EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS
COUR EUROPÉENNE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

Press Unit
Unité de la Presse

Press country profile
Fiche pays pour la presse

Last updated: July 2026

Bulgaria

Ratified the European Convention on Human Rights in 1992

National Judge: Diana Kovatcheva (17 April 2024 -)
Judges' CVs are available on the ECHR Internet site

Previous Judges: Dimitar Gotchev (1992-1998), Snejana Botoucharova (1998-2008), Zdravka Kalaydjieva (2008-2015), Yonko Grozev (2015-2024)

List of judges of the Court since 1959

The Court dealt with 648 applications concerning Bulgaria in 2025, of which 505 were declared inadmissible or struck out. It delivered 24 judgments (concerning 143 applications), 23 of which found at least one violation of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Applications processed in	2024	2025	2026*
Applications allocated to a judicial formation	472	533	303
Communicated to the Government	220	52	23
Applications decided:	547	648	282
- Declared inadmissible or struck out (Single Judge)	489	471	255
- Declared inadmissible or struck out (Committee)	28	29	12
- Declared inadmissible or struck out (Chamber)	9	5	2
- Decided by judgment	21	143	13

* January to July 2026

For information about the Court's judicial formations and procedure, see the ECHR internet site
Statistics on interim measures can be found here.

Applications pending before the court on 01/07/2026	
Applications pending before a judicial formation:	328
Single Judge	72
Committee (3 Judges)	186
Chamber (7 Judges)	70
Grand Chamber (17 Judges)	0

Bulgaria and ...

The Registry

The task of the Registry is to provide legal and administrative support to the Court in the exercise of its judicial functions. It is composed of lawyers, administrative and technical staff and translators. There are currently **673** Registry staff members.

Noteworthy cases, judgments delivered

Grand Chamber

X and Others v. Bulgaria

02.02.2021

The case concerned allegations of sexual abuse committed against three children in a Bulgarian orphanage prior to their adoption by an Italian couple in June 2012.

No violation of the substantive limb of Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment)

Violation of the procedural limb of Article 3

Simeonovi v. Bulgaria

12.05.2017

The case concerned the absence of legal assistance for the first three days of the detention of Mr Simeonov, who was sentenced to life imprisonment, and the conditions of the detention and prison regime imposed on him.

Violation of Article 3

No violation of Article 6 §§ 1 and 3 (c) (right to a fair trial/right to legal assistance)

Stanev v. Bulgaria

17.01.2012

The case concerned a man forced to live for years in an unsanitary and dilapidated psychiatric institution with inadequate food and heating and no activities for residents.

Violation of Article 5 § 1 (right to liberty and security), in that the applicant was illegally detained

Violation of Article 5 § 4, concerning the impossibility for him to bring proceedings to have the lawfulness of his detention decided by a court

Violation of Article 5 § 5, concerning the impossibility for him to apply for compensation for his illegal detention and the lack of review by a court of the lawfulness of his detention

Violation of Article 3 (prohibition of degrading treatment), concerning the conditions in which he was forced to live

Violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy), concerning the impossibility for him to apply for compensation regarding his degrading living conditions

Violation of Article 6 § 1 (right to a fair hearing), in that he was denied access to a court to seek restoration of his legal capacity

Nachova and Others v. Bulgaria

06.07.2005

Two deaths as a result of police force and ineffective investigation and prosecution of the incidents, including into possible racist motives behind the events.

Two violations of Article 2 (right to life)

Violation of Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination)

Hasan and Chaush v. Bulgaria

26.10.2000

State interference with the internal organisation of religious communities

Violation of Article 9 (freedom of religion) and Article 13 (effective remedy)

Noteworthy cases, judgments and decisions delivered

Chamber

Cases dealing with the right to life (Article 2)

Kutsarovi v. Bulgaria (no. 47711/19)

07.06.2022

The case concerned the death of the applicants' son, who died in 2009 while being escorted by the police to the offices of the Organised Crime Division.

No violation of Article 2

Y and Others v. Bulgaria (no. 9077/18)

22.03.2022

The case concerned the complaints brought by the mother and daughters of a victim of marital murder.

Violation of Article 2

No violation of Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) read in conjunction with Article 2

O.D. v. Bulgaria (no. 34016/18)

10.10.2019

This case concerned an order made by the Bulgarian authorities for the expulsion to Syria of a former Syrian serviceman on the grounds that he posed a threat to national security.

The Court held that O.D.'s removal to Syria would amount to a violation of Article 2 and

Article 3 (prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment) of the Convention.
The Court also held that there had been a violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy), read in conjunction with Articles 2 and 3.
The Court found, in particular, that in view of the overall situation in Syria and the individual risk faced by the applicant it could not be established that he could safely return to Syria.

Bulgarian Helsinki Committee v. Bulgaria

21.07.2016
The case concerned the death of two children with mental disabilities in special homes in which they had been placed, and the request submitted to the Court by an association specialising in human rights protection to grant it legal standing either as an indirect victim or as the representative of the two deceased adolescents.
Applications declared inadmissible as incompatible *ratione personae*

Dimitrov and Others v. Bulgaria

01.07.2014
The case concerned the death of a suspect in drug trafficking and pimping during a police operation.
Violation of Article 2
Violation of Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment)
No violation of Article 6 § 1 (right to a fair trial/hearing)

Nencheva and Others v. Bulgaria

18.06.2013
Fifteen children and young adults died between 15 December 1996 and 14 March 1997 in a home for physically and mentally disabled young people in the village of Dzhurkovo, from the effects of cold and shortages of food, medicines and basic necessities. The manager of the home, observing the problems, had tried without success on several occasions to alert all the public institutions which had direct responsibility for funding the home and which could have been expected to act.
The Court found a violation of Article 2 in that the authorities had failed in their duty to protect the lives of the vulnerable children placed in their care from a serious and immediate threat. The authorities had also failed to conduct an effective official investigation into the deaths, occurring in highly exceptional circumstances.

Cases dealing with inhuman and/or degrading treatment (article 3)

Pedev v. Bulgaria (no. 27165/21)

27.05.2025
The case concerned an applicant who took part in a demonstration in 2020 and complained that he had been subjected to ill-treatment during his arrest by the police, while detained in a police station and while in hospital, where he was attached to the bed with leg restraints and handcuffs..
Two violations of Article 3 (prohibition of degrading treatment / obligation to conduct an investigation)

D v. Bulgaria (no. 29447/17)

20.07.2021
The case concerned the arrest at the border between Bulgaria and Romania of a Turkish journalist claiming to be fleeing from a risk of political persecution in his own country, and his immediate removal to Turkey. The events occurred three months after the 2016 attempted coup in Turkey.
Violation of Article 3 and violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy)

G.S. v. Bulgaria (no. 36538/17)

04.04.2019
The case concerned a Georgian national's complaint that if extradited to Iran, where he faced theft charges, he would be at risk of being flogged.
The Court held that it would be a violation of Article 3 if the applicant were extradited to Iran because of the possible punishment that awaited him there.

Popovi v. Bulgaria

09.06.2016
The case concerned the arrest of Mr Popov, former secretary general of the Ministry of Finance, during a police operation that received extensive media coverage.
Violation of Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment and lack of effective investigation)
Violation of Article 6 § 2 (presumption of innocence) regarding the statements by the Minister of the Interior on the day of Mr Popov's arrest

No violation of Article 6 § 2 regarding the statements by the Prime Minister and the prosecutor R.V. on the day of Mr Popov's arrest
Violation of Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) due to the media coverage of Mr Popov's arrest and the search and seizure carried out in Mrs Popova's offices
Violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) taken in conjunction with Articles 3, 6 § 2 and 8

Stoyanov and Others v. Bulgaria
Alexey Petrov v. Bulgaria
Petrov and Ivanova v. Bulgaria

31.03.2016
These cases concerned a number of media-hyped police operations, raising issues similar to those examined by the Court in the case of Gutsanovi v. Bulgaria regarding the prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment (Article 3) and respect for the accused's presumption of innocence (Article 6 § 2).
For the case of *Stoyanov and Others*
Violation of Article 3 (prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment)
Violation and no violation of Article 6 § 2 (presumption of innocence)
Violation of Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life)
Violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) taken in conjunction with Articles 3 and 8
For the case of *Alexey Petrov*
No violation of Article 3,
Violation and no violation of Article 6 § 2,
Violation of Article 8
For the case of *Petrov and Ivanova*
Violation of Article 3
Violation and no violation of Article 6 § 2
Violation of Article 13 taken in conjunction with Articles 3 and 6 § 2

S.Z. v. Bulgaria (no. 29263/12)

03.03.2015
The case concerns criminal proceedings brought against individuals responsible for the illegal confinement and rape of the applicant.
Violation of Article 3 on account of the shortcomings in the investigation carried out into the illegal confinement and rape of the applicant, having regard in particular to the excessive delays in the criminal proceedings and the lack of investigation into certain aspects of the offences.
The Court observed that it had already, in over 45 judgments against Bulgaria, found that the authorities had failed to comply with their obligation to carry out an effective investigation and considered that these recurrent shortcomings disclosed the existence of a systemic problem. It considered that it was incumbent on Bulgaria, in cooperation with the Committee of Ministers, to decide which general measures were required in practical terms to prevent other similar violations of the Convention in the future.

Abdu v. Bulgaria

11.03.2014
The applicant in this case complained of the authorities' failure to conduct an investigation into the potentially racist nature of an attack on him.
Violation of Article 3 taken alone and in conjunction with Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination)

Gutsanovi v. Bulgaria

15.10.2013
The case concerned a police operation carried out at the home of Mr Gutsanov, an influential politician, leading to his arrest.
Violation of Article 3
Violation of Article 5 § 3 (right to liberty and security) on account of the unjustified length of detention
Violation of Article 5 § 3 (right to liberty and security) regarding Mr Gutsanov's right to be brought promptly before a judge
Violation of Article 5 § 5 (right to compensation)
Violation of Article 6 § 2 (presumption of innocence) regarding the remarks made by the Prime Minister and the regional public prosecutor
Violation of Article 6 § 2 regarding the remarks of the Interior Minister and the reasons for the Varna Regional Court's decision of 18 May 2010
Violation of Article 8 (right to respect for the home)
Violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) read in conjunction with Articles 3 and 8

Cases concerning the use of force by the police, inadequate investigation and

prosecution of deaths and injuries (Articles 2 and 3)

Anzhelo Georgiev and Others v. Bulgaria
30.09.2014

Lenev v. Bulgaria
04.12.2012

Dimov and Others v. Bulgaria
06.11.2012

Iordan Petrov v. Bulgaria
24 .01.2012

Biser Kostov v. Bulgaria
10.01.2012

Kolevi v. Bulgaria
05.11.2009
Violation of Articles 2 (right to life) and 5 §§ 1, 3 and 4 (right to liberty and security)
Press release (Bulgarian version)

Angelova and Iliev v. Bulgaria
26.07.2007
Violation of Article 2 (right to life)
Violation of Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination)

Ognyanova and Choban v. Bulgaria
23.02.2006
Two violations of Article 2 (right to life) in respect of Mr Stefanov's death, and, in that the authorities failed to conduct an effective investigation into Mr Stefanov's death;
Violation of Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment);
Violation of Article 5 § 1 (right to liberty and security);
Violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy); and,
No violation of Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination).

Osman v. Bulgaria
16.02.2006
Two violations of Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment) on account of the ill-treatment to which the applicants had been subjected, and, on account of the lack of an effective investigation;
No violation of Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) with regard to the allegations that the ill-treatment was motivated by racial prejudice;
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No 1 (protection of property)

Krastanov v. Bulgaria
30.09.2004
Two violations of Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman treatment) concerning the applicant's ill-treatment by police officers and the Bulgarian authorities failure to conduct a thorough and effective investigation into the ill-treatment
Violation of Article 6 § 1 (right to a fair hearing)

Anguelova v. Bulgaria
13.06.2002
Two violations of Article 2 (right to life)
Violation of Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment)
Violation of Article 5 (right to liberty and security)
Violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy)

Cases concerning conditions of detention in prisons and pre-trial detention facilities

Neshkov and Others v. Bulgaria
27.01.2015 (pilot judgment)[1]
Violation of Article 3
Violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy)
The applicants' cases, as well as many other similar cases – the Court having already decided more than 20 cases leading to 25 violations of the Convention and there being approximately 40 more applications concerning detention conditions in Bulgaria currently pending before the Court – highlight a systemic problem within the Bulgarian prison system, justifying a pilot-judgment procedure because of the serious and persistent nature of the problems identified.

Harakchiev and Tolumov v. Bulgaria

[1] The pilot judgment procedure was developed as a technique of identifying structural problems underlying repetitive cases against many countries and imposing an obligation on member States to address those problems. Where the Court receives several applications that share a root cause, it can select one or more for priority treatment under the pilot procedure. In a pilot judgment, the Court's task is not only to decide whether a violation of the Convention occurred in the specific case but also to identify the systemic problem and to give the Government clear indications of the type of remedial measures needed to resolve it.

08.07.2014
Violation of Article 3 as concerned the regime and conditions of Mr Harakchiev's and Mr Tolumov's detention
Violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) as concerned the lack of effective domestic remedies in respect of the conditions of Mr Harakchiev's and Mr Tolumov's detention
Violation of Article 3, as concerned Mr Harakchiev's inability to obtain a reduction of his sentence of life imprisonment without commutation from the time when it became final

Iordan Petrov v. Bulgaria

24.01.2012
Violation of Article 3 in respect of ill-treatment by the police and prison guards, the lack of effective investigation into those events and the conditions of detention at Varna Prison
No violation of Article 3 in respect of the alleged lack of medical care
Violation of Article 6 § 1 (right to a fair trial) in respect of the use of confessions obtained in breach of Article 3
Violation of Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) in respect of the monitoring of the applicant's correspondence with his lawyer
Violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) in respect of the poor conditions of detention at Varna Prison
No violation of Article 13 in respect of the monitoring of correspondence

Shahanov v. Bulgaria

10.01.2012
Violation of Article 3
Violation of Article 13 in conjunction with Article 3
3
Violation of Article 8(right to respect for private and family life)
No violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) in conjunction with Article 8
Violation of Article 6 § 1 (length of the criminal proceedings)
Violation of Article 13 in conjunction with Article 6 § 1

Iorgov (no. 2) v. Bulgaria

02.09.2010
No violation of Article 3
No violation of Article 5 § 4 (right to liberty and security)

Yordanov v. Bulgaria

10.08.2006
Violation of Article 3
Violation of Article 5 § 3 (right to liberty and security)
Violation of Article 8 (right to respect for home)

Iovchev v. Bulgaria

02.02.2006
Violation of Article 3
Two violations of Article 5 § 3 (right to liberty and security)
Violation of Articles 6 § 1 (right to a fair trial within a reasonable time) and 13 (right to an effective remedy)

I.I. v. Bulgaria (no. 44082/98)

09.06.2005
Violation of Article 3
Violation of Article 5 §§ 1, 3 and 4 (right to liberty and security)

Kehayov v. Bulgaria

18.01.2005
Violation of Article 3
Violation of Article 5 §§ 3 (right to be brought promptly before a judge) and 4 (right to have lawfulness of detention decided speedily by a court)

Iorgov v. Bulgaria

11.03.2004
Violation of Article 3

Cases dealing with the prohibition of slavery and forced labour (Article 4)

Krachunova v. Bulgaria (no. 18269/18)

28.11.2023
The case concerned Ms Krachunova's attempts to obtain compensation for the earnings from sex work that X, her trafficker, had taken from her. The Bulgarian courts had refused compensation, stating she had been engaged in prostitution and returning the earnings from that would be contrary to "good morals".
Violation of Article 4

Cases dealing with the right to liberty and security (Article 5)

Marin Yosifov v. Bulgaria

13.10.2020

The case concerned criminal proceedings for corruption brought against a mayor. The applicant complained of being detained for four days (for 24 hours on police orders and for a further 72 hours on an order of the public prosecutor) without being brought before a judge. He also complained about the search carried out at his office, which in his view was incompatible with the requirements of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Violation of Article 5 §§ 3 and 4 (right to liberty and security: right to be brought promptly before a judge and right to a speedy review of the lawfulness of detention)

Cases concerning deportation of aliens in the absence of adequate safeguards against arbitrariness

Raza v. Bulgaria

11.02.2010

Violation of Article 5 §§ 1 and 4
Violation of Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life)
Violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy)

Al-Nashif v. Bulgaria

20.06.2002

Violation of Article 5 § 4
Violation of Article 8 (right to respect for family life)
Violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy)

Cases concerning excessive length of detention pending trial and defective judicial control of lawfulness of detention

Vasilev v. Bulgaria

02.02.2006

Violation of Article 5 §§ 3 and 4
Violation of Article 6 § 1 (length)

Mitev v. Bulgaria

22.12.2004

Violation of Article 5 §§ 1, 3, 4 and 5
Violation of Article 6 § 1 (length)
Violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) in conjunction with Article 6 § 1

Ilijkov v. Bulgaria

26.07.2001

Violation of Article 5 §§ 3 and 4
Violation of Article 6 § 1 (length)

Unlawful placement in psychiatric hospital and lack of domestic remedies

Varbanov v. Bulgaria

05.10.2000

Violation of Article 5

Ordered placement in an educational centre for young people

I.G.D. v. Bulgaria (no. 70139/14)

07.06.2022

The case concerned a minor who was placed in specialised institutions on the grounds of having committed a number of offences. At the time of his initial placement the applicant was 11 years old.

Violation of Article 5 § 4 (right to have the lawfulness of one's detention decided speedily by a court)
Violation of Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life), taken alone and in conjunction with Article 13 (right to an effective remedy)

D.L. v. Bulgaria (no. 7472/14)

19.05.2016

No violation of Article 5 § 1 (right to liberty and security)
Violation of Article 5 § 4 (right to have the lawfulness of detention examined speedily)
Violation of Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life)

Cases dealing with Article 6

Doynov v. Bulgaria (no. 27455/22)

01.04.2025

The case concerned an allegation that the Supreme Administrative Court had lacked independence and impartiality when ruling on an action for damages, brought against that same court, for a serious breach of European Union law.

No violation of Article 6 § 1 (right to a fair hearing)

Bosev v. Bulgaria (no. 62199/19)

04.06.2024

The case concerned the conviction of a journalist for defamation of a senior Government official and, more specifically, doubts as to the impartiality of one of the

judges having ruled on the charges laid against him on appeal.
Violation of Article 6 § 1 (right to a fair trial)
Violation of Article 10 (freedom of expression)

Pengezov v. Bulgaria (no. 66292/14)

10.10.2023
The case concerned a judge's temporary suspension from his duties on account of his indictment for irregularities allegedly committed in the performance of his former duties.
Violation of Article 6 (right to a fair hearing) as concerned the insufficient extent of the judicial review carried out by the Supreme Administrative Court,
No violation of Article 6 (right to a fair hearing) as concerned the independence and impartiality of the Supreme Administrative Court, and
Violation of Article 8 (right to respect for private life)

Korporativna Targovska Banka AD v. Bulgaria (nos. 46564/15 and 68140/16)

30.08.2022
The case concerned the withdrawal of the applicant bank's licence by the Bulgarian National Bank (BNB) and the resulting court proceedings in which it was ordered that it be wound up.
In finding violations, the Court held, in particular, that: the relevant legislation and how it had been applied by the Bulgarian courts had denied KTB a proper judicial review of the decision to withdraw its licence; KTB had been represented in court by individuals dependent on the BNB and had not been able to put forward its case; and there had been no judicial or other legal safeguards against the decision to withdraw KTB's licence.
Two violations of Article 6 (right to a fair trial)
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 (protection of property)

Donev v. Bulgaria

26.10.2021
The case concerned disciplinary proceedings to dismiss the applicant, a judge and a court president. He complained, in particular, that the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) and the Supreme Administrative Court had not satisfied the requirements of independence and impartiality set out in Article 6 of the Convention.
No violation of Article 6 (right to a fair trial)

Miroslava Todorova v. Bulgaria

19.10.2021
The case concerned two sets of disciplinary proceedings against the applicant, who had been a judge and the President of the Bulgarian Union of Judges at the relevant time. The Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) ordered a reduction of her salary, followed by her dismissal on the grounds of delays in dealing with her cases.
No violation of Article 6 (right to a fair trial)
Violation of Article 10
Violation of Article 18 (limitation on use of restrictions on rights) read in conjunction with Article 10

Cases concerning procedural shortcomings and excessive formalism in law and in judicial proceedings:

Divergences in the Supreme Court of Cassation case-law

Mariyka Popova and Asen Popov v. Bulgaria

11.04.2019
No violation of Article 6 § 1

Alleged lack of impartiality of a court

Mustafa v. Bulgaria

28.11.2019
Mr Mustafa, a civilian who had no links to the army, was tried and convicted by military courts for an ordinary offence because one of the other defendants in the case was serving in the army at the time it was committed. Mr Mustafa argued that those courts were neither independent nor impartial.
Violation of Article 6 § 1

Boyan Gospodinov v. Bulgaria

05.04.2018
Violation of Article 6 § 1

Lack of effective access to a court

Aleksandar Sabev v. Bulgaria

19.07.2018
Violation of Article 6 § 1

Chakalova-Ilieva v. Bulgaria
06.10.2016
Violation of Article 6 § 1

Stankov v. Bulgaria
12.07.2007
Violation of Article 6 § 1

Capital Bank AD v. Bulgaria
02.11.2005
Violation of Article 6 § 1
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1

Right to question witnesses

Dimitrov and Momin v. Bulgaria
07.06.2018
No violation of Article 6 §§ 1 and 3 (d)

Trial in one's absence

Lena Atanasova v. Bulgaria
26.01.2017
No violation of Article 6 § 1

Kounov v. Bulgaria
23.05.2006
Violation of Article 6 § 1

Stoichkov v. Bulgaria
24.03.2005
Violation of Article 5 §§ 1, 4 and 5

Non-recognition of a final judgment

Kehaya and Others v. Bulgaria
12.01.2006
Violation of Article 6 § 1
Two violations of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1

Presumption of innocence

Maslarova v. Bulgaria
31.01.2019
The case concerned a complaint lodged by Ms Maslarova, who was Minister for Labour and Employment Policy from 2005 to 2009, about a failure to respect her right to be presumed innocent on account of remarks made by certain political and judicial figures, and relayed in the press, in relation to criminal proceedings against her for embezzlement of public funds.
Violation of Article 6 § 2 and violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy)

Excessively long court proceedings

Finger v. Bulgaria
Dimitrov and Hamanov v. Bulgaria[2]
10.05.2011
First pilot judgments concerning Bulgaria in which the Court has asked the Government to introduce remedies to deal with unreasonably long criminal proceedings and, more importantly, a compensatory remedy in respect of unreasonably long criminal, civil and administrative proceedings. Those remedies must conform to the Court's principles and become available within 12 months from the date on which the judgments become final.
A violation of Article 6 § 1
A violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy)

Cases regarding effectiveness of remedies in respect of length of proceedings, lodged following the pilot judgments in Dimitrov and Hamanov v. Bulgaria and Finger v. Bulgaria:

Valcheva and Abrashev v. Bulgaria
Balakchiev and Others v. Bulgaria
Declared inadmissible on 18.06.2013
These cases concerned the applicants' complaints about unreasonable length of proceedings. More importantly, they also concerned the effectiveness of two new administrative and judicial compensatory remedies introduced by the Bulgarian authorities following two pilot judgments[3]. These remedies were intended to enable victims of unreasonably lengthy proceedings, including people who had already lodged an application with the Court in this regard, to obtain monetary compensation.
Although no long-term practice had been established in this domain, the Court considered that it could not be assumed at this current stage that the Bulgarian authorities and courts applying the new remedies provisions of the Acts would not give proper effect to them. Therefore, the new remedies could be regarded as effective. Moreover, it considered that mere

[2] Systemic problem in Bulgarian's justice system, namely, the absence of effective legal remedies for excessive length of civil, administrative and criminal proceedings.

[3] Judgments *Finger v. Bulgaria* and *Dimitrov and Hamanov v. Bulgaria* of 10 May 2011

doubts about the effective functioning of a newly created statutory remedy did not dispense the applicants from having recourse to it. Since the applicants had not apparently brought such proceedings and no special circumstances absolved them from doing so, their complaints were rejected for non-exhaustion of domestic remedies.
Press release in Bulgarian

Cases dealing with the right to private and family life (Article 8)

Inadequate control of secret surveillance

Kanev and Bulgarian Helsinki Committee v. Bulgaria (no. 45864/22)
28.04.2026
The case concerned the processing of data by Bulgaria's intelligence services. In 2021 Mr Kanev, chair of the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee, had asked Bulgaria's State Agency for National Security whether it had gathered intelligence about him or the association. The Agency had refused to disclose that information, and proceedings brought by Mr Kanev to challenge that refusal had been unsuccessful.
Violation of Article 8

Green Alliance v. Bulgaria (no. 6580/22)
17.02.2026
The case concerned regulations issued in 2008 and amended in 2018, which allow Bulgaria's State Agency for National Security to infiltrate informers (known as "agents on cover" – служители на прикритие), into private entities or as members of a "liberal profession". Such agents conceal that they are working for the Agency but are not allowed to use covert surveillance techniques or equipment and are considered different from undercover agents (known as "agents under cover" – служители под прикритие). A claim brought by Green Alliance in 2018 before the Bulgarian courts for judicial review of the regulations was unsuccessful.
Violation of Article 8

Ekimdzhiev and Others v. Bulgaria (no. 70078/12)
11.01.2022
The case concerned secret surveillance and the system of retention and subsequent accessing of communications data in Bulgaria.
Violation of Article 8 (right to respect for private life and correspondence) in respect of secret surveillance, and in respect of retention and accessing of communication data
Savovi v. Bulgaria
27.11.2012
Hadzhiev v. Bulgaria
23.10.2012

Association for European Integration and Human Rights and Ekimdzhiev v. Bulgaria
28.06.2007
Violation of Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life and correspondence)
Violation of Article 13

Legislation exposing those affiliated with the former security services

Anchev v. Bulgaria
11.01.2018
Application declared inadmissible

Deportation of foreigners in the absence of adequate safeguards against arbitrariness

C.G. and Others v. Bulgaria (no. 1365/07)
24.04.2008
Violation of Article 8
Violation of Article 13 Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 7 (procedural safeguards relating to expulsion of aliens)

Other cases on Article 8

Koychev v. Bulgaria
13.10.2020
The applicant claimed to be the biological father of a child born outside marriage, and complained of the fact that his actions to have his paternity recognised had been rejected on the grounds that the child had been recognised by another man, the mother's new husband.
Violation of Article 8

Marin Yosifov v. Bulgaria
13.10.2020
The case concerns criminal proceedings for corruption brought against a mayor. The applicant complained of being detained for four days (for 24 hours on police orders and for a further 72 hours on an order of the

public prosecutor) without being brought before a judge. He also complained about the search carried out at his office, which in his view was incompatible with the requirements of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
Violation of Article 8

Y.T. v. Bulgaria (no. 41701/16)
09.07.2020
The case concerned a transsexual (Y.T.) who had taken steps to change his physical appearance and whose request for (female to male) gender reassignment had been refused by the Bulgarian courts.
He claimed that he had become aware of his male gender identity during adolescence and that he had lived in society as a man.
Violation of Article 8

Vetsev v. Bulgaria
02.05.2019
The case concerned the Bulgarian authorities' refusal to allow Mr Vetsev, who had been remanded in custody, to travel to his brother's funeral.
Violation of Article 8

L.D. and P.K. v. Bulgaria (nos. 7949/11 and 45522/13)
08.12.2016
The case concerned the inability for L.D. and P.K., who claimed to be the biological fathers of children born out of wedlock, to challenge declarations of paternity by two other men and to have their own paternity established.
Violation of Article 8

Ivanova and Cherkezov v. Bulgaria
21.04.2016
The case principally concerned a complaint by a couple about the threatened demolition of the house in which they live.
Violation of Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life and the home) if the order for the demolition of the house were to be enforced without a proper review of its proportionality in the light of the applicants' personal circumstances
No violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 (protection of property) if the order for the demolition of the house were to be enforced

Yordanova et autres c. Bulgarie
24.04.2012
The case concerned the Bulgarian authorities' plan to evict Roma from a settlement situated on municipal land in an area of Sofia called Batalova Vodenitsa.
Violation of Article 8 (right to private and family life)

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion cases (Article 9)

Tonchev and Others v. Bulgaria (no. 56862/15)
13.12.2022
In this case, the applicants – three pastors and three religious associations – complained of the circulation to schools in 2008 by the Burgas municipal authority of information about their faith containing remarks which they considered hostile and defamatory.
Violation of Article 9

Metodiev and Others v. Bulgaria
15.06.2017
The case concerned the refusal by the authorities to register a new religious association called the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community as a denomination.

Karaahmed v. Bulgaria
24.02.2015
The case concerned a demonstration by members of the Ataka political party outside the Banya Bashi Mosque in Sofia and the official investigations into this incident.
Violation of Article 9

State interference with the internal organisation of religious communities

In the three cases immediately below:
Violation of Article 9

Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (Metropolitan Inokentiy) and Others v. Bulgaria
22.01.2009

Supreme Holy Council of the Muslim Community v. Bulgaria
16.12.2004

Hasan and Chaush v. Bulgaria
26.10.2000

Freedom of expression case (Article 10)

Zhablyanov v. Bulgaria (no. 36658/18)

27.06.2023

The case concerned the removal of Mr Zhablyanov from the post of Deputy Speaker of Parliament following statements he had made.
The Court found, in particular, that his interrupting a minute's silence in Parliament to commemorate the victims of the communist regime and a statement that he subsequently made justifying "the People's Court" could be seen as going against the values underpinning the Convention. The removal overall had hence been "necessary in a democratic society".
No violation of Article 10

Mestan v. Bulgaria (no. 24108/15)

02.05.2023

The case concerned an administrative sanction imposed on the leader of a political party – traditionally supported by voters belonging to the Turkish minority in Bulgaria – who was a candidate in the 2013 Bulgarian parliamentary elections, for speaking in Turkish while campaigning for election. The Bulgarian authorities took the view that he had breached the Bulgarian Electoral Code.
Violation of Article 10

Handzhiyski v. Bulgaria

06.04.2021

The case concerned the applicant's placing of a Santa Claus hat and a sack on the statue of Dimitar Blagoev in the main square of Blagoevgrad on Christmas Day as a form of political protest. He was convicted and fined for minor hooliganism.
Violation of Article 10

Criminal convictions of/civil judgments against journalists

Yordanova and Toshev v. Bulgaria

02.10.2012
Violation of Article 10

Cases regarding the right to freedom of assembly and association (Article 11)

Yordanovi v. Bulgaria

03.09.2020

The case concerned the complaint by the two applicants about criminal proceedings brought against them for attempting to set up a political party on a religious basis. They complained of unjustified interference with their right to freedom of association and also of discrimination against them.
Violation of Article 11

National Turkish Union and Kungyun v. Bulgaria

08.06.2017

The case concerned the refusal of the Bulgarian authorities to register an association promoting the rights of the Muslim minority in Bulgaria.
Violation of Article 11

A group of cases concerning complaints about continuous refusal of the authorities to register Macedonian parties and organisations and allow their peaceful gatherings

In all three cases below: Three violations of Article 11 as regards the refusal to register the association United Macedonian Organisation Ilinden and to allow a number of peaceful assemblies of supporters of that association, as well as an assembly of its sibling organisation United Macedonian Organisation Ilinden – PIRIN;
No violation of Article 11 and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) as regards the refusal to register United Macedonian Organisation Ilinden – PIRIN as a political party.

United Macedonian Organisation Ilinden and Others v. Bulgaria (no. 2), Singartiyski and Others v. Bulgaria, United Macedonian Organisation Ilinden and Ivanov v.Bulgaria (no. 2), United Macedonian Organisation Ilinden – PIRINand Others v. Bulgaria (no. 2)

18.10.2011

In all five cases below: Violation of Article 11

The United Macedonian Organisation Ilinden and Others v. Bulgaria

19.01.2006

Ivanov and Others v. Bulgaria
24.11.2005

The United Macedonian Organisation Ilinden and Ivanov v. Bulgaria
20.10.2005

The United Macedonian Organisation Ilinden – PIRIN and Others v. Bulgaria
20.10.2005

Stankov and the United Macedonian Organisation Ilinden v. Bulgaria
02.10.2001

Refusal to register political parties and associations

In both cases below: Violation of Article 11

Zhechev v. Bulgaria
21.06.2007

Tsonev v. Bulgaria
13.04.2006

Article 14
(prohibition of discrimination)

Stoyanova v. Bulgaria (no. 56070/18)
14.06.2022
The case concerned the homophobic murder of the applicant's 26-year-old son. His attackers, secondary-school students, had singled him out for assault because they had thought he looked like a homosexual.
Violation of Article 14 taken together with Article 2 (right to life)

Property issues cases
(Article 1 of Protocol No. 1)

Sakskoburggotski and Chrobok v. Bulgaria (no. 38948/10)
07.09.2021
Judgment on just satisfaction (Article 41) on 2 May 2023
The case concerned the attempts by the former King of Bulgaria, Simeon II, and his sister, a former princess, to have property that had been under the Crown restored to them, and a moratorium on the transfer and on the commercial exploitation of former Crown property imposed in 2009.
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1
Violation of Article 6 § 1 (right to a fair trial)

Todorov and Others v. Bulgaria
13.07.2021
The case concerned the seizure of property belonging to the applicants believed to be the proceeds of crime.
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 in respect of four of the applications
No violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 in respect of the three other applications

National Movement Ekoglasnost v. Bulgaria
15.12.2020
The case concerned the applicant association's being ordered to pay allegedly excessive costs to a
nuclear power plant in proceedings for the reopening of a civil trial.
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1
Case concerning the method to calculate compensation for expropriation

Kostov and Others v. Bulgaria
14.05.2020
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1
Confiscation and retention for over nine years of sums of money not declared to Bulgarian customs

Togrul v. Bulgaria
15.11.2018
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1

Property complaints brought by royal family

Sakskoburggotski and Others v. Bulgaria (nos. 38948/10, 55777/12, and 8954/17)
12.04.2018
Application declared partially inadmissible

Domestic remedy for enforcement of administrative court judgments considered effective as of mid-2012

Dimitar Yanakiev v. Bulgaria
31.03.2016
Press release in Bulgarian
Violation of Article 6 § 1 (right to a fair trial)
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1

Effects of restitution law on third parties

Velikovi and Others v. Bulgaria

15.03.2007
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1

Interference by the prosecution authorities in privatisation deals, without judicial control

Zlínsat, Spol. S R.o. v. Bulgaria
15.06.2006
Violation of Article 6 § 1 (fairness)
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1

State's failure to respect its pecuniary obligations

Kirilova and Others v. Bulgaria
09.06.2005
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1

Inadequate application of V.A.T. legislation

Nazarev and Others v. Bulgaria
25.01.2011
Application declared inadmissible

"Bulves" AD v. Bulgaria
22.01.2009
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1

Failure to enforce judgments recognising the right to restitution or of compensation for nationalised agricultural land

Mutishev v. Bulgaria
03.12.2010
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1

Naydenov v. Bulgaria
26.11.2009
Violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1

Black sea coastal resort restitution of land cases

Nedelcheva and Others v. Bulgaria
28.05.2013
Two violations of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1

Kupenova and Others v. Bulgaria
7 May 2013
Application declared inadmissible

Cap on Bulgarian retirement pensions

Valkov v. Bulgaria
25.10.2011
This case is part of a group of 29 cases which concern the existence of a statutory limit on State retirement pensions and alleged discrimination in this respect.
No violation of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1
No violation of Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination)

Right to education (Article 2 of Protocol No. 1)

Velev v. Bulgaria
27.05.2014
The case concerned access to education for a remand prisoner. Mr Velev alleged that he had not been allowed to pursue his secondary education while being detained on remand in Stara Zagora Prison for 29 months.
Violation of Article 2 of Protocol No. 1

Anatoliy Ponomaryov and Vitaliy Ponomaryov v. Bulgaria
21.06.2011
The case concerned the requirement that two Russian boys, living in Bulgaria with their mother who was married to a Bulgarian, pay school fees for their secondary education, unlike Bulgarian nationals and aliens with permanent residence permits.
Violation of Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) in conjunction with Article 2 of Protocol No. 1

Cases dealing with the right to free elections (Article 3 of Protocol No. 1)

Anatoliy Marinov v. Bulgaria (no. 26081/17)
15.02.2022
The case concerned Mr Marinov's voting rights, which he was unable to exercise during the 2017 parliamentary elections in Bulgaria. His right to vote had been automatically withdrawn, in line with the Constitution, when he had been placed under partial guardianship owing to psychiatric issues in 2000.
Violation of Article 3 of Protocol No. 1

Kulinski and Sabev v. Bulgaria
21.07.2016
The case concerned the constitutional ban on prisoners' voting rights in Bulgaria.
Violation of Article 3 of Protocol No. 1
No violation of Article 13 (right to an effective remedy)

Riza and Others v. Bulgaria

13.10.2015

The case concerned respect for the right to stand for election and the right to vote.

Mr Riza and a Bulgarian political party, "DPS - the Movement for rights and freedoms", alleged that the annulment of the election results in 23 polling stations in Turkey had unjustifiably interfered with their right to stand for election and the other applicants alleged that the annulment of their ballot papers had constituted a violation of their active electoral rights.

Violation of Article 3 of Protocol No. 1 – concerning the right to stand for election of Mr Riza and the DPS

Violation of Article 3 of Protocol No. 1 – concerning the right to vote of the 101 other applicants

Ekoglasnost v. Bulgaria

06.11.2012

The case concerned the inability for Ekoglasnost, a Bulgarian political party, to submit two documents required by an electoral law, enacted shortly before parliamentary elections in June 2005, in order to present its candidates.

Violation of Article 3 of Protocol No. 1

Right not to be tried or punished twice (Article 4 of Protocol No. 7)

Tsonyo Tsonev v. Bulgaria (no. 4)

06.04.2021

The case concerned a complaint relating to the imposition of an administrative fine and a sentence of eighteen months' imprisonment, essentially for the same offence.

Violation of Article 4 of Protocol 7

Velkov v. Bulgaria

21.07.2020

The case concerned the applicant's complaint that he had been convicted twice of the same offence of breaching the peace during a football match.

Violation of Article 4 of Protocol No. 7

Noteworthy pending cases

Geshev v. Bulgaria

Case communicated to the Government in 2024

Concerns premature termination of office of the Chief Prosecutor.

Articles 6 (right to a fair trial), 8 (right to respect for private life) and 10 (freedom of expression).

United Macedonian Organisation Ilinden and Others v. Bulgaria and 9 other applications
Vasilev and Society of the Repressed Macedonians in Bulgaria Victims of the Communist Terror v. Bulgaria and 9 other applications
Paraskov v. Bulgaria and 3 other applications

communicated to the Government in 2024

All three cases concern associations which advocate the view that there is an oppressed Macedonian minority in Bulgaria and alleged interference with their rights (either because of refusals to register the applicant associations or with regard to rallies they had organised).

Article 11 (freedom of association) and in some of the applications also Article 18 (limitation on use of restrictions on rights).

Krasimir Ivanov Kanev and Bulgarian Helsinki Committee v. Bulgaria
Green Alliance v. Bulgaria

Cases communicated to the Government in 2023

Concerning covert monitoring of communications/data by the State Agency for National Security

In particular Article 8 (right to respect for private life)

Bulgarian Judges Association v. Bulgaria

Case communicated to the Government in 2022

Concerns alleged smear campaign against a professional association of judges; it also concerns legislation obliging judges to declare their membership of organisations.

Articles 10 (freedom of expression), 11 (freedom of association) and 14 (prohibition of discrimination).

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