EUROPEAN POLICY FOR PROTECTION OF WHISTLE-BLOWERS WHO REPORT IRREGULARITIES, FRAUD AND CORRUPTION AND THE BULGARIAN REALITY

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ЕВРОПЕЙСКА ПОЛИТИКА ЗА ЗАЩИТА ПОДАТЕЛИТЕ НА СИГНАЛИ ЗА НЕРЕДНОСТИ, ИЗМАМИ И КОРУПЦИЯ И БЪЛГАРСКАТА ДЕЙСТВИТЕЛНОСТ

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Abstract: *According to Art. 45 of the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, citizens have the right to complaints, proposals and petitions to the state authorities. It is a means of civil control over the activities of state authorities and the opportunity for the administration to improve and democratize its activities. The aim is to remedy the violations, irregularities and harmful effects of illegal and inappropriate actions.*

Enduring problems and different practices in the Member States of the European Union concerning the mechanisms for effective protection of whistle-blowers of corruption, fraud and violations brings to the fore the debate on a common policy, based on a positive, good and effective practices and achievements. The task is to achieve a legal order and security for every citizen and to assure his rights, powers and duties to cooperate and fight against everything that violates the democratic principles and values, economic prosperity and the rule of law. The law stipulates a concept of "public interest" as a synonym for the common good, the common wealth, general prosperity and common wellbeing and last but not least common justice and equality before the law (*Yosifova, 2018). The achievement of this good practice requires the commitment of all its citizens to notify the competent authorities of each infringement, fraud and corruption without fear that repressive and harsh measures would follow to affect their health, official and political development and/or members of their families.*

Key words: Whistle-blowers, Protection, Corruption, Irregularities, Fraud

All anti-corruption international acts provide sections that explicitly regulate mechanisms for effective protection for whistle-blowers and offenders. As a legal framework can be named the:

- United Nations Convention against Corruption;
- United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;
- Criminal Law Convention on Corruption;
- Civil Law Convention on Corruption;
- Convention on the Protection of the European Communities' Financial Interests;
- Anti-Bribery Convention (officially Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions) etc.

It is imperative to note that Bulgaria has ratified all these international instruments with its membership in the European Union and some of the requirements are enshrined in the Bulgarian legislation. Undoubtedly it must be because the whistle-blowers are playing a vital democratic role in exposing corruption, fraud, abuse, lobbying, bourgeois, opacity in European funds, inactivity and irregular work of the administration or its inaction, which actions are just a small part of the problems which the citizens see or are directly affected by.

Whistle-blowers take a significant personal, public and corporate risk, such as service prosecution, dismissal, harassment, physical abuse, and in some cases, it affects other members of their family. There is another significant problem for them, namely when in obvious facts and evidence they face indifferent, massive groundless attacks and accusations, continuous calls by the Ministry of Interior and the prosecutor's office for questioning enquiring **where and how the information has been acquired over a number of years** or lack of investigation into the facts they have discovered.

What are the main elements of the legal framework that aims to achieve effective protection for alerts?

By definition, **protection** a**s** well as **compensation** for all categories of risks is provided to the whistle-blower.

The practice identifies two categories of citizens who are expected to report irregularities and corruption.

− First - external entities - by every citizen;

− Secondly - internal entities - by employees under conditions on confidentiality.

How are EU Member States ranked according to the legal framework they have introduced to protect whistle-blowers and corruption?

It is important to point out some results from the Global Integrity Report[1] which define integrity as a

modern and comprehensive category that needs to be protected. The most secured according to this report, are the citizens filing signals from the UK, Romania, Slovenia and Luxembourg. On the other hand, there are countries where there is a lack of regulation for protection of the alert and in this Bulgaria takes the first place, followed by countries like Greece, Spain, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovakia and Finland which have a fragmented and unsystematic legal framework.

The First European Union Integrity Report of April 24, 2014, prepared by Transparency International, highlights the risk of corruption in the European institutions. According to the report, the European institutions are vulnerable to corruption due to a number of ***"loopholes"*** *-poor application of ethical rules and transparency and financial control rules*. " The report was prepared before the European Parliament elections, which term ends in 2019, and now before the new EP elections, about 70% of the EU citizens still have the feeling of revolting corruption.

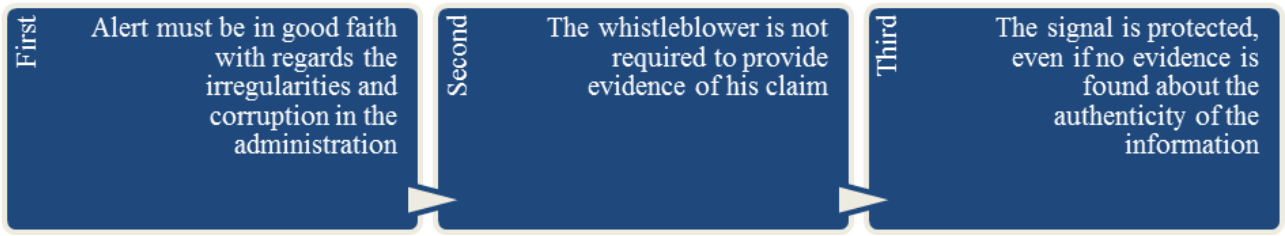
According to Karl Dolan, the head of Transparency International's European office *"The European institutions have done a lot to restore confidence in recent years, but solid foundations have been undermined by complicated rules, complacency and lack of consistency."*

Over the past two years, the citizens' preference and beliefs to report irregularities and corruption to the media instead of the police and the prosecutor's office are clearly highlighted. On the other hand, the practice shows that the prosecution reacts to such signals only after the media reactions. The question is how these checks are completed. Citizens' alerts to these two competent institutions are not published, nor are the results reported in their official bulletins, so it cannot be ascertained whether such signals are present, what are the results of them and what is their effectiveness. The lack of such transparency is also one of the main reasons Bulgaria once again to be at the bottom of the charts from a negative point of view.

Transparency is the only mechanism of democracy that can give enough freedom to the citizens to participate in governance and control processes. The imposition of this good practice does not require the creation of committees, agencies or ministries, but only the good will of the government and the deputies to give a green light to European best practices for the protection of whistle-blowers and corruption.

Instead, in Bulgaria, the first question after such an alert is deposited is to question the person lodging the signal from where and how the information is obtained, is it verified, which means that they are not accustomed with the meaning of the international acts in this respect to protect the subjects reporting irregularities and corruption. Or else they are well aware of them but they need some assistance in understanding them better, which help should come from the judicial system, the Commission for Counteracting Corruption and the Seizure of Unlawfully Acquired Assets, this is the State Agency for National Security, etc.

When government employees report such cases, the risk for them is significantly higher, although the European Union has announced a number of measures - called good practices. In many countries, the principle of accepting anonymous alerts has been introduced, which for Bulgaria continues to be rejected by the MPs and the government. The European Union has approved the following good practices:



The citizen, who file the report has the right to protection from the management of the respective office, including the right to be transferred to another administration, and to receive a response on the outcome of the investigation.

On 20 January 2017, a Report on the role of whistle-blowers was published to protect the financial interests of the European Union. Based on the report by the Committee on Budgetary Control and the Committee on Constitutional Affairs (A8-0004 / 2017)[2] substantiated findings are motivated that require a detailed reading and wide public discussion of the imposition of good practices which is to help the country to improve and leave the negative front positions such as:

It remains for an international research institution to determine our place of protection the right of every Bulgarian citizen to report offenses and corruption without including the entire state machine against this subject and without fear of repression, dismissal, humiliation, detention and imprisonment.

What is the basis for the protection motives of the European Parliament for citizens, reporting offenses and corruption?

– The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 325 thereof,

– Article 22a, Article 22b and Article 22c of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union,

– Resolution of 23 October 2013 on organized crime, corruption and money laundering: recommendations on the actions and initiatives to be taken,

– The decision of the European Ombudsman to wind up the OI / 1/2014 / PMC own-initiative inquiry into the reporting of infringements,

– Directive (EU) 2016/943 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2016 on the protection of undisclosed know-how and business information (trade secrets) against their unlawful acquisition, use and disclosure,

– Article 9 of the Council of Europe`s Civil Law Convention on Corruption,

– Article 22 (a) of the Council of Europe`s Criminal Law Convention Corruption,

– Recommendation CM / Rec (2014) 7 of the Council of Europe for protection of whistle-blower's,

– Articles 8, 13 and 33 of the UN Convention against Corruption,

– Principle 4 of the Recommendation of the Council on OECD on Improving Ethical Conduct in the Public Services,

– Study of the Office of the European Ombudsman of 2 March 2015 and its call for the EU institutions to adopt the required rules to report on irregularities,

– OECD publication entitled 'Providing effective protection for whistle-blowers',

– the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in Guja v. Moldova case, Application No 14277/04 of 12 February 2008,

– Article 6 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and Article 52 of its Rules of Procedure,

– Report of the Committee on Budgetary Control and the opinion of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs (A8-0004 / 2017),

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT should have full access to information in order to be able to carry out the discharge procedure for whistle-blowers and corruption throughout the European Union. The Parliament regularly receives information from individual citizens or non-governmental organizations on irregularities linked to individual projects that are fully or partially financed through the Union budget.

The European Parliament confirms that whistle blowers have an important role to play in preventing, detecting and reporting irregularities related to EU budget expenditure, as well as in identifying and communicating corruption cases. For all this, it is necessary to create and promote a culture of trust that promotes European public interests and in which officials and other staff of the EU as well as the general public feel protected by good governance practices, which shows that the EU supports, protects and encourages potential whistle-blowers.

For this purpose, it is necessary to establish a vital and urgent horizontal legal framework to regulate the rights and obligations for whistle-blowers protection throughout the European Union and in the EU institutions- such as anonymity, providing legal, psychological and if necessary, financial assistance, as well as access to various information channels, rapid response schemes and more.

Reactions that allow for the protection contained in the United Nations Convention against Corruption, such as requiring Member States to provide appropriate and effective protection for whistle-blowers, frauds and corruption, which are an essential source of information in the fight against organized crime and their successful

investigation and mastering.

Successful investigation and tackling corruption is achieved when it is based on the principles of transparency and integrity, which therefore requires law enforcement to protect whistle-blowers throughout the European Union but only if they protect the public interest through bona fide action, in line with the case- law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).

It is imperative to include one of the main arguments in the report:

> *"Whereas the authorities should **not restrict or reduce the ability of whistle-blowers** and journalists to document and disclose illegal, unlawful or harmful practices when they disclose such information in good faith and with the public interest is a priority."*

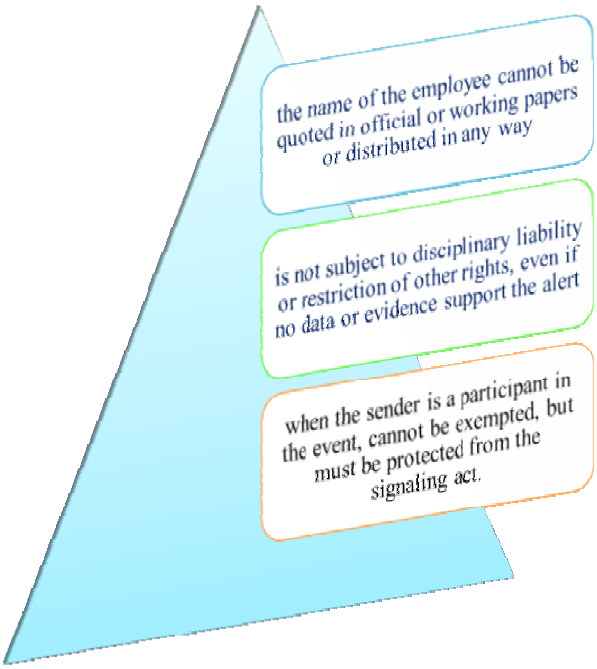
Assessment of the European legal regulation

To starts with, we can refer to the Staff Regulations (Articles 22a, 22b and 22c), according to which all institutions of the European Union are obliged from 1 January 2014 to set up committees and work on the internal rules for the protection of the following pan-European assessment: At Member State level, the protection of the citizens reporting irregularities is not harmonized in their legislation, which is a personal and professional risk argument for the whistle-blowers, which is basically a high barrier to develop this transparency and desire for the participation of citizens in the fight against corruption. In this respect, the European Parliament also refers to guarantees, *"that all reprisals against whistle-blowers will be punished appropriately."*

Secondly, the following European Union acts can be identified:

- Commission Implementing Directive (EU) 2015/2392 sets out reporting procedures, document storage requirements and safeguards for whistle-blowers;
- Directive 2013/30 / EU on the safety of oil and gas activities in coastal waters;
- Council Regulation (EU) No 596/2014 on Market Abuse;
- Directive (EU) 2015/849 on money laundering and terrorist financing, and Council Regulation (EU) No 376/2014 on the reporting of events, all in the interest of protecting the common good and the financial interests of the Union, as well as in promoting the culture of public accountability and integrity of public and private institutions, all serious matters for discussion.
- European Parliament resolution of 14 February 2017 on the role of whistle-blowers in defending the EU's financial interests (2016/2055 (INI));
- The European Ombudsman's decision of 2014 to launch an own-initiative inquiry into the EU institutions on the protection of whistle-blowers, which welcomes the extremely positive results of this investigation; calls on the EU institutions and other bodies which have not yet implemented the guidelines drawn up after the closure of the investigation to do so without delay;
- European Parliament Decision establishing a special unit within the Parliament with a reporting mechanism and special structures (e.g. hotlines, websites, contact points) to obtain information from whistle-blowers in relation to the Union's financial interests, until an independent EU institution is established.

Which practices the European Union recommends as safe, effective and purposeful?



National Strategy for Prevention of Corruption in the Republic of Bulgaria 2015-2020

Following the recognition in the preamble of the strategy that it does not offer comprehensive catalogue of measures for combating corruption, but

its top priority is the fight against corruption in the high echelons of power, the protection of citizens reporting irregularities and corruption is found in Priority 5 entitled "Release of Citizens of petty corruption". The assessment is that the institutions do not have strategic documents or action plans to counteract corruption. It is necessary, according to the strategy, to encourage citizens to report in cases of petty corruption for which effective protection of alerts is required through a system of safeguards against persecution or official and administrative repression. The implementation of the priority is aimed at 4 measures developed schematically as a vision.

– Elaboration of uniform standards and mechanisms for submitting and processing reports of corruption by citizens and businesses;

– Settlement of the statutory obligation to consider anonymous reports that contain sufficient information to identify the offender and the offenses he has committed;

– Development of guidelines, principles and normative regulations for integrity tests as a tool of intra-institutional practice and responsibility of the heads of relevant departments for its implementation; and

– Introduction of a "hotline" and a system for receiving signals and complaints of corruption in public administration.

Another priority 6 is relevant to the theme entitled "Create an environment of public intolerance towards corruption". It contains three measures targeting systematic and target oriented policy toward Organization of communication anti-corruption campaigns, Provision of cash prizes of investigative journalists, officials and citizens who have submitted signals and specific information about corruption, led to convictions or sanctions of punished criminals and Introduction of anti-corruption education as integral part of civic education

In 2017, a Report on the Implementation of the National Strategy for Prevention and Combating of Corruption in the Republic of Bulgaria (2015-2020) was published, which reports that the above measures have no reported data, figures, analytical analysis of the implementation of the measures and concrete achievements results.[3]

Act on Counteracting Corruption and on Seizure of Illegally Acquired Property

The law was promulgated on January 19, 2018, and there are already 5 amendments and supplements, the latter from the first working day of 2019. Paragraph 4, article 1 of the General Provisions of the Act contains two points, which can be referred to the protection of citizens submitting signals.

"P. 4. Respect and guarantee the rights and freedoms of citizens "and" 7. Protection of persons, who have reported violations. "The application of the law requires compliance with five principles:

- legality;
- transparency;
- independence;
- objectivity and
- impartiality.

According to Art. 34 of the Law while realizing its activity on corruption prevention, the Commission shall interact with other state bodies, bodies of the local self-government, nongovernmental organization, business representatives, as well as with international organizations in carrying out its activity in the prevention of corruption. The law excludes citizens as a subject of interaction with the Commission, which limits the circle of interaction that violates the principle of transparency.

Art. 47 of Chapter six "Signals" includes several constraints that are a prerequisite for influencing citizens' willingness to report corruption and conflict of interest. In the first place, this is par. 6, which states that "*Anonymous signals shall not be examined and shall not be resent on competence".* The text contradicts the proclaimed vision of the Strategy for Prevention and Combating Corruption in the Republic of Bulgaria 2015 - 2020, which provides in its Priority No 5 "*Settlement of the statutory obligation to consider anonymous reports that contain sufficient information to identify the offender and the offenses he has committed"*.

The question is: if there is a conflict of interest between two individuals in one institution and this is a proven fact why the signal will not be given a go ahead unless it is signed by the particular person?

Unlike the Strategy, the Act contains a special chapter on "Protection of the person, having sent the signal", which introduces obligations for the persons, who have been assigned to examine the signal not to disclose the identity of the person, not to disclose facts and data, which have become known to them in relation to the examination of the signal and to keep the written documents, given to them, from unregulated access of third persons. In special cases, upon request of the Commission chairperson,

assistance of the Ministry of Interior bodies may be sought for undertaking additional measures for protection of the person, having sent the signal.

With substantial legal value is the last article 51 of Chapter Seven, which states: "*Any person, who has been fired, pursued, or in relation of whom actions have been undertaken, leading to psychological or physical harassment, because of the fact, that he has sent a signal, shall be entitled to compensation under a judicial procedure for suffered property and non-property harms.*"

Attention should also be paid to the definition of "check of morality" in the law. According to item 13 of the Additional Provisions, § 1. Verification of integrity is a test, which aims to establish, that the checked person fulfils his/her powers or obligations honestly and in good faith, while observing the Constitution and the law of the country and in the interest of citizens and society.

Can the concept of "public interest" be equated with the expression "in the interest of citizens and society". According to Roman legal doctrine, it is linked to abstract concepts of "prosperity" and "wellbeing" when used to protect citizens' rights and freedoms from unfavourable managerial decisions in a democratic society or otherwise explained - in real democracies, derives from civil society, for which the two traditions are, by their very nature, close and explicable from one another, for which the interpretation should be bound and based individually in each particular case.

Penal Procedure Code

In 2006, the National Assembly repealed the Law on Proposals, Alerts, Complaints and Petitions of Citizens, aimed at ensuring the wide participation of working groups and citizens in the entire system of social governance.[4] During the same year in April, a Penal Procedure Code came into force to determine the order for conducting penal proceedings with a view to ensure discovery of crimes, denouncement of culpable persons and proper application of the law.

The Code shall secure the protection from criminal infringements on the Republic of Bulgaria, on the life, freedom, honour, rights and lawful interests of the citizens, as well as the rights and lawful interests of the legal persons, and shall further contribute to the prevention of crime and strengthening of lawfulness. In Part Three "Pre-trial proceedings", chapter sixteen "General" lists the obligations of citizens and officials for notification. The content of the notification is revealed in Art. 205 of the PPC. The first paragraph lays down the obligations of citizens to notify in the following sentence:

> *"Where they come to know about a perpetrated crime of general nature the citizens shall be publicly obliged to notify forthwith a body of pre-trial proceedings or another state body."*

It should be noted that the rule of law only refers to acts **of general crime** as a subject of reporting, whereas European policy is aimed at protecting the whistle-blowers for crimes of **frauds and corruption,** which is more valid from legal point of view. It is unacceptable for the law to require Bulgarian citizens legally to be able to identify when a violation and corrupt behaviour constitute a **crime** so to initiate a notification action. Assuming that a violation is at the root of a corruption scheme, how should it be determined whether it is a criminal offense after corruption has not been declared a criminal offense in Bulgarian criminal law? In search of the core essence of the investigated legal staff, a question was sent to the Minister of Justice under the Access to Public Information Act:

> *"Since all the anti-corruption conventions that Bulgaria has ratified before its accession to the EU, call on the acceding countries to declare corruption as a crime, why this is not yet a fact in the Bulgarian Criminal Code, which may have a positive impact on the removal of the Mechanism for cooperation and scrutiny of the EC, which is still an obstacle to Schengen and the Eurozone?"*

The full response to the Ministry of Justice is provided below in the notes.[5]

The lack of an opportunity to properly assess what violation constitute a crime acts as a deterrent for citizens to signal. It should also be borne in mind that corruption in Bulgaria has not yet been declared as a crime.

Paragraph 1 of Art. 205 of the Penal Procedure Code introduces another requirement - the notification should be done by the citizens **"immediately".** In practice, the question arises as to how the moment of learning can be established in order to trigger the obligation of immediate

notification. Rather, the question is if the citizen does not receive a notification on the pretext that he cannot judge whether or not the act is a crime?

The body of pre-trial proceedings is the Ministry of the Interior and the Prosecutor's Office, to whom the notification must be submitted. It is not clear from the version of the norm, which may be the other state body, and the form under which the notification should be made. When notified to another public authority, this is not self-sufficient in connection with the assessment of the data received. Both hypotheses (notification to another state authority by citizens or knowledge of a crime of a general nature) have as a result the purpose of para. 3 of Art. 205-obligation to immediately exercise the power to initiate proceedings, which belongs to the prosecutor and conditionally to the investigative bodies.[6]

On the other hand, no provision of the Penal Procedure Code permits the formation of internal conviction and decision-making on the opening of proceedings to be given to investigative bodies and the introduced hypothesis of notifying "another state body" that does not even have the characteristic of "Investigative body".

With paragraph 2 of Art. 205 of the PPC, the same obligations are imposed on the officials, with one addition "**to take the necessary measures to preserve the situation and the data of the crime".**

The analysis of the content of Art. 205 of the PPC raise more questions than answers from its application and effectiveness. The norm has been in force since the adoption of the Penalty Procedure Code (PPC) and has not been amended and supplemented over the past 12 years.

Of particular importance for the clarification of the institute notification are the norms in the secondary legislation for conducting ex-ante checks. The procedures are structured on the database that is contained in the information and the development of the investigation may end with the initiation of pre-trial proceedings or refusal under Art. 213 of the PPC. The verification of the notification may also be terminated by a resolution the substance of which acts as an act giving rise to doubts on an objective basis and should be subject to a serious critical analysis. The procedural law uses the feature "lack of sufficient data", such as ambiguity, incompleteness or insufficient volume, as a basis for returning the sender's notification signal.

It should be stipulated that the abolition of the Act on Proposals, Signals, Complaints and Applications of Citizens and its replacement by just one article in the PPC cannot actually exhaust the substance of the purpose and the tasks of citizens' to signal violations, frauds and corruption in a democratic way, which creates the prerequisites that these notices do not lead to a visible result of a position of quick resolution and effective performance such as prevention. Suffice it to indicate just one example that the possible total period for conducting a preliminary check on the alert may exceed 7 months and when exercising control by the Prosecutor's Office there is another possibility to extend the time limit by another month when the decree is changed for refusal based on incomplete data and clarification of circumstances.

Let's reiterate that the preliminary check is about collecting enough data that is not contained in the alert signal for a crime, sufficient conviction of the probability that this event has occurred in the objective reality.[7]

This outlines the need for a serious debate to answer the issues raised and to address this issue in full to enable citizens and officials to report, convinced that they will have full and objective protection against the possibility of the notification being used such as repression, dismissal or for years to be called for further clarification on the alert, which is a prerequisite for the sender to become a victim or convicted of defamation under the current legal protection.

Conclusion

A historical review, despite the socialist nature of the 1952 CCP, shows that, despite the limited application, there are cases of receiving and viewing anonymous crime signals. The 1974 Code includes for the first time an instrument of pre-screening by signals from pre-trial authorities without conducting investigative actions under the CCP. Since 2003, investigators from the Ministry of Interior and other administrative bodies have carried out preliminary checks on received signals, without the right to disclose information about this.

In 2006, Art. 205 of the CCP, which is the basis of this study. Concentrating actions inherent in the criminal process creates mainly obstacles to the rapid decision of the competent authority. By the end of 2013, the Ministry of Interior's Instruction 89 introducing ex-ante checks, repealing Guideline No 281 / 08.12.2006, was in effect in the end of 2013. In 213 and 2014, The Supreme Administrative Court issues definitions that are declared ineligible because

of their non-disclosure in the State Gazette, which gives rise to serious debates and discussions about the existence or lack of a regulatory basis of the "preliminary inspection" institute.[8]

In 2014, the Chief Prosecutor issued the Instruction -208 of February 11, and the Interior Minister, Instruction No. I-191, February 10, which did not have any in-depth research and results on the effectiveness of these acts, which determines the need to file alerts from citizens and employees to be covered by the PPC. The Law on Counteracting Corruption and the Removal of Unlawfully Acquired Property is in force since 2018 and should include in one section the right of citizens, employees and deputies to report violations, frauds, corruption and crimes, including a number of measures for their defence, which were discussed as recommended by the European Parliament.

The debate is overdue, the problems are growing, the society is subject to continuous scandals, which implies that legitimacy, transparency, independence and objectivity are threatened, and democracy, freedom of speech and security are also threatened.

Notes

1. https://www.globalintegrity.org/global_year/ 2010
2. http://transparency.bg/bg
3. http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:HSt6LZ5XNCsJ:anticorruption.government.bg/
4. Proposals, alerts, complaints and applications are an indispensable source of information on the activities of all sections of social management of society. Every citizen has the right to reveal the shortcomings in the activity of state and public authorities and to individual employees and to propose measures for the improvement of social governance. Proposals, alerts, complaints and petitions are a democratic form of influence for rigorous and equal observance of laws by all. The law provides every citizen and every organization with the opportunity to protect their rights and legitimate interests against any violation by the authorities of social governance and the actions of individual employees and citizens. The protection of these rights requires the strict observance of the legal order by socialist organizations and citizens. The power of the law lies in its democracy. Exact compliance with the law is a guarantee for its democratic implementation.
5. In the International Anti-Corruption Conventions to which the Republic of Bulgaria is a Party, the Council of Europe Criminal Law Convention on Corruption, the OECD Convention on the Fight against Foreign Bribery in International Business Transactions, The United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of the Member States of the European Union is not binding (the definition of corruption), and the criminalization of various corruption offenses and their actions (such as bribery, trade in influence, etc.) and crimes related to corruption offenses. Reports of the International Anti-Corruption Monitoring Mechanisms (GRECO Anti-Corruption Group, OECD Anti-Bribery Task Force, UNCAC Implementation Review) report high levels of compliance of Bulgarian substantive law (the Criminal Code) to international standards in the area of criminalization of corruption offenses (reports are also published on the Ministry of Justice website).
6. Legal fiction of Art. 212, para 2 PPC
7. See Topalov, P., G., Georgiev – Criminal Process of Bulgaria, S., 1989
8. https://www.mvr.bg/docs/librariesprovider

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