REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

INFORMATION

REGARDING: Measures to Prevent and Counter Corruption in the Ministry of Interior

The Internal Security Directorate (ISD) of the Ministry of Interior (MoI) carries out constant monitoring of the operational situation, with particular focus on the performance of duties by MoI officials in the areas of vehicle registration, traffic control, border control and countering migration flows on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The ISD works in close cooperation with the Bulgarian Prosecutor's Office. **In 2022, 607 inspections were commissioned to the ISD by the Prosecutor's Office.**

Furthermore, in the implementation of its activities on prevention, suppression and detection of crimes, committed by MoI officials, the ISD effectively interacts with the other MoI structures – the Metropolitan and Regional Directorates of the Interior, Combating Organised Crime, National Police and Border Police General Directorates, etc.

In 2022, a total of 1,280 reports of crimes committed by MoI officials were verified by the ISD, of which 307 involved allegations of corrupt practices[1]. 83 pre-trial proceedings have been initiated in different Prosecutor's Offices in the country. Of the pre-trial proceedings initiated, 27 were for corruption.

In order to prevent and detect possible involvement of MoI officials in illegal smuggling of migrants across the borders and through the territory of Bulgaria to Western Europe, the ISD works in close cooperation with the Border Police General Directorate. **In the past 2022, 118 alerts containing evidence of unlawful actions by border police officials were verified and 8 pretrial proceedings were initiated.** The relevant heads of structures were informed of the disciplinary offences detected.

ISD has direct responsibilities for the implementation of the National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Corruption in the Republic of Bulgaria (2021-2027), more specifically in relation to priorities No *2 "Counteracting Corruption Offences"* and *5 "Freeing Citizens from Petty Corruption"*.

It is monitoring and controlling the use of the Automated Information System for Video Surveillance of Security and Road Policing (AIS-VSSRP), whereas significant results have been reported in preventing and detecting corrupt behaviour, crimes, or other illegal actions of police officials carrying out checks on compliance with traffic rules and security (patrolling) activities. In view of the effectiveness of this anti-corruption activity, it has been further developed over the years to also cover in 2021 the activities of security police. **In 2022, over 6 million files were reviewed in ISD and 254 officials were**

[1] Where data is showing disciplinary offence found in the course of the inspection - it is forwarded to the competent bodies for verification and follow-up.

sanctioned following disciplinary proceedings. In 2023, additional vehicles are to be equipped with AIS VSSRP.

In 2022, officials of ISD, Inspectorate Directorate (ID) and the National Police General Directorate carried out phased inspections of the organisation and implementation of control activities under the Law on Road Traffic and the performance of the duties of police units in carrying out traffic control activities. A total of 40 police units were checked. Reports have been prepared to the regional directorates with the identified weaknesses and measures have been taken to eliminate them.

ISD and the Fire Safety and Population Protection General Directorate are carrying out joint operations through searches and surveillance with technical means (*drones*) along the routes where persons who have illegally crossed the border may be moving. **Since the summer of 2022, 108 checks have been carried out. The implementation of these measures will continue in 2023.**

Within the administrative control as part of the prevention of corruption in the MoI system, integrity tests of MoI officials are conducted. These are aimed at randomly checking officials in a real-life environment during the performance of their duties and - in the event of a violation - informing the relevant heads of structures in order to take appropriate measures to cease bad practices. **In 2022, 12 tests were carried out on officials from different regional directorates in the field of traffic control. Evidence of disciplinary offences committed by 28 officials was found.** Checks on cases are ongoing. The implementation of this measure will continue in 2023.

As part of the integrity testing initiatives in the MoI, an Ordinance on the Terms and Procedures for Substance Abuse Detection has been adopted (in force as of February 2023).

Another important part of ISD activities is the operation of a hotline and website for citizens to report crimes, abuse of power or other unlawful actions by MoI officials, with the possibility to keep the identity of the sender confidential. **In 2022, the identities of 7 whistleblowers were preserved. The whistleblowing system has been further developed, with a mobile application for reporting misconduct by MoI officials, introduced in early 2023. The application is administered by the ISD.**

Training

In order to ensure and maintain continuous professional training and in line with the Directorate's development vision, the ISD staff participates in various trainings, including ones with international partners.

During the reporting period, the ISD joined as a partner in the Horizon Europe "CuiBONO" project, which main objectives are related to the fight against corruption in public and private organisations and strengthening the capacity in EU Member States, including through training, to rapidly identify, detect and effectively prevent large-scale cross-border corrupt practices and incidents.

Within the Preventing and Countering Corruption project, funded by the Home Affairs Programme, the Directorate's staff is conducting ongoing training which will continue in 2023.

In 2023, a visit of ISD officials to France will be held in order to exchange experience and best practices in the field of anti-corruption.

In 2022, as part of the professional on the job training, 118 ISD officials received training on issues of discipline, the provisions of the Criminal Code concerning the concepts of "corruption" and "bribery" and the means of detecting and countering corruption.