will bind regional development activities with public financing sources, EU funds and private financing sources, while observing all requirements of efficient management and control. In the process of programming of the national development, the initiatives of the municipalities for the sustainable local and regional development shall be taken into account.

The Law on Regional Development defines all necessary levels of government, which develop the respective policy, assist its implementation and make evaluations of the results. Regional councils for development, as a body conducting the state policy for regional development, shall be established in the regions for planning. Directorates "Technical assistance, coordination and management of regional programmes and plans" shall be established in the structures of the district administrations in the centres of the planning regions. Thus, the implementation of the national policy for regional development at the level of NUTS II regions, in accordance with the EUROSTAT classification, is institutionally provided for. These structures will provide technical support to the Regional Development Councils and will undertake activities for horizontal and vertical coordination of the implementation of planned measures and programs.

Environment assessment has to be elaborated for all the plans and programmes, while Environment Impact Assessment shall be elaborated within the ex-ante assessment for regional plans and for National Regional Development Operational Programme. So, the Law on Regional Development gives the framework of the regional development policy and through its Secondary legislation: will establish a system of coordinated efficient planning and programming documents in compliance with the EU requirements; will regulate coordination between regional development and spatial planning; will facilitate coordination and implementation of structural assistance at regional and local levels; will propose an appropriate regulation of the system for monitoring and assessment of the actions in implementing the planning documents; will define the authorities' responsibilities and functions and will propose an effective system for coordination and control of the activities; will establish the required links and interactions between different bodies and planning documents. In fact, that will contribute to sustainable and balanced development of the country as a whole and at different levels as well.

The recently adopted Land Protection Act provides the framework for the sustainable use of land resources, especially of arable land. According to the latest amendments in the Law on the Property and Use of the Agricultural Lands the owners of the lands are free by state and notary taxes for 5 years period of time. This legislative prerequisite is going to facilitate the trade and market of agricultural lands. The Law on the Property and Use of the Agricultural Lands and its implementing regulations restored the property of agricultural lands to the former owners. The owners are free to choose the way to use agricultural lands by their purpose and are able to consolidate their land in the cooperation for the cultivation. There are conditions for re-allocating of the lands by use of state and regional land funds. This is done by exchange of private and state lands. To achieve re-allocation of private lands with state ones, a good organization is established for fast exchange and the process is decentralized. The local authorities will also play an active part in that process. The use of state land fund for re-allocation with exchange is applicable for big investors, which have to take the responsibility to create a new permanent plantation or a specialized hi tech plants production. The state will take an active role in the land market, by emitting the compensatory bonuses and is going to sell the state land to owners of such compensatory

bonuses. Also the Ordinance is going to be developed for ensuring people to receive lands for agricultural purposes. Partnerships involving a wide range of individuals and organizations can and should play a key role in conserving biological diversity in Bulgaria. Partnerships can be formed to support many conservation activities, including park and trail maintenance, education and interpretation programmes, and biological inventory and monitoring, and fund raising. In Bulgaria, innovative conservation partnerships are still relatively uncommon. However, it is a country rich in human skills, knowledge, and commitment needed to build successful partnerships. The principal aim of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy is to find a consistent response to the decline of biological and landscape diversity in Europe and to ensure the sustainability of the natural environment. Special emphasis is put on concerted European action under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

National authorities, donors, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the research community and the general public are implementing the Strategy. The twenty-year time span of the Strategy consists of five-year action plans. The first one, which was planned and approved for 1996-2000, addresses 11 Action. National Strategy for the Conservation and Management of Wetlands was prepared in 1993 and a Programme for the Management of the Black Sea Coastal Zone whose implementation has already started; and Ministry of Environment and Water established a National Nature Protection Service (NNPS) in March 1994. National Strategy for Biological Diversity in Bulgaria was established in December 1994 and it includes: Strengthening the Scientific Basis for Conservation; Legislative Initiatives; Expanding and Strengthening the Protected Areas Network; Environmental Education and Cooperative Extension; Developing and Implementing an Ecotourism Policy; Stimulating Conservation in the Black Sea Basin; Stimulating Conservation in the Balkan Peninsula; and Protected areas law-adopted from the Parliament in 1998.

Main national laws, which concern the Bulgarian forestry, are the Forests Act (adopted on 29.12.1997) and the Restitution of Forests Act (adopted on 25.11.1997). The Forests Act treats the issues about general definitions of terms “forest” and “Forest Areas”; the forests ownership; forests management and organization; forests regeneration; harvesting; forests guarding and protection; construction activities in the forests; forestry sector financing; penalties. There are two main points – this law establishes the base for restitution of forests and implementation of the structural reform, which means separation between state and economic activities in the forests. The Restitution of Forests Act defines all procedures for the restitution process and responsible parties for its implementation. At present moment is finished the first stage of the whole process – gathering of applications and is ongoing the second stage – real ownership restoration. A new Hunting and Game Protection Act has been prepared and is in procedure of adoption. Recommending minimal prices during 1998 were elaborated and included in the Bulgarian National Standard. They are in accordance with the demand, offering and quality requirements of the harmonized with the EU standards, in order to guarantee the Bulgarian forest regeneration. New 11 standards in accordance with EU standards were developed and enforced under Bulgarian National Standard. A concrete action taken in Bulgaria to implement the IPF proposals was the drawing up and enforcement of a New Forest policy.

Bulgaria recognizes and respects customary and traditional rights, including the right to land and land tenure of indigenous people, local communities, forest dwellers and forest owners and this has been guaranteed by the current Forest Act. Bulgaria has only initial ideas for starting the forest certification process but the Government is highly interested in supporting it in order to introduce new market mechanisms. There are still no clear financial mechanisms for compensation of the future private forest owners. It is envisaged a bylaw under the Forest Act to developed in this regard.

The decision-making structure for agriculture is provided by the Collegium, whose members are: the Deputy Ministers; the Heads of Departments; the Chairman of the Agricultural Academy; and the Heads of the organizations and services with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Agrarian Reform. The

national bodies responsible for the nutrition and food policy in Bulgaria include the Ministry of Health; Ministry of Agriculture; National Center for Health Education; Regional Hygiene and Epidemiology Inspectorates.

There are about 90 decrees and legislative acts concerning nutrition and food safety but the Food Law was elaborated only in 1998 and has been submitted to the Parliament for its consideration. Draft for Food and Nutrition Policy was developed in 1992 after the International Conference on Nutrition in Rome. A Governmental Decree and programme for Iodine Deficiency Disorders and Diseases (IDD) control were adopted in May 1994. A basic Food Law was developed and at present it is under consideration in the Parliament. An extensive updating of existing food regulations started. They are harmonizing with the European Union Directives. Strengthening the regulatory control over food is undertaken through structural and functional reforms of the regional Hygiene and Epidemiology Inspectorates. The internationally recognized system for efficiency assurance of the food safety “Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point” is being adapted and applied. Some measures regarding nutrition policy in relation with the Rome Conference was adopted in “Health Policy of the Republic of Bulgaria” in 1996. The National Agriculture and Rural Development Plan (NARDP) addresses special care for: young and starting farmers; women; and minorities and disabled persons.

Policies and strategies are being developed to achieve equality in all aspects of society including issuing a strategy in the year 2000 to eliminate obstacles to the full participation of women in sustainable development. In addition, mechanisms are being developed to assess the implementation and impact of development, and environment policies and programmes on women. The proportion of women decision-makers in parliament was 13.3% in 1992 and 1996, while the proportion of women decision-makers in local government was 19.8% in 1993 and 21.4% in 1996. The National Economic Development Plan for 2000-2006 (NEDP) was prepared in keeping with the National EU Accession Strategy, with the Bulgaria 2001 Programme of the Government, the updated National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis and the Accession Partnership Programme. The legal basis for the National Economic Development Plan is the Regional Development Act, which states that the plan is a “unity of sectoral and regional programmes based on an analysis of the overall development of the country and on an overall development strategy.” The three documents cover the same 7-year period. The National Economic Development Plan is first and foremost a strategic document by through which Bulgaria defines its needs and its future development orientation. The National Agricultural and Rural Development Plan was elaborated by a working group at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Agrarian Reform including representatives from the ministries of: Industry; Environment and Waters; Regional Development and Public Works; and assisted by members from the organizations of; agriculture, food producers, NGOs and regional development agencies.

Programmes and Projects:

A. Providing Adequate Shelter for All: No information available.

B. Improving Human Settlement Management: No information available.

The Government of the Republic of Bulgaria considers the necessity of implementation of national housing policy due to the following reasons: 1. Housing sector is a key element of each economy and economic activities and it should be used as one of the engines for economic development in all transitional phases; 2. Conduction of national housing policy through the achievement of the needed level of housing supply contributes for the prosperity of the society and of each individual. In addition, the necessity of conduction of a national housing policy also derives from the analysis and the main conclusions for the current status and negative trends in the housing sector. The objectives and tasks for the conduction of new national housing policy are set up in the Government Program titled “People are

the Wealth of Bulgaria". The following vision is anchored as a key element in the draft version of the National Housing Strategy, which is going to be approved by the Council of Ministers: "Establishment of a balanced, adequately developing and sustainable housing system through the provision of conditions for the access to dwellings of good quality (owned and rented), that would meet the demand of the Bulgarian citizens."

The Minister of RDPW conducts the implementation of the state spatial - urban planning policy, housing policy, ensures conditions for implementation of the principles of energy efficiency and environment protection in the field of spatial-urban planning, construction and construction industry; implements the governmental policy connected with exploitation, construction, reconstruction and modernization of water supply and sewage systems and facilities for human settlements. Two basic strategic objectives of the state housing policy are set up in the draft version of the National Housing Strategy: Halting the process of aggravating the status of the existing housing stock. Introduction of an operational mechanism for the provision of new accessible dwellings (own and rented). For the achievement of those objectives several programs will be implemented during the forthcoming years. Major recent government policy and institutional changes in the field of sustainable housing and urban development. Pursuant to the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria and the country's laws and regulations, the Minister of Regional Development and Public Works has the following powers in the field of sustainable housing and territorial development:

1. implementation of governmental regional development policy;
2. implementation of governmental territorial development policy; provision of methodological guidance and execution of control on the overall activities related to the territorial development;
3. conducts the state housing policy;
4. guidance and control over the overall activities of cadastre;
5. formulation of activities related to the geodesy and cartography;
6. promotion of improvement of the administrative-territorial development and of the local authorities;
7. provision of conditions for the introduction of principles of energy efficiency and protection of the environment in the field of territorial and urban development, construction and construction industry.

The following basic acts and regulations are developed and adopted during the recent two years to address the implementation of those functions:

1. National Housing Strategy;
2. Territorial Development Act along with the related secondary legislation;
3. Cadastre and Property Register Act;
4. Regional Development Act;
5. Geodesy and Cartography Act;
6. Act for the amendments and supplements to the State Property Act;
7. Act for the amendments and supplements to the Municipal Property Act;
8. Saving-for-Housing Banks Act;
9. Act on approval and enforcement of the Urban Development Plan of Sofia.

After the adoption of the National Housing Strategy, the implementation of the programs anchored in it as well as the development and adoption of several secondary acts related to the above mentioned laws will be launched.

Improvement quality of housing: Quality of housing stock (age of dwellings, number of rooms, number of bathrooms, number of persons per room, basic equipment available in dwellings)

According to the data received by the National Statistics Institute, the total number of dwellings in Republic of Bulgaria at the end of 2002 is 3 691 787, out of which the number of dwellings in the towns, where 69,6% of the population lives is 2 305 849. The main part of dwellings is private property of physical entities - 96.5%. 3.0% of dwellings are state-owned or municipal property while the rest 0,5%

are property of commercial enterprises, public or cooperative organizations, or they have been vacant/unoccupied by the time of census. Calculated on the grounds of the overall existing housing stock, the housing supply could be compared to that of the developed West-European countries. By the end of 2002 the total number of dwellings is much higher than the number of the households and the we have the following proportion: in 1000 persons – 471 dwellings. This fact created a wrong impression that housing should not be stated as a priority problem, but dwellings are located unevenly along the country. The vacant/unoccupied dwellings which constitute 14.5% out of the total number of dwellings are located in “unattractive” areas and a great part of them are “non-standard” - without necessary equipment such as electricity, central heating, gas supply, water supply, etc., abandoned, semi-demolished. An evaluation for the status of housing supply could be obtained from other indicators like “tenure of one-household” and “number of persons per room”. In our country only 69.3% of the dwellings are occupied only by one family/household; in over 130 000 dwellings live three and more persons per room; and in about 55 000 – one room is occupied by four and more persons. The equipment of dwellings does not meet the modern requirements. Relatively better is the situation with the water supply and energy supply, and in practical terms almost the entire population is supplied with water and electricity. Here the problem is created by the quality and reliability of the networks. Over 82.5% of the dwellings are equipped with internal water supply and sewerage system, but only 40% of the population uses sewerage system due to its lack or not completed collector systems. Only 61 Waste Water Treatment Plants are build in the settlements. The share of the dwellings linked to the central heating system is 12.7% and they are located in 42 towns. Gas supply system for dwellings could be considered an alternative option for heating. In 17 towns operate gas distribution companies. 88 610 dwellings /2.4% out of the total number of dwellings/ are lacking any basic equipment. The problem with energy efficiency of the housing stock becomes more significant: on one hand the price of the energy is a heavy burden for the budgets of the households, and on the other hand we are faced by the global trend toward energy savings in the context of sustainable development, as 70% of the domestic energy consumption is for heating.

According to the data of the Ministry of Energy and Energy Resources, external surrounding elements of buildings have actual coefficients of heat conduction which are 35 times higher comparing to the standards for the new construction enforced in 1999. Thermal insulation is lacking in 80% of the basements and the attic floors of the existing housing stock. The bad thermal insulation is a reason for the increased heat losses. Heat losses through glazed surfaces /windows and glazed doors to the balconies/ in some cases reach up to 50% of the total heat losses. It is expected that the biggest problems now would be faced with the large-panel buildings which number is 18 900 and they are located in 120 residential areas along the country. There are 707 441 dwellings in those buildings inhabited by over 1.77 million people. 83% of the panel dwellings are in the towns, which are administrative centers of the country’s regions, while in a number of big cities, the panel dwellings constitute approximately 50% of the whole housing stock. Series of expert assessments confirm the necessity of urgent renovation of the internal installations and hydro-insulation of the roof of the panel buildings.

C. Promoting Sustainable Land-Use Planning and Management: Bulgarian National Forest Programme (NFP) is still in preparation. A key issue in it will be including of the IPF proposals. There will be strong emphasis on integrated forest and agricultural management. Bulgarian NFP is being developed in accordance with Bulgarian Strategy for Biodiversity Conservation; Bulgarian National Action Plan for Biodiversity Conservation. The cross-sectoral approach is the basis for development of the NFP. Private projects in the following areas of activities include: Rural tourism; Fishing tourism; Scientific and Photo tourism of endemic and/or protected animal and plant specie; SME’s for the processing of essential oil plants; etc. The measure will also encourage the enforcement of the “equal opportunity” principle by providing equal opportunities to apply for men and women, as well as disabled persons. Women, disabled persons and minorities will receive special attention, support and education should they decide to start or develop activities in the “in-house” craftsmanship area. The programme for IDD control includes iodine fortification of the table salt for humans, the salt for animal consumption and for food production.

National representative survey on goiter and urine iodine excretion was conducted in 1997 for estimation the efficiency of IDD Programme. Bulgaria was included in WHO BULGARIA Integrated Non-communicable Disease Intervention (CINDI) programme in 1994. A National Committee at the Ministry of Health was established. Strategies and programmes for intervention directed to positive changes in the dietary habits of Bulgarian population were developed. The programme is going in 7 regions in the BULGARIA. A Nutrition Surveillance Programme was developed for identifying the nutritional problems at the national level, population groups at risk, and assessment of the prevalence and distribution of diet-related health problems. An Intervention Programme for nutrition improvement in Orphanages started in 1998. The activities supported under Measure 1.6. Water Resource Management – Irrigation, are included in the National Investment Programme until 2006.

D. Promoting the Integrated Provision of Environmental Infrastructure: water, sanitation, drainage and solid waste management: See under Freshwater and Sanitation Profiles.

E. Promoting Sustainable Energy and Transport Systems in Human Settlements: The Programme for Energy Efficiency Production in Light Industry for the period 1997-2000 was a part of the National Energy Efficiency Programme and was developed in compliance with the National Energy Efficiency Plan and Reduction of the Emissions of Greenhouse Gases - Contract DOE-1/93, financially secured by the State Department of the USA, within the range of the worldwide programme concerning these issues. Special attention for the programmes is paid to the environmental and social aspects of sustainable consumption and production. During the privatisation process, the Agency for Small and Medium-size Enterprises, as well as some Bulgarian and international funds, give credits for projects mainly to small and medium-size enterprises in order to encourage the sustainable consumption and production models. Major programmes undertaken include the following: better meeting the commercial, private, and public needs for mobility in both urban and rural areas; promoting traffic efficiency, such as reduction of heavy traffic hours, provision of mass transport modes, etc.; improving efficiency in fuel consumption; Reducing emissions from transportation, such as carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter and volatile organic compounds; Reducing traffic-related accidents and damages; and promoting non-motorized modes of transport, such as cycle ways, footways, etc. The participation of Bulgaria in the Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment (TINA) project is a very important component of the development of transport infrastructure. The Programme of Transport Sector Development also includes: constructing and developing of Sofia National Airport; restructuring, rehabilitation and modernization of rail transport; and rehabilitation, modernization and development of the national road network.

In accordance with the described priorities and principles for planning and construction of projects in transport infrastructure, the Government of Bulgaria has developed and adopted a four-year Middle-term National Investment Programme for the period 1998 – 2001. It clearly determines the obligations of the State Budget for development of the country's infrastructure, including the transport sector. In addition, the Ministry of Transport and Communications has elaborated an Investment Programme for Development of the Transport Infrastructure of the country. It comprises 36 national investment transport projects, 25 of which are included in the Middle-term National Investment Programme of the Government. The investments, necessary for their construction till year 2015 are with a total amount of US\$ 4,890,85 Million. The projects are in the field of railway, combined, road, maritime (sea and inland waterways) and air transport and are situated along the five Pan-European Transport Corridors, which pass through the territory of Bulgaria.

F. Promoting Human Settlement Planning and Management in Disaster-Prone Areas: No information available.

G. Promoting Sustainable Construction Activities: The equipment of dwellings does not meet the modern requirements. Relatively better is the situation with the water supply and energy supply, and in practical terms almost the entire population is supplied with water and electricity. Here the problem is created by the quality and reliability of the networks. Over 82.5% of the dwellings are equipped with internal water supply and sewerage system, but only 40% of the population uses sewerage system due to its lack or not completed collector systems. Only 61 Waste Water Treatment Plants are build in the settlements. The share of the dwellings linked to the central heating system is 12.7% and they are located in 42 towns. Gas supply system for dwellings could be considered an alternative option for heating. In 17 towns operate gas distribution companies. 88 610 dwellings /2.4% out of the total number of dwellings/ are lacking any basic equipment. The problem with energy efficiency of the housing stock becomes more significant: on one hand the price of the energy is a heavy burden for the budgets of the households, and on the other hand we are faced by the global trend toward energy savings in the context of sustainable development, as 70% of the domestic energy consumption is for heating. According to the data of the Ministry of Energy and Energy Resources, external surrounding elements of buildings have actual coefficients of heat conduction which are 3-5 times higher comparing to the standards for the new construction enforced in 1999. Thermal insulation is lacking in 80% of the basements and the attic floors of the existing housing stock. The bad thermal insulation is a reason for the increased heat losses. Heat losses through glazed surfaces /windows and glazed doors to the balconies/ in some cases reach up to 50% of the total heat losses.

It is expected that the biggest problems now would be faced with the large-panel buildings which number is 18 900 and they are located in 120 residential areas along the country. There are 707 441 dwellings in those buildings inhabited by over 1.77 million people. 83% of the panel dwellings are in the towns, which are administrative centers of the country's regions, while in a number of big cities, the panel dwellings constitute approximately 50% of the whole housing stock. Series of expert assessments confirm the necessity of urgent renovation of the internal installations and hydro-insulation of the roof of the panel buildings. Technical developments and new initiatives, including minimum standards of building regulations (or building codes) that apply to all housing construction. Currently under implementation is harmonization of the secondary technical regulations with the requirements of the European standards on designing of: building constructions, networks and production facilities, supply and distribution of gas, electric and heat power; networks and facilities for water supply and sewerage. Recent initiatives and trends in sustainable housing construction and urban development (energy, water consumption and saving, eco labeling of building materials, new demonstration projects...)

New legislative acts are adopted recently: Territorial development act, including requirements to the building constructions (based on Directive 89/106/EEC) and to the construction products (Regulation on the basic requirements and conformity assessment of the construction products);

- Energy Act;
- Energy Efficiency Act;
- Environment?? Protection Act;
- Waste Management Act.

As well as the related acts of secondary legislation.

Principle problems encountered as regards health in buildings (asbestos, radon, lead poisoning) and policies developed to solve these problems. A number of regulatory acts aimed at ensuring safety and healthy conditions of labour, living and recreation are in force in Bulgaria:

- Rules for issuing permissions to use new and imported construction products in the construction industry;
- Regulation on the hygiene requirements for health protection of urban environment;
- Regulation on sanitary rules for import, production and use of materials and products of asbestos and with asbestos content;
- Regulation on the admissible values of vibrations in the housing buildings;

- Hygiene norms for marginal admissible levels of the noise in residential and public buildings, etc. Currently under implementation is harmonization of the secondary technical regulations in this field with the requirements of the European standards. In 1999, a law established a National Agricultural Extension Service. It transformed the National Agricultural Extension Service existing since 1995 into an independent unit with its own budget. Its entire activity is aimed to contribute for sustainable development of Bulgarian agriculture.

H. Promoting Human Resource Development and Capacity-Building for Human Settlement Development: No information available.

Demographic Trends and Indicators Number and basic structures of the population – The trend towards the decrease of population of the country is still ongoing during the recent years. The permanent population in Bulgaria at the end of 2002 is 7845841 inhabitants. For one year, due to the higher death rate comparing to the birth rate, as well as to the migration outside the country, the population has decreased with 45 000 persons, or 0.6%. Below is information for population by 31 December in years and gender:

Year	Total	Male	Female
1990	8669269	4269998	4399271
1995	8384715	4103368	4281347
2000	8149468	3967423	4182045
2001	7891095	3841163	4049932
2002	7845841	3816162	4029679

In 2002 the number of people living in the cities is 5.461.000 persons, or 69,6 % of the population of the country, and in villages – 2.385.000 persons (30,4 %). During the period of 1990 – 2003 some significant changes in the age structure of the population are observed due to the unfavorable trends in demographic process. Increasing is the ongoing process of aging of population. While the average share of the young people up to the age of 15 in 1990 is 20.1%, and the share of the people over the age of 65 is 13.4%, this share in 2002 is respectively – 14.6 ? 17.0 % out of the total population.

Mechanical movement of the population – The number of mechanical movements within the country is 147 000 in 2002 and the number of migrated people is 128000. Comparing to the former years the mechanical movement of the population within the country is relatively less. The intensity of the internal migration (proportion between the number of migrations and the number of population) during the former year is 1.9%, while in 1995 it is 2.3% and in 2002 – 2.7%. The most intensive is the migration “city – city”. Approximately 46% of all migrated people have changed their residence from one city to another. The share of the migration processes “village – city” is significantly less – 23% and “city – village” – 20%. The migration “village – village” in 2002 is 11%.

Status: Within the framework of the light industry and its branches for the purposes of energy saving and other resources, the following measures have been undertaken: Electricity saving illuminating bodies, devices, equipment and machines were introduced; Many enterprises use their own water sources for industrial purposes as heating and production; and Local thermal power plants are used on a large scale. The delay is due to the prolonged process of privatisation and the poor economic state of the country at the moment. There is no strategy for sustainable consumption and production patterns because, the current trend towards rapid and efficient privatisation was considered useless to develop branch and national strategies and long-term working programmes for the proposed models.

About 41% of the total population has been threatened by air and water pollution coming from the energy sector, industry, and transportation. Fourteen hot spots with high levels of pollution harmful to human health have been declared in the country. The pollution from the transport sector is increasing due to increased travel; the old aged vehicle fleet, and the imperfections of the existing road network. Heavy metal contamination is characteristic for areas adjacent to the motor ways in the towns and the outskirts. Noise pollution of the environment as a result of the transport and industrial sector is a big problem for towns affecting about 40% of the urban population. Road network - The total length of the national road network is 37,288 km.

In order to overcome the serious problems of urban infrastructure caused by the continuous application of the approach for functional zoning, the following measures are to be undertaken amongst which are the following: the preservation of municipal property in these territories should be regulated by the Law on Municipal Property and the Law on Territorial Development; new plans for the principle of space integration and merging of the functions at all levels of planning from the agglomeration to the town and the individual residential district; and creation of new legislation to regulate the scope of the master urban plan, which should include the zone around the town and aim at ensuring well balanced sustainable development; etc. The urban network in Bulgaria (5,336 human settlements) has been formed for millenniums. It bears the signs of ancient cultures (Tracian and Slavonic dwellings, ancient Greek and Roman towns) and all the negative consequences of contemporary urbanization. All characteristic features of Bulgarian towns in recent years indicate alarming signs of lagging behind European standards and of instability amongst which are: demographic structure; social community; economic activity; etc. The issue of the quality of the urban living environment is becoming more and more important for public health care, as well as for the economy of resources.

Environmental surveys show that in 1989, more than 40% of the population lived in human settlements with bad air quality, seriously polluted rivers, and poor groundwater quality. Heavy metal contamination is characteristic for areas adjacent to the motor ways in the towns and the outskirts. Noise pollution of the environment as a result of the transport and industrial sector is a big problem for towns affecting about 40% of the urban population. The problem of waste disposal has not been solved yet and the construction of wastewater treatment plants is very slow. The low technological and energy efficiency in the production and household sectors make human settlements big electricity consumers. However, the state of the environment in the small towns and villages is good apart from the low level of infrastructure. In comparing conditions in human settlements with previous years, there has been a decrease in environmental pollution caused by industry, due to reduced production and consumption. This tendency is not sustainable in character, because a restoration of economic activity is expected. The pollution from the transport sector is increasing due to increased travel, old aged vehicle fleet, and the imperfections of the existing road network.

According to received applications there are claims for 13% private, 5% of authorities (school and religious) and 38% municipal forests in future. It is expected the ratio between different kinds of ownership to be 82% state owned, 5% municipality owned, 10% private owned and 3% owned by authorities forests after restitution process finalization. It is envisaged about 30% of future state forests to be given for use of municipalities. After Restitution of Forest Act and following from its sub-regulation adoption, started the work for strengthening of Regional Land Commissions. In the RFBs and SFs has established special working groups, which prepared and submitted to the Land Commissions all existing information and documentation in each forestry unit. Some specific issues as the case of missing old documents were additionally elaborated and solved. This additional work has lead to amendment of the Law for the Forest Restitution in early 1999. Detailed analysis of all applications and fixing of digital models coming from forestry management plans and plans for restitution of agricultural lands is ongoing as a basis for real ownership restoration.

There are significant damages caused by poaching. At the same time the forestry is the main livelihood in certain regions e.g. local people in rural areas commonly use firewood. In Bulgaria, only papers are recycled and the quantity is generally insignificant. Amongst other challenges are the following: Institutional strengthening of the National Forestry Board and its regional and local units in regard to the Forests Act implementation and structural reform accomplishment; Staff education and training; Development of a General Information System for the forestry sector; Improvement of the forestry infrastructure; Development of national standards for the forestry certification and support of the whole process in the country; Finalization of the restitution process; etc. In 1996 the Bulgarian economy entered into a deep foreign currency and banking crisis, which led to unprecedented financial destabilization and dramatic decline in the economic life. The economic programme approved in mid 1996 which was supported by an agreement with the IMF, failed mostly due to the attempt to bypass the commitments undertaken with respect to the structural reform in the state owned sector. The depth of the financial crisis reflected the economic performance in 1996 and more specifically: real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declined by approximately 9%; foreign trade contracted by about 12%; the Lev depreciated 6.9 times (from Lev 71 per USD at end 1995 to Lev 487 per USD at end 1996); and annual average inflation increased twice (from 62% in 1995 to 121% to 1996).

Capacity Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: The National Agricultural Advisory System (NAAS) was established in 1994 with an ordinance of the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry. NAAS has 30 local offices, 3 specialized offices and 4 national centers – study, informational, agro business and accounting, and laboratory. The headquarters of the NAAS are in the Ministry of Agriculture. From 2000 NAAS is a separate legal entity and will be providing equitable access to all major groups – farmers, women, youth, etc. Special attention is provided to young and new farmers regarding their education and training. A national seminar with the participation of representatives from all the ministries related to the food and nutrition problems, food industries and NGOs was conducted; unfortunately, the Government has not yet adopted the policy. The local agricultural extension services provide on-site advice and consultancy. Also, they submit information through the local newspapers and the electronic media. They provide information to the farmers about open days and demonstrations organized in agricultural farms. The local extension services have the task of making the farmers aware of new credit lines and of the lending conditions, and also to assist the producers to prepare business projects. They organize training, qualification and re-qualification courses.

Information: A decree for improving the nutrition of schoolchildren was adopted by the government and published in 1996. It includes legal and economic measures for nutrition improvement in the school canteens and refreshment bars, makes provision for an increase of the state aid directed to the school meals. Directions for requirements and practical approaches for the establishment of healthy nutrition in school canteens and refreshment bars, as well as Manual with recipes were developed and are under publication. Reference values of Energy and Nutrient Intake for Bulgarian population, were updated in 1994. Bulgarian Food Composition Tables were updated in 1995, and in 1997, the country started to carry out an Annual Food Supply and Nutritional situation assessment. This assessment has to be carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture. Two national representative surveys on Dietary and Nutritional Status of Bulgarian Population were conducted in 1997 and 1998. A national survey on dietary and nutritional status of schoolchildren and women in child bearing age (18-45 years old) was carried out in 1998 and data obtained are under processing.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: The Global Environment Fund and USAID are supporting the project for Energy Efficiency Strategy to Decrease Greenhouse Gas Emission. It will be implemented in a Demonstration

Zone in the City of Gabrovo. The GEF share of the project is US\$ 2.575 million; USAID is contributing US\$ 0.9 million. The Government of Republic of Bulgaria and the Government of Japan have signed the Agreement for the establishment of Energy Efficiency Centre in the industry in 1995. The Centre works on the problems of energy efficiency and environmental protection together with the Japanese specialists. The Centre investigates the energy consumption and possibilities for implementation of measures for energy efficiency in the different industrial branches. The Centre provides science and technical information and transfers energy efficiency technologies in the industry. There is an information system for analysis of energy consumption and energy efficiency management. The National programme for energy efficiency in the different branches of the industry was developed together with the National agency for energy efficiency and a Draft Law for energy efficiency.

The programme “Transit Roads” was started in 1992 with the financial help of the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the PHARE programme. More than 600 km of first grade roads with intensive traffic were rehabilitated under the programme “Transit Roads 1.” The reconstruction of approximately 900 km of the main road network was catered for under the programme “Transit Roads 2”, carried out between 1997 and 1999. This programme was directed to the most heavily loaded sections in worst operational condition on the route of the international roads and the Pan-European corridors. The former General Road Directorate has already started the realization of the programme “Transit Roads 3”, which will cover the period 1999 – 2002 and cater for about 900 – 1000 km of the main road network. Bulgaria participates in the Pan-European process. In Bulgaria, the governance process became more transparent due to the criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, the forest policy has cross-sectoral basis, and the information flows is more operative and easily measured. The criteria and indicators used in the country to assess progress towards sustainable forest management at the international level include: appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to the global carbon cycle; Maintenance of forest ecosystems health condition and vigour; Maintenance and increase of productive functions of forests (wood and non-wood); conservation and appropriate enhancement of biodiversity in forest; appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (notably soil and water); and Maintenance of other socio-economic functions and conditions. The Strategy for Agricultural and Rural Development was discussed in a meeting of the CCU for the Special Preparation Programme. Higher transparency of the programming process was achieved by two public hearings on priorities and measures of the plan. Representatives of the European Commission were present at the hearing, in keeping with the partnership principle.

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