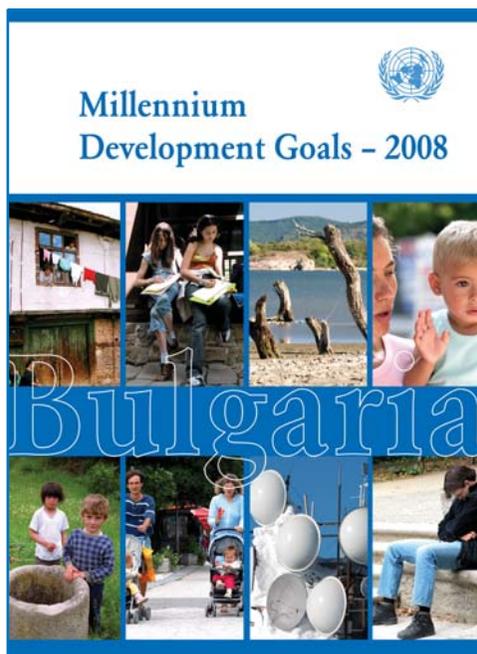


Millennium Development Goals Bulgaria 2008

SUMMARY



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Partnership for the report

This report materialized from the collaborative effort of a broad range of institutions and experts who discussed the draft report in six thematic discussions and one general meeting in the course of nearly six months. The report would have been impossible without the valuable inputs and participation of the following institutions and their representatives:

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INTRODUCTION

by President Georgi Parvanov

Millennium Development Goals Report – Bulgaria 2008

Bulgaria's second Millennium Development Goals Report – 2008 accurately and justly reflects the contribution of the Republic of Bulgaria towards global development goals. The report outlines our country's achievements for raising the living standards of Bulgarian people, for education and healthcare, for protecting the environment, for strengthening democracy and building a more effective international system of development assistance. The analyses of progress against the specific targets and indicators under each of the eight global goals formulated in 2003 in the country's National Millennium Development Goals Report, give grounds for judging the practical actions of several Bulgarian governments in the respective areas on their merits, for getting a clear picture about the extent of cooperation and interaction between the Bulgarian state and the UN agencies operating in the country as well as the quality of dialogue and partnership with business, trade unions, local governments and non-governmental organizations.

The Republic of Bulgaria successfully completed transition to democracy and a market economy and gained full membership in the European Union, while the process of reform became a powerful factor for achieving the global Millennium Development Goals. The country reports a steady and high pace of economic growth; it is becoming an auspicious place for investment, living and tourism as incomes are growing fast and unemployment is rapidly decreasing.

In this report Bulgaria sets itself more ambitious goals comparable to those in the other European Union member states. The country's transformation from a beneficiary into a donor of international aid will make our contribution to the international system of development assistance all the more significant. Furthermore, Bulgaria is ready to share its experience from the transition to democracy and a market economy, from building democratic institutions and establishing civil society and market structures with other countries in Southeast Europe as well as other regions, thereby enabling faster achievement of the global Millennium Development Goals.

The policies, approaches and measures proposed in the country's Millennium Development Goals Report - 2008 provide a good basis for accelerated implementation of the planned targets by 2015, for ensuring higher living standards and quality of life, for more competitive education and more effective healthcare, for a sustainable environment and for a greater contribution of the Republic of Bulgaria towards the global goals of international development assistance.

Our joint effort, will and action can create a better life for all!

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'G' followed by a vertical line and a small dot.

Georgi Parvanov
President of the Republic of Bulgaria

FOREWARD

Heads of state and government of the UN member states will come together at a high-level event in New York in September 2008 to review the status of the Millennium Development Goals. On the brink of the summit – and in preparation for it – the Bulgarian Government and the UN agencies in Bulgaria have put together this report in collaboration with civil society organizations, members of the academia and business.

For the world the year 2008 is a midway point in the global effort to reach the Millennium Development Goals. For Bulgaria this report is the last that covers its achievement prior to joining the European Union. As such it is a social baseline in the universal language of MDGs which celebrates the significant accomplishments of the country. In the future, Bulgaria's progress will be assessed in a different way according to its status of a EU member state. Accordingly, the country will have the potential to participate in shaping the EU common development policy and to contribute to the achievement of the Global Development Goals.

The Millennium Development Goals – 2008 is the second report Bulgaria has produced to honor the country's commitment as a signatory of the **Millennium Declaration**, whereby all UN member states pledged to make global efforts until 2015 to reduce poverty, respect human rights, promote peace, strengthen democracy, and ensure environmental sustainability. In addition, Bulgaria offers this report as a new donor of development assistance who can share with other regions of the world a wealth of experience the country has gained during the transition to market economy and democratic institutions. Now Bulgaria is willing to contribute even more actively to the achievement of the global development agenda.

Bulgaria's first report on the Millennium Development Goals was published in March 2003. The report adapted the eight global goals to the country's development levels at the time of preparation for accession to the European Union and formulated progress monitoring indicators and targets corresponding to the respective development levels in the EU member states. This report reviews progress made against the goals defined in 2003 in the context of Bulgaria's membership in the European Union and redefines some national goals and indicators.

New progress monitoring indicators have been introduced to track Bulgaria's progress under Goal 8: *Develop a Global Partnership for Development*. Whereas in 2003 that goal was interpreted from Bulgaria's position as a beneficiary of international aid, the current report looks at it from the position of a donor country. Therefore new targets have been formulated under this goal: 1) Complete the transition from a recipient of international aid to a donor of official development assistance (ODA); and 2) Ensure Bulgaria's active and effective participation in the common EU development cooperation policy. Bulgaria has already elaborated its national policy and will soon have in place institutions and rules for provision of official development assistance. Along with the other new EU members, Bulgaria has set itself the ambitious aim to be part of EU development policies by contributing ODA funds at 0.17% of GNI (gross national income) until 2010 and 0.33% of GNI until 2015.

Today, Bulgaria can be optimistic about its efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals. The country is on track to achieve a number of Millennium Development Goals targets, or even deliver better than expected results on some of them. For instance, Bulgaria aspired to reach average monthly income levels of 280 euros in 2015 compared to a 91 euro benchmark in 2001. The average monthly income in the country in 2007 was already gaining on 165 euros. The planned target for long-term unemployment by 2015 was 7 per cent, but unemployment levels fell down to 3.9 per cent already in June 2007. The numbers of long-term unemployed people halved from 513,700 in December 2001 to 208,200 in June 2007.

While most of the indicators for education and unemployment are close to the EU average, other indicators are significantly lower. Such are the indicators for average and minimum monthly income, child mortality, maternal mortality, incidence of tuberculosis and syphilis. At the same time Bulgaria continues to set a successful example for effective government policies and efficient measures at the national and the local level to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. In June 2008 it received excellent appraisal for the implementation of the National Program for Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS and was able to secure continued financing of 32.4 million euros for 2009 - 2014 from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Although the indicators under the educational targets are comparable to the EU levels, the report notes that the quality of education is declining and urgent reforms are needed to support the adjustment of the educational system in an economy that must be innovative and competitive within the EU single market. Major issues are still persistent in the healthcare sector where the management, efficiency and effectiveness of health services fail to meet the needs and expectations of the people. Access to healthcare is not universal and

- when coupled with poor income and educational levels among some groups of the population - it leads to social, regional and ethnic disparities.

By highlighting certain drawbacks of the implemented approaches and institutional solutions, and by recognizing accomplishments in meeting the Millennium Development Goals, the report identifies policies and measures that can accelerate Bulgaria's progress and can bring the country closer to its targets for 2015. Furthermore, with this report Bulgaria declares its firm commitment to undertake its new responsibility: to help overcome global poverty and contrasts in the world by acting as a 'creative donor' of development assistance.

Although there has been progress against poverty, illiteracy, epidemics, disease and malnourishment in many regions of the world, development challenges will remain intractable without joint efforts and partnership between national governments, business, the non-governmental sector and international organizations. These challenges can now be met with the participation of Bulgaria and with the remarkable resources available through the EU membership.

I hope the report will incite stronger public interest in Bulgaria towards the global development agenda, and will encourage civic action and institutional commitments to participate more actively and more productively in the joint effort to create a better world for all.



Henry R. Jackelen
UN Resident Coordinator
UNDP Resident Representative

FREQUENTLY USED ACRONYMS

CM	- Council of Ministers
EU	- European Union
FDP	- Fine dust particles
GDP	- Gross domestic product
GNI	- Gross national income
GSS	- General secondary school
ILO	- International Labor Organization
MDGs	- Millennium Development Goals
MES	- Ministry of Education and Science
MH	- Ministry of Health
MLSP	- Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
MoFA	- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NA	- National Assembly
NGOs	- Non-governmental organizations
NHIC	- National Health Information Center
NSI	- National Statistical Institute
ODA	- Official development assistance
PEA	- Popular Education Act
PISA	- Program for International Students Assessment
PPP	- Purchasing power parity
RES	- Renewable energy sources
SEN	- Special educational needs
STI	- Sexually transmitted infections
TIMSS	- Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UNDP	- United Nations Development Programme
WHO	- World Health Organization
WWTF	- Waste water treatment facilities

MILLENNIUM CHALLENGES AND BULGARIA

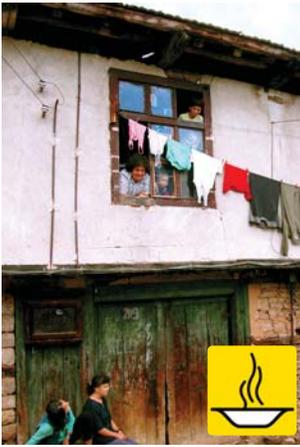
WHERE DO WE STAND? WHERE WE WOULD LIKE TO GO?

The Millennium Development Goals – 2008 is the second report Bulgaria is producing to honor the country's commitment as a signatory of the **Millennium Declaration**, whereby all UN member states pledged to make global efforts until 2015 to reduce poverty, respect human rights, promote peace, strengthen democracy, and ensure environmental sustainability. In addition, Bulgaria offers this report as an emerging donor of development assistance who can share with other regions of the world a wealth of experience the country has gained during the transition to market economy and democratic institutions.

Today, Bulgaria can be optimistic about its efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals. The country is on track to achieve a number of Millennium Development Goals targets, or even deliver better than expected results on some of them. For instance, Bulgaria aspired to reach average monthly income levels of 280 euros in 2015 compared to a 91 euro benchmark in 2001. The average monthly income in 2007 was nearing 165 euros. The planned target for long-term unemployment by 2015 was 7 per cent, but unemployment levels fell down to 3.9 per cent already in June 2007. The numbers of long-term unemployed people halved from 513,700 in December 2001 to 208,200 in mid 2007.

Despite these figures, indicators for minimum monthly income, child mortality, maternal mortality, incidence of tuberculosis and syphilis are significantly lower compared to EU average. At the same time Bulgaria continues to set a successful example for effective government policies and efficient measures at the national and the local level to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. In June 2008 it received excellent appraisal for the implementation of the National Program for Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS and was able to secure continued financing of 32.4 million euros for 2009 – 2014 from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Bulgaria's first report on the Millennium Development Goals was published in March 2003. The report adapted the eight global goals to the country's development levels at the time of preparation for accession to the European Union and formulated progress monitoring indicators and targets corresponding to the respective development levels in the EU member states. This 2008 Report reviews progress made against the goals defined five years ago and redefines some national goals and indicators in the context of Bulgaria's membership in the European Union.



Goal 1 is concerned with raising incomes and curbing unemployment.

In 2007, average incomes in Bulgaria reached 164.9 euros against the planned target of 280 euros by 2015. Annual income growth rates over 10% and high inflation, give reason to revise the average income target to 380 euros by 2015. Declining relative poverty implies revising that target indicator from 15% to 13% by 2015. Due to the gradual increase of the poverty line to 99 euros in 2007, this target is revised to 228 euros by 2015 from the current 170 euros. The youth unemployment target of 25% was practically overachieved in 2007 (15.1%) and calls for a more ambitious target of 10%. The long-term unemployment target of 7% was also overachieved (4% in 2007)

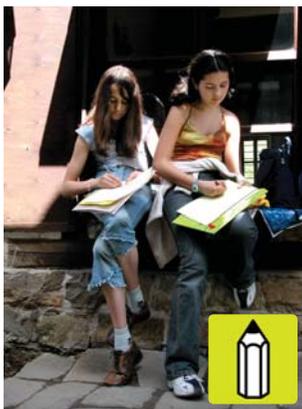
and was redefined to 3% for 2015.

In the coming years, Bulgaria will face less and less unemployment-related issues as they increasingly give way to shortage of skilled labor. EU membership and the Lisbon Strategy in particular, make it necessary to expand the unemployment reduction target with specific additional indicators measuring employment, labor productivity and the relative share of employee compensation in GDP. A realistic goal for Bulgaria would be to achieve 45% of EU labor productivity by 2015. However, poor labor productivity is a result of overall business efficiency in Bulgaria and not only of workforce efficiency. Labor productivity measured in PPP is only 35% of EU average, while earned income is about 20% of EU average. The relative share of employee compensation in GDP, which is another indicator, was 34.5% in 2007. That is the lowest value in the EU and the second lowest in Europe, where only Turkey ranks behind Bulgaria at 20.1%.

Regional and ethnic disparities continue to hold back total economic growth. The proportion of the poor at the municipal level varies from 1.8% in the capital Sofia to 53.8% in Boynitsa, Vidin district, and 38 municipalities report unemployment over 25%. Against the backdrop of low incomes, which place Bulgaria at the bottom of EU standards, luxury consumption is growing at a stunning pace and volume. Rural and urban disparities also constitute a major problem. Whereas urban poverty has to do with money, rural poverty is about lack of jobs, poor or inaccessible healthcare, education and social services. Unemployed people and Roma people face an extremely high risk of poverty. The poverty line in Bulgaria remains twice lower compared to the newly accessed countries and about five times lower compared to the old EU member states. The high share of the grey economy in the country

also affects all monetary indicators. Data from a European Commission survey show that Bulgaria has the largest black labor market in the Community. Overall, 35% of Bulgaria's GDP is generated from informal labor relations and incomes, for which no taxes and social security contributions have been paid.

Economic growth should have a much stronger social focus on overcoming poverty and wider participation of low-income groups in the distribution of wealth. A new public consensus is needed based on more solidarity and justice, which are the fundamental democratic values of the European social model.



The second Millennium Development Goal is about education.

Bulgaria modified the global millennium goal in education - „Achieving primary education for all“ to „Improving primary and secondary education“ because the real issue for the country is not simply access to education, but access to quality education.

Basic education continues to have a high coverage - 94.7% of children graduated elementary school in 2007 against a 100% target by 2015. Issues build up in the upper educational grades. Around 4% of children drop out of school in the junior high stage of primary education,

which constitutes 45% in the total number of dropouts. Reasons for the high dropout rate vary from social, financial and family issues to absences and low grades.

International studies show that the quality of education in Bulgaria's elementary schools is still very good, but it deteriorates in the junior high stage of primary education. Between 1995 and 2003, Bulgaria lost 51 points in international student performance rankings in mathematics and 66 points in natural sciences - the highest drop in all 46 countries covered by the assessment (TIMSS, 15 year-old students).

Although Bulgaria's spending on education as a percentage of GDP is close to the average for the new EU members, it is one of the lowest appropriations in „New Europe“. The situation is aggravated by the fact that Bulgaria's GDP is lower than the EU average, which further deteriorates the physical infrastructure for education and undermines the social prestige of Bulgarian teachers. That has direct repercussions on the quality of education.

Progress in education is uneven geographically and socially. Educational disparities divide not only Roma children and Bulgarian children, but also those living in rural and urban areas. There is a huge difference between elite schools (special profile high schools) and other schools, which were more than 100 points apart in another international ranking (PISA 2006, students aged 940). The matriculation exams undertaken by all schools in 2008 once again explicitly showed a rift between different types of schools and disparities between rural and urban areas. Formally, all Bulgarian children have equal access to primary and secondary education but in reality, due to the lack of quality education, many Bulgarian children have already been excluded from the global running, whilst a very small part, 'the elite', has vast chances to be among the winners.

To improve the quality of secondary education, Bulgaria needs to urgently reform its educational system and to create a streamlined school network; an independent system to evaluate the quality of education; and an effective teacher qualification and career development system, as well as elevating education into a national priority. The reforms should also aim to tie vocational education with the needs of the labor market and with specific job prospects and placements, thus creating a more competitive workforce. The crisis in mainstream education has been recognized and educational issues have received special attention over the past couple of years. Several strategic documents were adopted on educational development and prevention of dropouts. All these documents indicate there is good will for improving the quality of education in Bulgaria, but many more concrete steps will be required for the actual achievement of that goal, both in terms of regulations and resources.



The third Millennium Development Goal is about promoting gender equality,

more specifically by eradicating income differences between men and women and ensuring wider participation of women in governance.

Women's participation in the labor market grew to 47.5% in 2007 from 43.9% in 2002, but is still far from the 60% EU Lisbon target by 2010. The number of employed women in Bulgaria is 3 percentage points lower compared to EU-27 and 4 points lower compared to the old EU member states (EU15). The pay gap is closing faster.

Between 2001 and 2005, it dropped from 21.17% to 17.16%, down by 4 percentage points. At the end of 2005, working women were paid on average 82.84% of the wage of working men against an 80% target by 2015.

Formal gender equality before the law, however, continues to go hand in hand with substantial imbalances. There are discrimination practices in the labor market with regard to some groups of women (for example, young women with short professional experience, pregnant women and women with small children, women over 45 years). A global issue such as feminization of poverty has its dimensions in Bulgaria, too. Women from minorities, single women and mothers, unemployed and old women, women from agricultural and rural regions all face the risk of poverty. Gender differences by economic sector also show feminized professions (79% of employees in education and 79.5% in healthcare are women) and in all economic sectors the average salary of women is lower than that of men.

After more than doubling up to 26% in the 38th National Assembly, the number of women parliamentarians edged down to 22% in the 40th National Assembly. As a result, Bulgaria slipped from the 19th position worldwide in March 2003 to 42nd in August 2007. By October 2007, only 43 of 240 representatives in the 40th National Assembly were women. Women are represented even less in the executive and in local governments. In October 2007, only 4 of 18 ministers were women and only 5 of 28 district governors were women. The number of women in office is even smaller at the local level – out of 264 municipal mayors, only 20 were women.

Bulgaria needs to systematically implement gender equality policies in all spheres of life. A particularly important step is the adoption of the Equal Opportunities Bill, which has been postponed since 2001. An important area of future action is the development of mechanisms and actions to promote the policy of reconciling family and professional obligations for parents who are raising small children or are taking care of a dependent family member. Promoting fatherhood is also essential for achieving equality.



Child mortality (Goal 4) is indicative for the overall social and economic state of any society and goes far beyond issues of healthcare and medical care. From 2001 to 2006 infant (under-one) mortality in Bulgaria significantly decreased from 14.4/1,000 live births to 9.2/1,000. Under-five mortality also decreased from 16.7/1,000 in 2001 to 11.0/1,000 in 2007. If that annual reduction rate of 5 to 6% is sustained, Bulgaria will be able to achieve its planned targets by 2015. Progress against the other two targets is significantly slower. Perinatal mortality has declined marginally from 12.3/1,000 in 2001 to 11.0/1,000 in 2007, whereas underweight

births show no substantial dynamics over the past 6 years (8.8% in 2007 compared with 8.6% in 2001).

The trend of decreasing child mortality in the country results more from Bulgaria's overall social and economic development than from specific progress in the healthcare system. With few exceptions, child mortality in the 28 districts does not directly depend on the status of healthcare services represented in the number of beds, obstetricians and other factors. The proportion of GDP allocations for healthcare and medical care has been increasing every year. However, the healthcare system is still under-funded. In 2005, healthcare appropriations in Bulgaria accounted for 4.3% of GDP against 6.65% in Europe (2003) and 8.81% in EU countries (2003). The difference is even more dramatic in absolute terms. In the same years per capita GDP was USD 3,443 in Bulgaria, USD 20,776 in Europe and USD 24,743 in EU countries.

Local deficiencies in recording perinatal mortality cannot be ignored in the context of still high child mortality in Bulgaria. Bulgarian demographic practice does not follow the criteria for „giving birth“ and „abortion“ recommended by the World Health Organization. Many countries restrain from the full adoption of these criteria, but in Bulgaria they have been completely altered, which significantly distorts demographic data. Recording births and abortions under a uniform methodology with other EU countries will lead to even greater and more negative aberrations of perinatal mortality indicators in Bulgaria. Lagging dynamics in the effort to address perinatal mortality and underweight births require decisive measures for improving the quality of obstetric and gynecological aid.

Overall data give reason to believe that by 2015 Bulgaria will achieve at least two of its child mortality targets - under-five mortality down to 9.5 per 1,000 live births and total infant (under-one) mortality down to 7 per 1,000 live births. If the current rate of improvement is sustained, even better results can be expected for these indicators.



Indicator dynamics under **Goal 5 - improve maternal health** - necessitate a change of targets. Maternal mortality of 7.3/100,000 live births in 2005 corresponds to five deaths across Bulgaria. On the other hand, cervical cancer morbidity has been alarmingly increasing, from 16/100,000 in 1990 to 27.7/100,000 in 2002 and 29.4/100,000 in 2006. Every day, three women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and one dies. Therefore, the

target for *Considerable reduction in maternal mortality* should be replaced with a new target, *Considerable reduction in cervical cancer morbidity and mortality*. The ambition will be to reduce new cases of cervical cancer down to 15/100,000 women by 2015. The indicator for *Proportion of births assisted by qualified medical personnel* should also be considered accomplished. In reality that is no longer an issue for Bulgaria.

For the newly introduced target – *Reduce cervical cancer morbidity* – the most necessary step is to launch mass screening. Combined with vaccination, mass screening is the most effective approach for the full eradication of this lethal and disabling disease.



The sixth Millennium Development Goal is also about human health and aims to limit the spread of HIV/AIDS, syphilis and tuberculosis.

The spread of HIV/AIDS in Bulgaria is still under control and remains under the epidemiological threshold of 1%. The number of registered HIV cases, however, has increased threefold from 2002 up to 814 at the end of 2007, of which 125 were recorded since January 2007. Particularly alarming is the spread of HIV/AIDS among young people under 25 years (who accounted for 36% of the reported new cases in 2007). The current epidemiological situation in Bulgaria, the neighboring Black Sea countries and Western Europe indicates there is a serious danger of concentrated epidemic outbreaks among injecting drug users, men

having sex with men and prostituting men and women. Therefore, two new indicators will be added - *tracking HIV prevalence among injecting drug users and men having sex with men*. The objective is to limit the spread of HIV under 5% in each group.

The main goal of the national HIV/AIDS policy is to prevent an epidemic. To measure progress against that goal, Bulgaria is tracking HIV prevalence among one of the target groups in the national policy – young people aged 15-24, who are indicative for the entire population. Urgent and effective measures for prevention, health promotion and health and sexual education of young people are required, if Bulgaria is to keep the spread of HIV in that age group under 1%.

Syphilis morbidity in the EU and in Bulgaria characteristically shows cyclic dynamics caused primarily by changing patterns of sexual behavior. After a peak in 1990-2000, syphilis morbidity began to subside, down to 7.7/100,000 in 2005 and 6.6/100,000 in 2006. Reducing new cases of syphilis to 5 per 100,000 by 2015 is a realistic goal. It will

depend on several factors – limiting the spread of syphilis among the highest risk groups (injecting drug users, prostituting men and women and young Roma men) and limiting the cases of congenital syphilis, which lately have alarmingly increased.

Like in most European countries recently, the spread of **tuberculosis** in Bulgaria has been increasing. Tuberculosis incidence was 25.9/100,000 in 1990 and 40.1/100,000 in 2005. In comparison, in 2005 average tuberculosis incidence in EU-27 was 19 per 100,000. Another indication is that WHO has defined Bulgaria as one of the 18 high TB priority countries in the European region, where an average of 79 new cases per 100,000 require urgent and effective measures for limiting the spread of the disease.

The epidemiological situation in Bulgaria shows that the goal to halve tuberculosis cases down to 20 per 100,000 persons in 2015 is overambitious and should be revised with the more realistic target of 22/100,000. Key factors contributing to the resurgence of tuberculosis include the appearance of extremely resistant forms of the disease, the fast increase in HIV cases, and the growing numbers of most-at-risk people. In 2007, the government launched a new National Program for Tuberculosis Prevention and Control in Bulgaria (2007-2011) and a Program for Improving TB Control in Bulgaria financed by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

These diseases are connected with the overall state of society and can hardly be addressed by health means alone – the problems of the most vulnerable groups of injecting drug users, prostituting men and women, people with low incomes and poor education, interlink in several Millennium Development Goals. They require a concentrated and coordinated national response.



Millennium Development Goal 7 is about ensuring environmental sustainability.

Bulgaria is one of the richest European countries in terms of biodiversity and well preserved natural habitats. Forests in Bulgaria span 4,076 million hectares making up 33.3% of its total territory. Bulgaria has 257,000 hectares of old forests, ranking third in Europe after Switzerland and Finland. The key environmental issues facing the world in 2002-2007 were challenges for Bulgaria, too – climate change, the loss of biodiversity, and shortage of natural resources, including drinking water.

In accordance with international recommendations, Bulgaria adds to the new MDG Report one new target - *Reverse the loss of biodiversity by 2010*. Another modification is connected with the *Natura 2000* network. The target proportion of protected territories by 2015 is revised from 12% to 34%. At the end of 2007, protected areas covered 28% of Bulgaria's territory. To track and adequately assess progress on Target 1 for integrating the principles of sustainable development into country policy and programs, a new indicator has been introduced to **assess the use of renewable energy sources (RES) in the national energy sector. The indicator will trace the proportion of electricity from renewable energy sources.** One of the major opportunities for significantly increasing the share of RES-based energy in the coming 10 years without cutting down domestic consumption is through the **large-scale use of biomass** in all its forms and varieties.

Bulgaria is meeting its obligations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the 1988 baseline. Greenhouse gas emissions were 70,718 Gg CO₂ equivalent in 2006 - a 50.14% reduction from the 1988 baseline compared to the obligation for 8% reduction under the Kyoto Protocol and way above the EU average (41% for EU-25).

The indicators under Target 3 for reducing the number of people without access to drinking water and proper sewerage infrastructure are revised to trace population numbers instead of settlements. Urban and rural water supply systems already cover 98.9% of the population. In comparison, in neighboring Romania that indicator is only 54%. The national water supply system, however, reports an extremely high loss of water - over 60%, caused by excessively degraded water supply infrastructure.

The proportion of the population covered by organized waste collection and disposal systems has grown from 80.2% in 2001 to 90.3% in 2006. Progress in the establishment of waste water treatment plants is relatively slower. The share of people served has marginally increased to 41.1% in 2006 from 40% in 2001. The capabilities of available waste water treatment facilities are often poorly coordinated, both in terms of overload and unused capacity. Population numbers connected to sewerage networks (67%) and served by WWTS (41%) are still low. Nearly 80% of EU citizens have access to waste water treatment plants, and in the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden and the UK that indicator is over 90%.

Differences within regions are no less significant. The main challenge is access to quality services that guarantee safe disposal and treatment of household waste water and sewerage both for the environment and human health. Sewerage networks cover 277 settlements - 167 towns and cities and 110 villages. Roughly 70.5% of towns and cities have proper sewerage against only 2.1% in villages.

Goal 7 is especially challenging for good governance. The environment is the battlefield for some of the most severe clashes between non-governmental organization and business. Environmental policies are therefore particularly vulnerable to corruption practices locally and at the central level.



Goal 8 – Partnership for development – is completely revised in the new MDG Report to meet Bulgaria’s new status as an EU member. By 2015, Bulgaria sets the goal to complete the transition from a recipient of international aid to a donor of official development assistance (ODA). That will require its effective participation in the overall EU development cooperation policy. More specifically, by 2010 Bulgaria will strive to contribute annually 0.17% of GNI (gross national income) on official development aid compared to 0.053% in 2007. ODA allocations should grow to 0.33% by 2015.

To achieve these goals, Bulgaria will define specific thematic and regional priorities as well as specific ways for providing ODA. The Framework Concept on Bulgaria’s Development Cooperation Policy elaborated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sets priorities on fighting poverty and improving the quality of life, providing assistance in the areas where the country holds particular expertise, like education, infrastructure, etc. Target regions for Bulgaria include: South East Europe, the Black Sea region and at least one country in Africa where EU has decided to channel 50% of its development assistance.

The achievement of these goals requires first and foremost the support of Bulgarian citizens, for many of whom the average EU standard is still a far-off, difficult to achieve prospect. The Bulgarian society needs a profound change of values and attitudes to face the country’s new global responsibilities.

Overall, in 2003-2008 Bulgaria has achieved significant progress against the defined goals. As economic, educational and health standards come closer to EU levels, both Bulgarian citizens and EU institutions will increasingly insist on better governance, too.

Bulgaria’s eight Millennium Development Goals are largely intertwined with one another. In the strongly competitive environment of the European Union, high incomes are unthinkable without competitive, good quality education. Economic progress needs good

healthcare because a long-lived and productive workforce is indispensable for the long-term sustainable development of the country. Higher incomes and employment will in turn lead to better access to education, lower child and maternal mortality, more care for socially sensitive diseases like HIV/AIDS, syphilis and tuberculosis, and greater responsibility to the environment.

Behind overall national achievements, however, there are dramatic disparities. Major contrasts can be seen in all social areas – incomes, education and healthcare. They jeopardize sustainable development, because they create grounds for social, economic, regional or ethnic conflict. Furthermore, Bulgaria is part of the global community and global poverty is not something Bulgarian citizens can pretend to overlook – not only because of human solidarity and Bulgaria’s international commitments, but also because overwhelming global disparities lead to upheavals that affect all countries.

By highlighting certain drawbacks of the implemented approaches and institutional solutions, and by recognizing accomplishments in meeting the Millennium Development Goals, the report identifies policies and measures that can accelerate Bulgaria’s progress and can bring the country closer to its targets for 2015.

ANNEX: TABLES

Goal 1: Halve extreme poverty and malnutrition

	2001	2007	2015
1. Average monthly income (in euros)	88.35	164.90	380
2. Proportion of the poor (%)	15.6	14.1	13
3. Poverty line (in euros)	53.01	98.94	228
4. Proportion of underweight newborns under 2,500 grams per 1,000 live births	8.6	8.8	6
5. Youth unemployment (people aged 15-24) - %	38.8	15.1	10
6. Long-term unemployment - %	12.1	4.0	3
7. Employment (people aged 15-64) - %	49.7	61.7	70
8. Employment (people aged 55-64) - %	24.0	42.6	50
9. GDP per 1 employee in PPS (EC-27 = 100)	31.4	35.6	45
10. Relative share of employee compensation in GDP (%)	34.9	34.5	40

Goal 2: Improve primary and secondary education

	2002	2007	2015
1. Net enrollment rate in the initial stage of primary education (elementary school)	99.8	97.8	100.0
2. Net completion rate in the initial stage of primary education (elementary school)	93.3	94.7	100.0
3. Net enrollment rate in the junior high stage of primary education	83.9	83.7	97.0
4. Net completion rate in the junior high stage of primary education	85.0	86.5	95.0
5. Net dropout rate in the junior high stage of primary education	3.2		2.0
6. Net enrollment rate in secondary education	74.9	78.3	86.0
7. Net completion rate in secondary education	51.31*	76.3	90.0
8. Net dropout rate in secondary education	3.0		1.0

*The number of graduates in 2002 was smaller as a result of the extended overall length of education by one year

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

1. Pay of women as a percentage of the pay of men	72% (2000)	82% (2005)	80%
2. Proportion of women in the National Assembly and in Municipal Councils	26% (2001)	22% (2007)	40%

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality

	2001	2007	2015
1. Child mortality for the 0-5 age group per 1,000 live births (a child's likelihood to die under age 5)	16.7	11.0	9.5
2. Infant mortality (children deceased before one year of age) per 1,000 live births	14.4	9.2	7.0

3. Perinatal mortality (still-born + dead before the 6th day) per 1,000 live births	12.3	11.0	8.0
4. Proportion of underweight live births (under 2,500 g. at birth)	8.6	8.8	6.0

Goal 5: Improve maternal health

	2000 – 2002	2006	2015
1. New cases of cervical cancer per 100,000 women	27.7 (2002)	29.4	15.0
2. Abortions (per 1,000 live births)	750 (2001)	504	550
3. Proportion (%) of pregnant women under medical monitoring (until the third month of pregnancy)	81.8 (2000)	64.5	90.0
4. Proportion (%) of births attended by qualified healthcare personnel	98.8 (2000)	99.4	99.8

Goal 6: Limit the spread of HIV/AIDS, syphilis and tuberculosis

	2001	2006	2015
1. HIV/AIDS prevalence among people aged between 15 and 24	<0.01%	-	<1%
2. HIV/AIDS prevalence among intravenous drug users	-	0.5% (2005)	<5%
3. HIV/AIDS prevalence among men having sex with men	-	-	<5%
4. Tuberculosis incidence (per 100,000 persons)	48.8	39.1	22
5. Countrywide DOTS coverage	-	100%	100%
6. Successful DOTS treatment	87%	-	>85%
7. Syphilis incidence (per 100,000)	18.7	6.6	5.0

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

	2001	2006	2015
1. Proportion of the territory covered by forests	31.2%	33.3%	35.9%
2. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Gg CO ₂ equivalent) against 1988 baseline	(-54.32%)	(-50.14%)	(-8%) (until 2012)
3. Proportion of electricity from renewable energy sources	4.7%		15%
4. Proportion of the population covered by an organized waste collection and disposal system	80.2%	90.3%	95.0%
5. Proportion of protected territories	4,8%	28% (2007)	34%
6. Proportion of the population served by waste water treatment plants	40%	41.1%	75%
7. Proportion of the population connected to sewerage networks	67.9%	69.4%	75%
8. Proportion of the population connected to central water supply	98.7%	98.9	100%

Goal 8: Include Bulgaria in the system of official development assistance

	2005	2007	2015
1. Proportion of gross national income (GNI) contributed to official development assistance	0.0359%	0.053%	0.33%

