

# Legal Reform: *Separation of Powers Program in Serbia*

The East-West Management Institute (EWMI), with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is implementing the five year Separation of Powers Program (SPP) in Serbia. The project is designed to help Serbia move closer to EU accession by strengthening the division of power and authority more equably among Serbia's three branches of government. SPP is structured around three tasks:



- 1. Court Budgeting:** EWMI is working to increase the capacity of the Serbian judiciary to allocate, acquire and manage its own budgetary resources, including through the use of strategic planning and needs based budgeting. This effort is being done in conjunction with the newly created High Court Council, with which EWMI is working to create its own budgeting office. EWMI has already conducted an assessment of Serbian budgeting practices and is preparing a package of regulations and job descriptions to be used in hiring and managing the HCC staff. The expected results include a more independent budget process and greater judicial branch control over judiciary funding.
- 2. Court Administration:** EWMI is assisting the Serbian judiciary in making the administration of justice more efficient, transparent, and responsive to the needs of users. Key tasks include helping to create a new position of court administrator, developing training programs for new court administrators on the effective management of judicial institutions, and introducing a weighted case management system. These reforms will lead to greater transparency and efficiency in court operations, and allow judges to devote more time to deciding cases rather than managing personnel and resources.
- 3. Parliamentary Reform:** Building the capacity of the National Assembly (NA) to manage its own budget and resources and improve its deliberative and oversight functions. Under a Memorandum of Understanding entered into between USAID and the NA, EWMI and its subcontractor, the State University of New York, are providing assistance and training to NA staff in strategic planning, budgeting, and improving transparency and outreach to the public.

*Working in partnership with grass roots groups, local governments and international organizations to build just, prosperous and democratic societies.*

EWMI is a not-for-profit organization based in New York with extensive experience in promoting judicial reform in the region, with past and current legal reform projects in Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, and Romania. SPP's work with the parliament is being implemented through a subcontract with the Center for International Development at the State University of New York at Albany (SUNY), which is a world leader in strengthening parliamentary institutions. EWMI's SPP Chief of Party is Judge Kenneth Stuart of Colorado, who previously served for five years leading EWMI's judicial reform project in Bulgaria.

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