

## SOUTHEAST EUROPE PARLIAMENTARY PROGRAM

### PROJECT DETAILS

**Country/ies:** Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina  
**Duration:** Sept 2004 – April 2008  
**Budget:** CAD \$ 1,423,141  
**Funder:** Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)  
**Partner(s):** National Assembly of Serbia, Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina  
**Status:** Closed

### About the Parliamentary Centre

The Parliamentary Centre is a Canadian not-for-profit, non-partisan organization that supports parliaments around the world. Our assessment, strategic planning and training programs, combined with research products and networking channels, help legislatures measure their performance, build capacity, tackle key issues and promote mutual learning.

In short - we help legislatures better serve their people.

### About the Project

The Southeast Europe Parliamentary Program (SEPP) was designed to strengthen the institutional capacity of legislatures in Southeast Europe so that the legislative branch had an increased value-added role for contributing to good governance in the region. Specifically, the program aimed to increase the capacity of parliamentary staff to provide effective non-partisan, professional, research, and administrative

services; to strengthen the financial resource management capacity of parliaments; and to increase the oversight role of parliaments by strengthening their capacity to monitor government expenditures.

Following a series of assessment missions partnerships for programming were established with two legislatures: the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia and the BiH Parliamentary Assembly.

### Accomplishments

Through SEPP, the Parliamentary Centre supported the National Assembly of Serbia to draft a law on the **State Audit Institution** (SAI). Through the program, an experienced researcher and legislative drafter was assigned to the parliamentary sub-committee tasked with drafting the law. The draft law was completed in Spring 2005 and reviewed by various international experts, including several prominent Canadians, for its viability, adherence to international norms, and non-partisan structure. On November 14, 2005, **the law was passed** with 129 of the 188 present MPs voting in favour for the law.

In order to **strengthen research capacity** within the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the Parliamentary Centre established a research unit within the BiH State Parliament in the fall of 2004.

Intended to provide analytical support to key committees of the House of Peoples and House of Representatives, the Research Centre was created following detailed assessment and planning work, which found that parliamentary leaders recognized the lack of research capacity as a serious gap that needed to be filled.

As a result, the Research Centre was established to provide greater empowerment and capacity to the BiH Parliamentary Assembly and its Committees to make more informed decisions when deliberating on issues of importance to its citizens.

The Research Centre also provided **support to parliamentary committees in holding public hearings**. Through a pilot project, the Legal/Constitutional Committees of both the House of Peoples and House of Representatives held committee hearings in December 2005 on the topic of post-secondary education across 8 cities in BiH.

## Testimonials

Commenting on the sustainability of project results, an external evaluation of the project commissioned by the UNDEF concluded that the the capacities of direct project beneficiaries are strengthened and they will continue to implement initiated activities beyond the life of the project.