



**TRANSPARENCY
INTERNATIONAL**
BULGARIA

ANNUAL REPORT

2011

Transparency International - Bulgaria was founded in June 1998 as the Bulgarian national chapter of TI and fully complies to the leading principles of the coalition. This is the first national chapter formed in South-Eastern Europe. The founders of TI-Bulgaria are people from a broad range of the social life: scientists, journalists, lawyers, judges, NGO and business representatives as well as MPs from all political groups.

The Mission, which comes from the status of a Bulgarian national chapter of Transparency International movement, is to join the efforts of governmental institutions, local authorities, civil society, private sector and media so as to undertake systematic reforms and initiate specific tasks for curbing corruption in the country. Main priorities in the work of TI-Bulgaria are the initiation and implementation of methods and programs for counteracting of corruption on both national and regional levels. The work ethics and principles of TI-Bulgaria are guided by the fundamental principles of the international coalition - of which we are part - we do not disclose names and do not attack individuals.

During the 13-years work TI-Bulgaria established a network of independent experts from variety of academic fields and public life, which participate in different project activities implementation. The organisation established contacts with general public and cooperation with a number of governmental and local authorities, as well as with civil society representatives.

In 2011 Transparency International Bulgaria continued its activities in the framework of its two general programmes: National Programme and Regional Programme.

NATIONAL PROGRAMME

I. COUNTERACTING POLITICAL CORRUPTION. MONITORING THE FINANCING OF POLITICAL PARTIES. MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC STANDARDS IN THE ELECTION PROCESS

Effective Civil Society Control as a Factor for Increasing Integrity and Transparency in the Political and Electoral Process Project

The Effective Civil Society Control as a Factor for Increasing Integrity and Transparency in the Political and Electoral Process Project is an initiative of Transparency International – Bulgaria started in June 2011 and implemented with the financial support of America for Bulgaria Foundation. The primary goal of the project is to promote integrity in the electoral process by mobilizing civil society organizations in order to exercise effective control over the forthcoming election campaigns.

In early September 2011 Transparency International Bulgaria together with other leading non-governmental organisations in the country initiated a civil coalition for monitoring of the presidential and local elections. So far, this has been TI-Bulgaria's largest and most complex initiative on monitoring election campaigns. It is entirely based on the already tested successful approach for independent civil monitoring and the public campaign "Sam Izbiram" ("It's My Decision"), implemented in 2009.

The monitoring of the 2011 elections was implemented in partnership with 22 NGOs all over the country. The coalition managed to mobilize 615 observers among representatives of public organizations, academia, students and independent experts. The organizations participating in the informal Civil Society Coalition for Free and Democratic Vote as well as the hundreds campaign volunteers were united by one main goal – to promote and increase transparency and integrity in the election process, to launch a broad public awareness campaign among Bulgarian citizens aiming at explanation voting rights and responsibilities, and at support institutions in curbing the abuse of citizens' rights and the election process distortion.

From September to October 2011 two different types of election campaigns were monitored: (1) presidential campaign on a national scale; and (2) election campaigns of the candidates for municipal councillors and mayors.

The monitoring focused on the financing of the election campaigns as well as on the preparation and the conduct of the election process. Volunteers monitored the Election Day in 39 municipalities throughout the country.

II. SUPPORT TO THE REFORM IN THE JUDICIARY. EFFECTIVE INVESTIGATION AND FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

United Nations Convention Against Corruption. Civil Society Review Project

The project is an initiative of the Transparency International – Secretariat as part of efforts of the coalition on enhancing civil society’s role in monitoring corruption. The monitoring and advocating around the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) review process, aimed at support of the preparation of UNCAC implementation review reports in Bulgaria was implemented from December 2010 to October 2011 and was funded by the UN Democracy Fund. At the outcome TI-Bulgaria prepared a report to evaluate the country review process and country compliance with UNCAC standards.

The report reviews Bulgaria’s implementation and enforcement of selected articles in UN Convention against Corruption Chapters III (Criminalization and Law Enforcement) and IV (International Cooperation). The report is intended as a contribution to the UNCAC peer review process of Bulgaria covering those two chapters.

The report is based on information obtained from a number of governmental institutions and civil society organisations (CSOs), among 20 organisations that were contacted with a standardised questionnaire. These included the Supreme Court of Cassation, the National Prosecution Office, the Ministry of Justice, the Association of Prosecutors in Bulgaria and the CSOs Access to Information Programme. In addition to information from the questionnaire responses, the report also reflects TI-Bulgaria’s independent research and analysis of national laws and regulations in the field.

Countdown to Impunity: Related Statutes of Limitation in the European Union Project

In 2011 Transparency International Bulgaria accomplished the 16-month project for the exploration of the regulations of the limitation periods in European Union. The research aimed at establishment whether the existent limitation periods for corruption violations in EU hinder the efficient implementation of anti-corruption legal framework as well as at identification of ways for resolving of analogous problems. The study focuses was on:

- Review of the specific rules and duration of limitation periods, applicable for violations related to corruption;
- Establishment of well-working practices and weaknesses in enforcing of limitation periods in cases of corruption;
- Development recommendations for addressing the weaknesses in applying the limitations periods.

III. TRANSPARENCY AND EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC FUNDS – COUNTERACTION CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Promoting Integrity through Advocacy: Counteracting Corruption in Public Procurement Project

The “Increasing Integrity through Advocacy: Counteracting Corruption in Public Contracting” Project is a three year initiative of Transparency International – Bulgaria, which started in February 2011. It is funded by the Integrity Initiative of the World Bank and Siemens.

The TI-Bulgaria project was aimed at fight against corruption in the public procurement area in Bulgaria and was focused on the implementation of an innovative anticorruption tool – Integrity Pact.

In 2011 TI-Bulgaria developed a BULGARIAN INTEGRITY PACT model, consistent with the requirements of the national legislation. It is the result of expert and analytical work related to evaluation of the deficiencies in the local practice, as well as research on leading international know-how in the public procurement area.

The main goal of the initiative is to increase the standards of integrity and transparency of the execution of contracts with significant public interest through change of the national policies in the subject area. In the process of its implementation, Transparency International – Bulgaria aims to facilitate:

- Fostering conditions for the development of a coherent anticorruption policy of the Bulgarian government;
- Increasing the opportunity for participation of private sector companies in anticorruption initiatives;
- Development of plans for civil society monitoring over the effects of anti-corruption measures introduction; and
- Focusing public attention towards the problem area and consolidating public support for similar initiatives.

IV. RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY

Monitoring of national press and electronic media

TI-Bulgaria team maintains on-going monitor of national press and electronic media. Archive of publications and analyses on corruption crimes, abuse of functions, trading in influence and other corruption dimensions is kept in the library of the ALAC.

Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre Project

The Centre was established in 2006 and is based on the Anticorruption Resource Centre (ACRC) established in 2002 over the years the ALAC was supported by different donor, among which TI – Secretariat and the European Commission. In 2010 the ALAC was working with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France. It is also a part of the project “Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres in South East Europe”, which includes the building of centres for legal advice and advocacy in a number of states in South East Europe. Such centres have already been created or are currently being set up in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Serbia, Georgia, and Albania.

The aim of the ALAC is to provide *pro bono* legal advice to citizens, victims and witnesses of corruption and gives an opportunity to the citizens to take an active part in combating corruption. The establishment of this Centre has been provoked by the necessity to improve the level of civil

knowledge on the challenges, facing citizens in counteracting everyday corruption, as well as raising their awareness on the approaches and mechanisms for combating corruption at legislative and institutional levels.

A free-of-charge telephone hotline 0800 11 224 has been established for victims and witnesses of corruption crimes to refer their reports on corruption.

The activity of the Centre is also aimed at increasing the capacity of public institutions in working with citizens when receiving complaints of corruption. In this context the efforts of the team of the Centre are a part of the efforts for raising public trust in state institutions and the introduction of systematic improvements (legislative, administrative and institutional) in the fight against corruption.

Anti-corruption Resource Centre

Transparency International Bulgaria continues maintaining of the Anti-corruption resource centre (established in 2002), which was set up with the financial support of the European Commission. Numerous books, periodic and analytic publications on corruption issues are available for general public to use. All reports and publications developed by TI-Bulgaria during its 13-year activity are at all interested parties disposal as well.

REGIONAL PROGRAMME

National Integrity System Project

National Integrity System is an evaluation model of Transparency International, designed to give a measurable expression of the functioning of key institutions and sectors that are crucial in the fight against corruption.

The initiative started in the beginning of October 2010 is a part of an international project of Transparency International, funded by "Prevention and Fight Against Crime" Programme of the Directorate General "Home Affairs" of the European Commission.

In 2011 Transparency International Bulgaria implemented a number of legal and sociological researches and on-field surveys to assess the national integrity system in Bulgaria. The study evaluates governmental bodies and institutions such as judiciary, National Assembly, public sector, law enforcement agencies, political parties, civil society, business and media.

Civil Society and Public Institutions – Partners in Increasing Transparency through the Elaboration and Implementation of Conflict of Interests Prevention Policy Project

Transparency International Bulgaria is a partner within the Civil Society and Public Institutions – Partners in Increasing Transparency through the Elaboration and Implementation of Conflict of Interests Prevention Policy Project implemented by Transparency International Croatia. The activities focus on know-how transfer in the conflict of interest prevention policies in Croatia.

Main activities of the project are in three lines and include:

- 1) Publication of a Handbook for prevention and conflict of interest;
- 2) Implementation of a comparative study of the best developed practices in EU member states in the conflict of interest field;
- 3) Conduction of number of training workshops with participation of public officials, media and non-governmental sector representatives.

The duration of the initiative is from May 2011 to July 2012.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Corruption Perceptions Index

As a national chapter for Bulgaria of Transparency International movement, each year TI-Bulgaria announces the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) results. The Corruption Perceptions Index is a complex survey that combines different sources of information about corruption, making it possible to compare countries according to their annual score. The CPI ranks countries according to the perception of corruption in the public sector and gives each country a score between 0 and 10, where 0 is a score given to countries with extremely high level of corruption.

Global Corruption Barometer

For six consecutive years TI-Bulgaria announces the Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer. The Barometer presents the main findings of a public opinion survey that explores the general public's views of corruption, as well as experiences of bribery around the world. It assesses the extent to which key institutions and public services are perceived to be corrupt and measures citizens' views on government efforts to fight corruption.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

- **The Importance of the Statutes of Limitations for the Judicial Persecution of Corruption in Member States of the European Union: Regional and National Report for Bulgaria**
- **Publicity and Transparency in Assigning and Executing of Projects with Significant Public Interest - Report on Monitoring of the Selection Procedure for Contractor and the Implementation of Contracts for Construction of "Trakia" Highway**
- **Parallel Assessment of the Implementation of United Nations Convention Against Corruption**

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL - BULGARIA BUDGET

ANNUAL RECEIVING: € 260,300

