



**NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE  
FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

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***EASTERN AND CENTRAL  
EUROPEAN PROGRAMS***

***1993***





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## ACTIVITIES IN ALBANIA

*I have personally been involved in this struggle in Albania where the National Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute have been active since 1991. They were, in fact, the first democrats from outside our long isolated country to arrive to help us... Their activities and support have been extremely valuable in Albania's continuing emergence from communism to democratic governance.*

-- Dr. Sali Berisha, President of Albania

Beginning with Albania's first post-war multiparty elections in 1991, NDI has conducted a comprehensive political and civic education program to assist the country's transition to democracy. NDI's work has focused on three areas: 1) promoting free and fair elections; 2) working with citizen groups to encourage public involvement in shaping a democratic political system; and 3) providing training in parliamentary organization and legislative procedure.

**Election Processes** NDI sent a technical team to Albania to assess the pre-election environment in advance of Albania's first general election in 1991. The team's report raised serious questions about the election law and the fairness of the campaign and was particularly timely for international observers in country to monitor the elections. Subsequently, NDI provided technical advice to the National Assembly on drafting a new election law at the request of the two leading parliamentary parties. Both parties later drafted an electoral code based in part on principles raised by NDI experts. Before the March 1992 parliamentary elections, NDI sponsored a visit to Bulgaria by Albanian party activists and legislators to observe that country's preparations for national elections. NDI also prepared a voter education film for broadcast, and organized two international delegations to monitor campaign events. On election day, NDI helped coordinate a nationwide monitoring effort and an independent vote count by domestic Albanian groups.

**Civic Education** In early 1992, NDI began providing technical assistance and equipment to the newly formed Society for Democratic Culture, a Tirana-based civic organization seeking to ensure free and fair elections. NDI helped the Society recruit and train election monitors throughout the country. NDI has since worked with the Society to promote greater public participation in the political process. The program includes forums at which citizens can communicate directly with their elected representatives.

**Legislative Training** In late 1991, NDI sent a team of international experts to Tirana to assess the organization of the newly elected People's Assembly of Albania and to share their experiences from multiparty parliaments in established democracies. During consultations with parliamentary officials and an all-parties seminar on the workings of multiparty parliaments, the team provided information on parliamentary procedure, organization and scheduling. NDI plans to work further with the parliament, addressing issues such as managing relations between the executive and legislative branches.

NDI's experience in Albania indicates that the country's move toward democratic rule is impeded by the public's uncertainty over the role of elected officials, and the rights and responsibilities of constituents. NDI is committed to furthering its civic education and political training projects, and has placed a full-time representative in Tirana to work with the Society for Democratic Culture, the national parliament and local governments. For further information on NDI's Albania program, please contact Senior Program Officer Susan J. Atwood.





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## ACTIVITIES IN BULGARIA

Since April 1990, NDI has provided technical advice and training to Bulgarian civic organizations and government officials in election monitoring, civic education, parliamentary procedure and local government administration. Most of NDI's activities have been coordinated with the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections and Civil Rights (BAFECR), an independent civic organization that monitors elections and promotes democratic politics and governance.

**Election Processes** With NDI's assistance, BAFECR trained more than 10,000 election monitors for Bulgaria's first post-communist elections in June 1990, and 9,000 monitors for the October 1991 parliamentary and local elections. Before the latter elections, NDI and BAFECR assembled top political leaders to discuss election regulations. The National Assembly incorporated much of the resulting 13-point plan for electoral reform into the new election law. For both elections, NDI and BAFECR jointly conducted pre-election assessments, held voter education roundtables, organized international observer delegations and drafted reports analyzing election results and processes.

**Civic Education** NDI has worked continuously with BAFECR's 28 local chapters to promote public participation in the country's political process. With NDI support, these chapters have held public roundtables on political and legal issues, monitored human rights conditions, and brought together elected officials and the public to address public policy issues. NDI has also trained BAFECR's leaders in organizational management, and has helped the national office develop an information exchange network with local chapters.

**Legislative Training** In July 1990, NDI and BAFECR sponsored a three-day parliamentary training workshop for 45 members of the National Assembly. A group of American, Danish and Hungarian legislators advised Assembly members on parliamentary rules and procedures. Subsequently, NDI sponsored two follow-on consultations to focus on more specific issues.

**Local Government** In September 1990, NDI conducted a seminar on local government structures for members of the National Assembly in connection with parliament's debate on local government reforms. NDI and BAFECR then convened citizen roundtables in several cities to encourage public input into defining the roles of local government bodies. NDI subsequently sent municipal government experts to conduct a management training program for the mayors of 35 Bulgarian municipalities.

With NDI's support, BAFECR has become an effective promoter of Bulgaria's fledgling democracy both inside and outside of the country. With NDI, BAFECR representatives have shared their civic organizing experiences and skills with democrats in other countries building similar organizations. NDI's plans to further Bulgaria's democracy building efforts by helping BAFECR expand and consolidate its network of local chapters; advise other civic organizations on developing their projects; prepare voter education programs and a monitoring strategy for upcoming parliamentary elections; and expand its role as a government watchdog organization.

For more information on NDI's Bulgaria program, please contact Program Officer Lisa McLean.





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## ACTIVITIES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND SLOVAKIA

NDI began its work in Czechoslovakia in 1990 by responding to a request from President Vaclav Havel for immediate assistance with writing the rules for the first democratic elections in 44 years. Shortly thereafter, NDI began a series of political party building programs to promote confidence and participation in the June national elections. NDI conducted a follow-up political party training program in 1992, and is currently engaged in a long-term civic education project in both the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

**Election Processes** In January 1990, President Havel asked NDI to provide advice on the country's new election law. Within 48 hours, NDI dispatched an international group of election experts who worked with the Civic Forum in drafting new electoral codes. Later that year, NDI organized a 64-member delegation to observe the national elections. The observer mission culminated in an NDI-sponsored symposium in Prague where Czech, Slovak and international political leaders examined institutions and practices necessary to restore democratic government.

**Political Party Training** Before the 1990 elections, NDI sponsored and participated in a series of training programs that helped enable the country's newly emerged democratic political parties to organize and present their respective messages of the electorate. NDI also sponsored a public opinion survey that assessed popular attitudes toward political parties and social and economic reforms. Political parties used the survey's findings to develop platforms responsive to voter interests.

In 1992, NDI organized a series of party-building workshops and consultations with 14 major democratic political parties as they prepared for parliamentary elections in June. The multiparty workshops focused on internal organizational structures, management techniques, grassroots support and message development. Individual consultations followed the workshops, and allowed NDI experts to tailor their training to the specific concerns and needs of each political party.

**Civic Education and Participation** Through its field representatives in Prague and Bratislava, NDI recently launched the first phase of a multi-year civic education project, dubbed "Listen to the People." By increasing citizen participation in nongovernmental organizations and political parties, the project seeks to contribute to the development of a broad-based civil society in the two countries. NDI will first identify public policy issues that can be addressed by well functioning civic organizations. From this research, NDI will help develop a curriculum that will be used to train organizers in the skills necessary to create and sustain civic organizations, allowing them to be effective advocates in their respective areas of interest.

For additional information on NDI's Czech and Slovak programs, please contact Program Officer Robert Benjamin.





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## ACTIVITIES IN HUNGARY

*On behalf of the political parties of the Hungarian National Assembly... warmest thanks to you [NDI] for the valuable assistance... provided in the process of consolidation of Hungary's new democracy... [T]he Institute has generously provided information, advice and support to enable Hungary's first freely elected parliament to professionalize its operation.*

— Gyorgy Szabad, President of the National Assembly, January 24, 1992

NDI has supported Hungary's democratic transition since 1989 when the Institute sponsored efforts to strengthen emerging parties and encourage continued liberalization of the political system. Since 1989, NDI programming has focused on three areas: 1) introducing parties in parliament to information on legislative organization and rules; 2) providing local governments with technical assistance on models of city management; and 3) assisting the parties to strengthen their organizational capabilities and improve communication with their constituencies.

**Election Processes** After sponsoring a series of programs to help democratic parties prepare for the March 1990 elections, NDI and the International Republican Institute mobilized a 60-member international mission to observe the first competitive parliamentary elections in Hungary in more than 45 years. Delegations were also organized for the November 1989 constitutional referendum and the April 1990 run-off elections.

**Legislative Training** Following the March 1990 elections, party leaders asked NDI to assist them in strengthening the organization and research capacities of their respective party caucuses within the newly elected parliament. NDI developed a year-long program during which legislative experts and elected representatives consulted with groups of MPs and staff from each of the parliamentary parties. These sessions addressed staff management, budgeting methods, oversight of classified information, rule of procedure, research services, and drafting legislative proposals. These consultations were augmented by two all-parties symposia where international experts presented a 21-page commentary on the parliament's draft rules of procedure. Most of the report's recommendations were included in the subsequent draft produced in May 1991. NDI has coordinated its work with the U.S. House of Representatives Special Task Force on Parliamentary Development in Eastern Europe (the Frost Task Force).

**Local Government** Following the 1990 local elections, NDI brought municipal government experts to Hungary to provide technical advice to Budapest's newly elected mayor and 22 district mayors. These experts consulted on models of local government, as well as issues raised by Hungarian officials including urban growth, infrastructure improvements and tax systems.

**Political Party Training** In preparation for the March 1990 elections, NDI sponsored a series of training programs to help the country's newly emerged democratic parties to organize and present their respective messages to the electorate. Throughout 1992 and 1993, in response to requests for assistance from Hungarian parliamentary and political party leaders, NDI conducted a series of consultations to discuss the organizational and political skills necessary to promote democratic governance and to insure the long-term viability of the current political parties. For more information on NDI's Hungary program, please contact Program Officer Lisa C. McLean.





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## ACTIVITIES IN POLAND

In June 1989, Poland conducted its first partially free legislative elections in more than 40 years. Since September 1989, NDI has supported the country's democratic transition with programming focusing on two areas: 1) strengthening the legislature; and 2) providing technical assistance to political parties.

**Legislative Training** In September 1989, then-NDI Chairman Walter Mondale and former Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker led the U.S. delegation to an NDI-sponsored conference in Warsaw to study the role of parliament in formulating national economic policy. Current and former legislators from eight western countries shared experiences with their newly elected Polish counterparts. Panels examined the committee system, access to information, floor debate and voting procedures. Polish participants were able to examine models from other countries and apply them to their own unique institution.

Prompted by NDI's initial legislative training program in Poland, the U.S. Congress passed the "Gift of Democracy" resolution to help strengthen the Polish parliament by providing technical training and computer equipment. The resolution was sponsored by Senator Peter Dominici, a participant in the Warsaw conference.

Working with the Secretary of the Senate, NDI sponsored a visit to the U.S. of Polish parliamentary staff members to study the technical systems and formal legislative processes of the U.S. Congress and the Virginia state government. Polish staff members were exposed to a full range of technologies including computer applications, legislative voting systems, research services and production of the *Congressional Record*.

NDI conducted a post-election assessment mission following the September 19, 1993 national elections, during which the number of parties represented in the Sejm was reduced from 29 to six. The team recommended that NDI work with the 56-member constitutional committee that is charged with presenting a draft constitution to parliament by May 1994. As a result, NDI will organize a conference in Warsaw on comparative constitutions in March 1994. This program will be followed by seminars with the Polish parliament on executive-legislative relations.

**Political Party Training** In April 1991, political experts from the U.S. and Europe advised representatives from 14 Polish parties on ways in which they could effectively organize for the October 1991 elections, the first fully democratic parliamentary polls in post-communist Poland. Many parties participating in those seminars requested individual follow-on assistance before the elections. In response, NDI conducted pre-election consultations for the leaders and organizers of 10 parties. The seminars and consultations focused on party organization and communication.

For further information on NDI's program in Poland, please contact Senior Program Officer Susan Atwood.





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## ACTIVITIES IN ROMANIA

Beginning with Romania's first post-war multiparty elections in May 1990, NDI has had a continuous presence in the country. NDI established a permanent field office in Romania in August 1991, which has focused its efforts on three areas: 1) promoting free and fair elections; 2) working with citizen groups to encourage public involvement in building a civil society; and 3) providing training to parliamentary parties on constituent relations.

**Election Processes** NDI provided support for Romanian organizations to monitor the May 20, 1990 elections, conduct voter and civic education, and promote participation in the electoral process. International experts advised on ways in which nonpartisan Romanian groups could effectively coordinate programs to support free and fair elections and the democratization process in general. In preparation for local and national elections in 1992, NDI provided technical and material assistance to a domestic civic organization, Pro Democracy Association (PDA), on the development of voter education materials and the recruitment and training of volunteer pollwatchers for the elections. This assistance enabled PDA to mobilize more than 5,000 nonpartisan pollwatchers to monitor the elections and to conduct independent vote counts for both rounds of the elections. NDI, along with the International Republican Institute, sponsored 60-member and 40-member international observer delegations to the May 20, 1990 and the February 9, 1992 local elections respectively.

**Civic Education** Responding to recommendations made by the delegation to the May 1990 elections, NDI began promoting a nationwide civic education campaign to address the consequences of 45 years of totalitarian rule. NDI provided technical and material assistance to the PDA, a nonpartisan organization founded by democratic activists who participated in NDI-sponsored training programs before the May elections. Following the September 1992 elections, NDI has worked with PDA to design broader civic education activities promoting greater public participation in the political process.

**Legislative Training** In September 1993, NDI and PDA cosponsored a "Parliamentary Dialogue on Constituency Servicing." The program represents an ongoing effort to strengthen channels of communication between parliamentarians and their constituents, and increase the accountability of elected officials. During the program, deputies and senators exchanged practical information on the importance of constituency servicing with international experts from four countries. In addition, the elected Romanian representatives met face-to-face with their constituents in town hall settings throughout the country. The program provided information about the link between national duties and constituent responsibilities and helped underscore the principle of representative government and the citizen's right to petition their elected officials.

In November 1993, PDA and NDI launched a program to promote transparency and accountability in the legislative decisionmaking process. The program addresses public admission to parliamentary debates, public input into the lawmaking process, and the use of roll-call voting.

For further information on NDI's program in Romania, please contact Senior Program Officer Susan J. Atwood.

