

Bulgaria

2015 Country Summary

Recommendations

Bulgaria's GI ranking in Band C places it in the moderate category for corruption in the defence and security sector. Bulgaria scored higher for Political risk, which scores in Band B (low risk of corruption). The highest risk area is Operations, which fell in Band D (high risk of corruption).

Anti-corruption initiatives: boosting implementation and continuity

The Bulgarian government appears open to cooperating with civil society. Regular formal consultations with the public take place in the form of the Public Council on Defence Policy, convened by the Minister of Defence and attended by representatives of academia and civil society. Corruption issues were addressed in 2013, but there has been no follow-up since.

There have been concerns about the limited influence of bodies involving NGOs, as their activity appears to diminish with time and recommendations are not always implemented. The government could build on the robust institutional structures available to ensure active civil society input into anti-corruption initiatives in the defence sector, which would help maintain the momentum for reforms.

For this commitment to bring significant and lasting improvements, however, the government needs to match it with a thorough implementation plan and quarterly published updates. The current gaps in available information on implementation of plans, as well as a seemingly uneven commitment to implementation, pose risks to the good progress that has been made.

Investigating and enforcing financial crimes

While sanctions do exist to punish personnel's involvement in corruption and unauthorized private enterprise, investigation of alleged offences and application of sanctions remains inconsistent. The 2013 Action Plan identified the need for improvements in acquisition planning, more training for acquisition officials, and internal audit of the procedures; it is unclear nonetheless to what extent these recommendations have been implemented. Oversight is provided internally by the Inspectorate and Internal Audit Directorate and externally by the National Audit Office, though the lack of transparency makes it difficult to gauge how active the NAO is; some scrutiny is also carried out by parliamentary committees which oversee budgets. Improving the consistency, effectiveness, and transparency of investigations and sanctions is key to sustaining the momentum for reform and building social trust.

Corruption and Military Operations

The 2013 Anti-Corruption Plan recognizes the significance of corruption as a strategic issue during military operations, mandating specific doctrines to adopt approaches to corruption in theatre. This is an important step and a useful one, given Bulgaria's contribution to international missions. However, it is unclear whether this recognition has been translated into specific doctrine and guidance. We recommend that the positive developments are followed with introduction of detailed anti-corruption doctrine, comprehensive training for commanders, guidance on operational contracting, and deployment of anti-corruption monitors.

Procurement and defence budgets

Bulgaria has introduced procurement reforms aimed to enhance transparency and the efficacy of procurement plans and procedures. Challenges stemming from a lack of regulation nonetheless remain in the areas of scrutiny of confidential procurement procedures, offset transparency, and government control over companies' use of agents and subcontractors. The government could build on legal solutions already in place to ensure more robust scrutiny of classified procurement procedures and to create greater transparency in offset contracts.

Scorecard

Political	Defence & Security Policy	Legislative Scrutiny	3
		Defence Committee	3
		Defence Policy Debated	4
		CSO Engagement	2
		International AC Instruments	3
		Public Debate	2
		AC Policy	4
		AC Institutions	2
		Public Trust	2
		Risk Assessments	3
	Defence budgets	Acquisition Planning	2
		Budget Transparency & Detail	3
		Budget Scrutiny	3
		Budget Publicly Available	3
		Defence Income	4
		Internal Audit	3
		External Audit	2
	Other Political Areas	Natural Resources	4
		Organised Crime Links	3
		Organised Crime Policing	2
		Intelligence Services Oversight	3
Intelligence Services Recruitment		2	
Export Controls		2	
Finance	Asset Disposals	Asset Disposal Controls	2
		Asset Disposal Scrutiny	3
	Secret Budgets	Percentage Secret Spending	3
		Legislative Access to Information	3
		Secret Program Auditing	2
		Off-budget Spending in Law	2
		Off-budget Spending in Practice	3
		Information Classification	3
	Links to Business	Mil. Owned Businesses Exist	2
		Mil. Owned Business Scrutiny	2
Unauthorised Private Enterprise		2	
Personnel	Leadership	Public Commitment	3
		Measures for Corrupt Personnel	2
		Whistleblowing	2
		Special Attention to Sensitive Personnel	1
	Payroll and Recruitment	Numbers of Personnel Known	4
		Pay Rates Openly Published	4
		Well-established Payment System	3
		Objective Appointments	2
		Objective Promotions	2
	Conscription	Bribery to Avoid Compulsory Conscription	
		Bribery for Preferred Postings	
Salary Chain	Ghost Soldiers	3	

		Chains of Command and Payment	2
	Values, Standards, Other	Code of Conduct Coverage	3
		Code of Conduct Breaches Addressed	2
		AC Training	2
		Prosecution Outcomes Transparent	1
		Facilitation Payments	2
Operations	Controls in the Field	Military Doctrine	2
		Operational Training	2
		AC Monitoring	1
		Controls on Contracting	1
		Private Military Contractors	1
Procurement	Government Policy	Legislation	2
		Transparent Procurement Cycle	3
		Oversight Mechanisms	2
		Purchases Disclosed	3
		Standards Expected of Companies	3
	Capability Gap	Strategy Drives Requirements	3
		Requirements Quantified	2
	Tendering	Open Competition v. Single-Sourcing	3
		Tender Board Controls	2
		Anti-Collusion Controls	1
	Contract Delivery / Support	Procurement Staff Training	2
		Complaint Mechanisms for Firms	2
		Sanctions for Corruption	2
	Offsets	Due Diligence	1
		Transparency	1
		Competition Regulation	4
	Other	Controls of Agents	2
		Transparency of Financing Packages	2
		Subsidiaries / Sub-Contractors	1
Political Influence		2	