



# 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	2023	2024	2025
Applications allocated to a judicial formation	486	472	533
Communicated to the Government	55	220	52
Applications decided:	524	547	648
- Declared inadmissible or struck out (Single Judge)	455	489	471
- Declared inadmissible or struck out (Committee)	28	28	29
- Declared inadmissible or struck out (Chamber)	2	9	5
- Decided by judgment	39	21	143

Applications pending before the court on 01/01/2026	
Applications pending before a judicial formation:	307
Single Judge	45
Committee (3 Judges)	189
Chamber (7 Judges)	73
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.

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

## Noteworthy cases, judgments delivered

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### 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

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### 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

**Jordan 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)

**Angelova 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)<sup>1</sup>

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**

<sup>1</sup> 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

#### **Jordan 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

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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](#)<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>3</sup>. 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](#)

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

<sup>3</sup> 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

#### **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 – PIRIN and 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](#)

**[Zlinsat, 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

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## 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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