

Bulgaria: Elections and the rule of law

Top rule of law issues

 **Prosecutor General:** Public protests in 2020 were closely linked to the public outcry at the [scope of powers and lack of responsibility](#) of Prosecutor General Ivan Geshev, who is still in office.

 **Corruption:** Corruption remains one of the biggest issues in Bulgaria, with [80% of polled Bulgarians](#) considering the problem widespread. In June 2021, the [United States blacklisted](#) multiple Bulgarian individuals and entities over alleged corruption.

 **Independence of the judiciary:** There are persistent concerns with the independence, integrity and effectiveness of the judiciary, although Bulgaria has not seen a capture of judicial institutions by the ruling party.

 **Press freedom:** The situation of journalists and independent media in Bulgaria is [assessed as alarming](#) by leading civil society groups and experts. Corruption and collusion between media, politicians and oligarchs are seen as widespread in Bulgaria with the situation deteriorating in recent years.

Elections at a glance

When? 14 November 2021

Who is being elected? The President of Bulgaria and all 240 members of the National Assembly

Why?

- The end of the first 5-year long term of office of President Ruman Radev
- The third parliamentary election this year after elections in April and July did not lead to a government formation

Who is leading the polls?

Parliament ([Politico/Kalman](#))

- GERB (EPP) **24%**
- We Continue the Change (-) **16%**
- Coalition for Bulgaria (S&D) **15 %**
- There Is Such a People (-) **12%**
- DPS (RE) **11%**
- Democratic Bulgaria (EPP) **10%**
- Stand Up.BG! We are coming! (-) **4%**

President ([Exacta](#))

- Rumen Radev (-) **48%**
- Anastas Gerdzhikov (-) **27%**
- Mustafa Karadayi (DPS) **7,5%**
- Lozan Panov (-) **7%**

System of government: Unicameral parliamentary republic

Electoral system: Proportional representation, 4% electoral threshold

Elections and covid-19:

- Only in-person voting at polling stations is permitted. However, those infected with covid-19 or under quarantine can vote from home through mobile polling stations.
- Postal voting is not possible.
- Voting abroad is possible via Bulgarian embassies and consulates.

Key numbers & facts

[Freedom House Freedom in the World 2021:](#)

Score 78/100, free (27/27 in the EU)

[World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2021:](#)

Score 0.54/1.00, (26/27 in the EU)

[RSF World Press Freedom Index 2021:](#)

Rank 112/180 (27/27 in the EU)

[TI Corruption Perception Index 2020:](#)

Rank 69/180 (27/27 in the EU)

[Eurobarometer on Independence of Judiciary 2021:](#)

56% of polled Bulgarians rate the justice system in Bulgaria negatively in terms of judicial independence (35% EU average)

[Implementation of leading ECtHR judgments:](#)

49 % pending from the last 10 years (45 % European average)

Further information

Expert consulted: Bilyana Gyaurova-Wegertseder, Bulgarian Institute for Legal Initiatives

Previous DRI analysis:

[Bulgaria's elections and the rule of law](#)

Further reading:

[EU 2021 Rule of Law Report Bulgaria](#)