

AmCham Bulgaria Public Affairs Committee Achievements in 2007 and Goals for 2008

Issue	Goals for '07	Achieved in '07	Goals for '08
Double tax treaty	Lobby Parliament and Senate for ratification once signed.	<p>Signing of the treaty and ratification by Parliament.</p> <p>Due to a technical error, the treaty has to be amended, so it did not go the Senate for ratification.</p>	Signing and ratification of the amended treaty.
Work permits/visas	<p>Implement proposed procedure for cooperation with Immigration Director.</p> <p>Lobby for legislative improvements.</p>	<p>Successful facilitation of visas for Americans demonstrated successful cooperation with the Immigration Directorate.</p> <p>Drafted an MOU to formalize the relationship with the Immigration Directorate.</p> <p>Problems remain with visas for non-American employees, esp. Asians and Eastern Europeans.</p> <p>Met Deputy PM Kalin for an initial discussion on legislative improvements. He introduced us to the working group on revising the visa regulation, which undertook to give us a chance to comment on the draft regulation.</p> <p>Received member feedback on specific procedural problems.</p>	<p>Sign MOU with Immigration Directorate.</p> <p>Comment on draft regulation and make progress on implementing legislative change to streamline procedures.</p>

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Commercial register reform	Moral support for the implementation.	Sent letters in support of timely implementation.	Support formation of a consultative council.
Environmental policy-making	Organize a roundtable with representative from government, business, NGOs, media	<p>Extensive working group discussion with NGOs and other business organizations about the proposed joint initiative.</p> <p>The joint initiative evolved into a proposal for a consultative council, but lost considerable momentum.</p> <p>Preliminary discussions with Environment Ministry, including written comments on their annual report on implementation of the Aarhus Convention.</p> <p>Secured sponsorship from members for a reception for the U.S. environmental trade mission.</p> <p>Advocacy and advice for individual members on environmental issues.</p>	<p>Deploy resources to reinvigorate this initiative.</p> <p>Make a formal proposal for a consultative council.</p> <p>Engage the Environment Ministry, ideally in cooperation with NGOs, in active dialog to ensure stakeholder cooperation on environmental policy making.</p>
Promotions Act	Followup on MinEcon Consumer Protection Directorate meeting, potentially in coordination with CRIB.	Successful lobbying to resolve the issue.	

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IPR	Awareness-raising campaign to be discussed/planned.	Nothing	Awareness-raising campaign to be discussed/planned.
Labor shortage/education reform	Plan ways to engage Education Ministry in dialog, probably in cooperation with BBLF and/or CRIB.	Nothing	Plan ways to engage Education Ministry in dialog, probably in cooperation with BBLF and/or CRIB.
Judicial reform/corruption	(no goal set)	Raised the issue with key government officials, but government does not see this as an issue for business	
Advocacy/Whistleblowing	(no goal set)	Supported Solae, DuPont, and Dundee, among others	
Other issues...			Support members on legislative changes concerning mineral water concessions.
Capacity-building for the committee	(no goal set)	Wrote job description for full-time Legislative Affairs Director and secured a budget for the position.	Hire Legislative Affairs Director. Mobilize external resources.