



OMBUDSPERSON OF THE
REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

„I will embody the ordinary Bulgarians' hope for fairness!“

Maya Manolova, Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

Presentation of the Annual Report on the Activities of the Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria in 2017

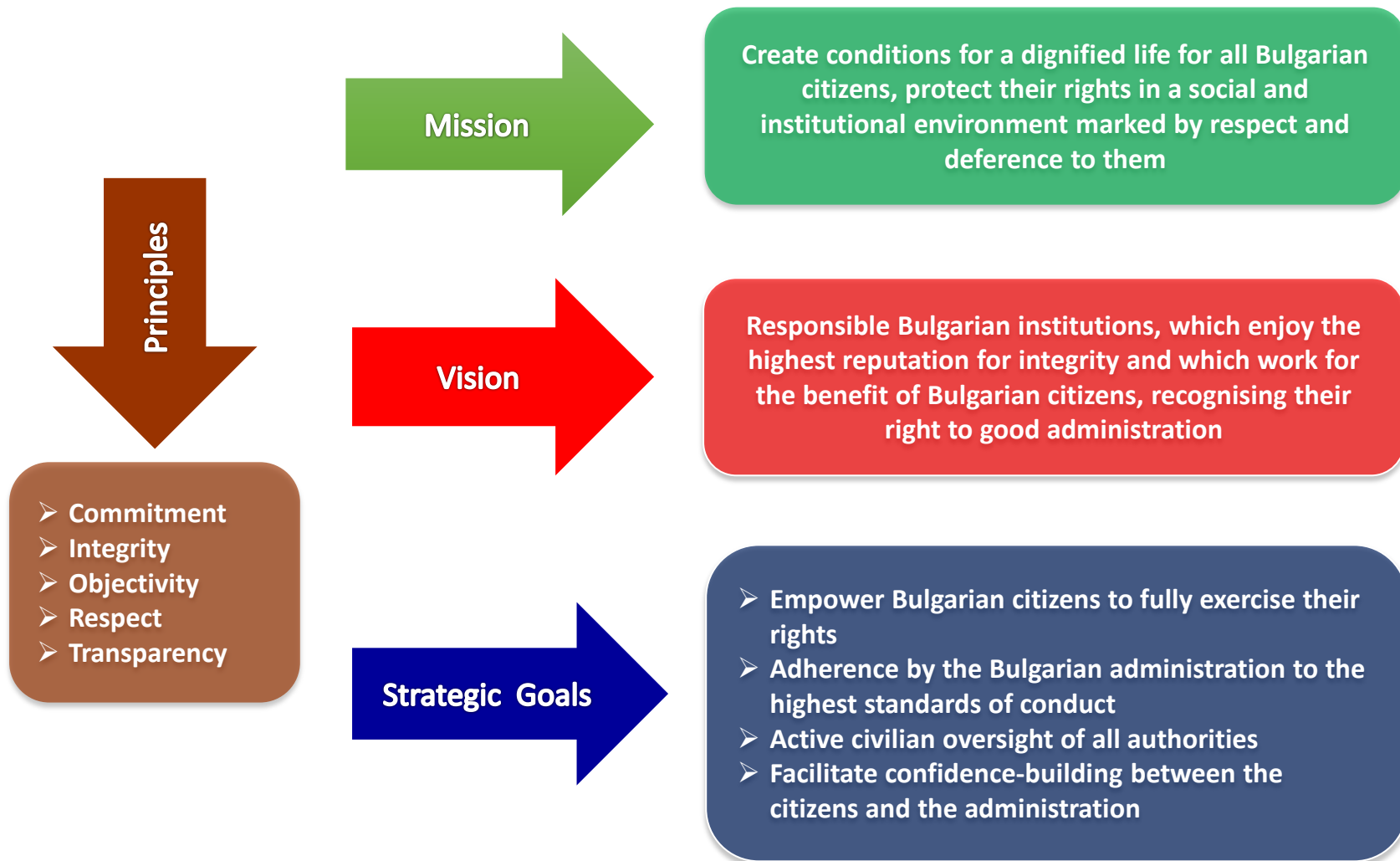


The Ombudsperson Institution

- Established in 2005, following the enactment by the National Assembly of the *Ombudsman Act*
 - An independent constitutional body elected for a five-year term of office
- Ombudspersons of the Republic of Bulgaria
 - Mr Ginyo Ganev, 2005-2010
 - Mr Konstantin Penchev, 2010-2015
 - Ms Maya Manolova, since 20 October 2015



Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, Principles



Priorities in 2017

1. Safeguarding children's rights
2. Protection of citizens' rights from any malpractices carried out by monopolies
3. Protection of the rights of citizens at risk of social exclusion

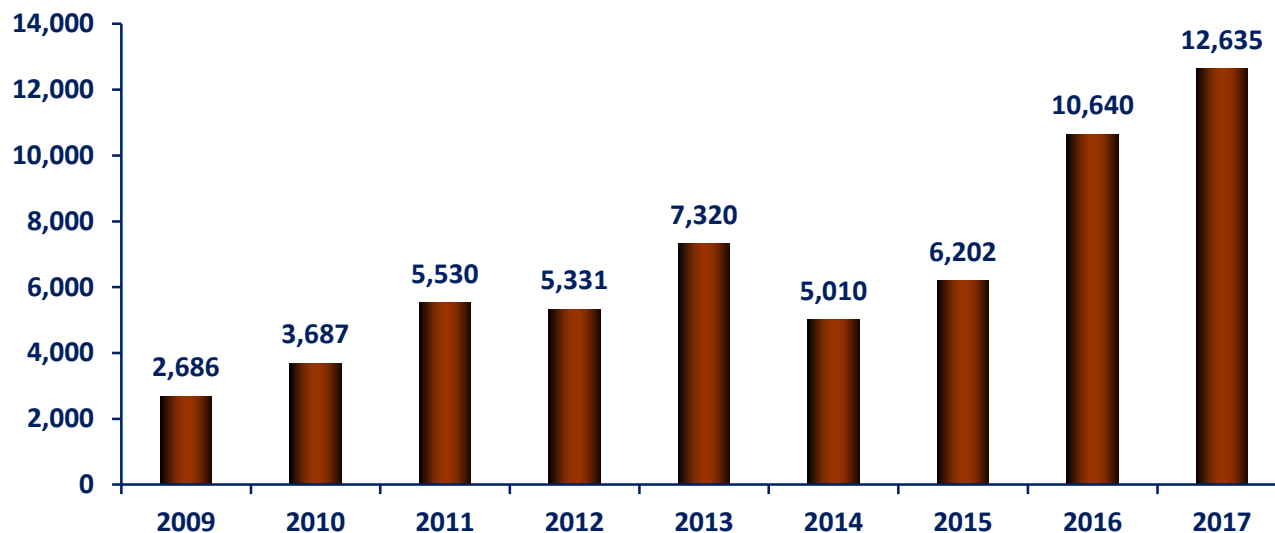


The Year of Hard Work

2015	2016	2017	
15,584	27,037	34,908	Citizens who sought the Ombudsperson's assistance (29.1%, 2017/2016)
10,287	17,362	22,369	Citizens received and counselled in the Reception Office of the Ombudsperson institution (28.8%, 2017/2016)
6,202	10,640	12,635	Complaints and alerts filed with the Ombudsperson (18.8%, 2017/2016)
1,645	3,138	3,060	Complaints filed by consumers of public utility services
761	1,429	1,790	Complaints related to violations of social rights (25.3%, 2017/2016)
183	601	1,401	Complaints requesting protection in enforcement proceedings (133%, 2017/2016)
16	77	97	Populated areas within the country where the Ombudsperson held meetings with citizens / External Reception Rooms
2	18	20	Round tables and public debates
0	11	10	Legislative initiatives
4	6	4	Constitutional challenges lodged with the Constitutional Court Requests for interpretation decisions
1	4	11	National campaigns and initiatives European campaign

The Year in Numbers (3)

Number of complaints and alerts filed with the Ombudsperson Institution over a period of nine years between 2009 and 2017



Campaigns and Initiatives (1)

Banning arbitration courts from judging citizens

Campaigns against the malpractices carried out by suppliers of public utility services

Legislative changes aimed at protecting citizens' rights in enforcement proceedings

Legislative changes aimed at protecting workers against their unscrupulous employers

The Ombudsperson for equitable agricultural land relations and against land-grabbing

“Our Child”, a campaign to protect children's rights and promote the Ombudsperson Institution's activities amongst children

“Don't waste – donate”, a campaign to lift value added tax on donated food




“Easter for Everyone – Gift a Holiday to Grandma and Grandpa”, national charity campaign organised under the auspices of the Ombudsperson

Campaign against the double standards on foodstuffs within the European Union



Campaigns and Initiatives (2)



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 За	130	Регистр.	131
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The Year in Numbers (1)

Number of complaints and alerts filed with the Ombudsperson in 2016 and 2017



Breakdown by type of infringement	No. of complaints		Growth (2017/2016)
	2016	2017	
Children's rights	297	426	43.4%
The rights of the persons with disabilities	291	314	7.9%
Discrimination	22	35	59.1%
Safeguarding citizens' rights in enforcement proceedings	601	1,401	133.6%
The right to education	186	300	61.3%
The right to healthcare	421	494	17.3%
Social rights	1,429	1,790	25.3%
The right to good administrative support	547	575	5.1%
The right to property	1,169	1,228	5.0%
Requests for regulatory changes	233	297	27.5%
Other infringements	5,466	5,810	6.3%
Total	10,640	12,635	18.8%

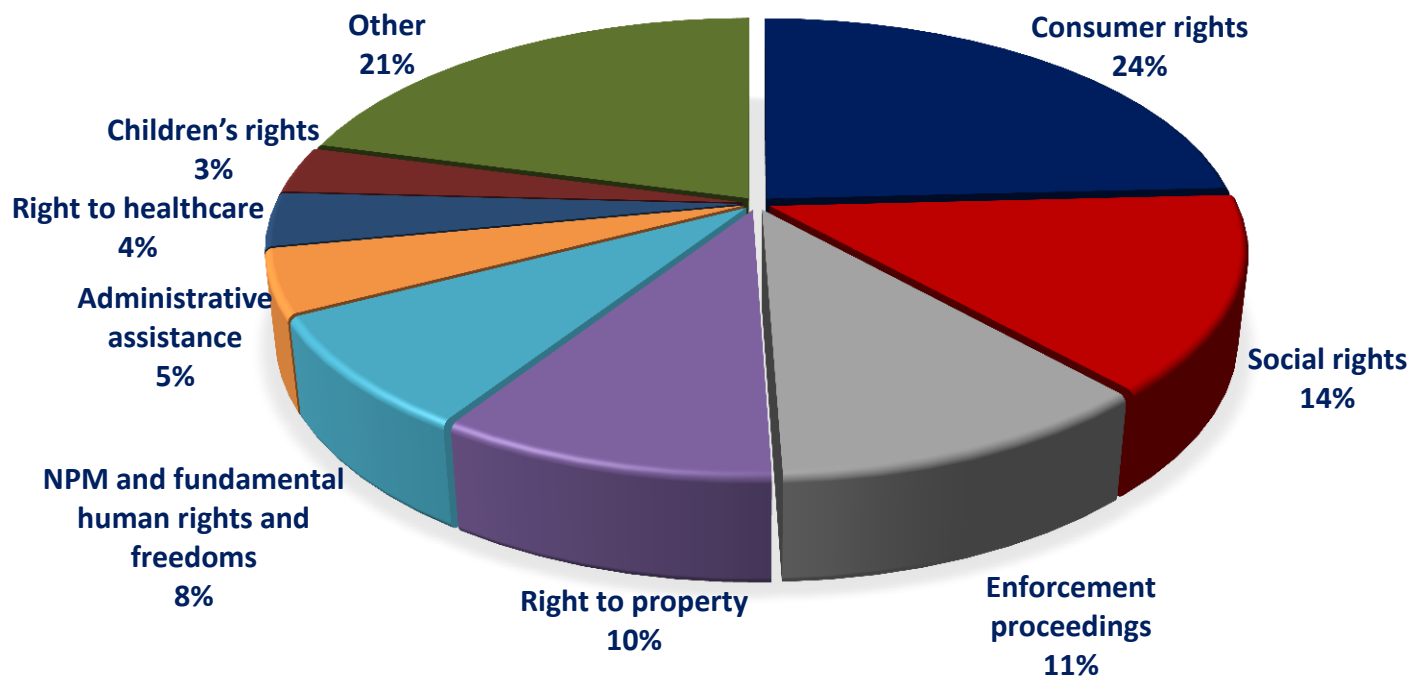
Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria



ОМБУДСМАН
НА РЕПУБЛИКА БЪЛГАРИЯ

The Year in Numbers (2)

Complaints and alerts filed with the Ombudsperson in 2017 (%)



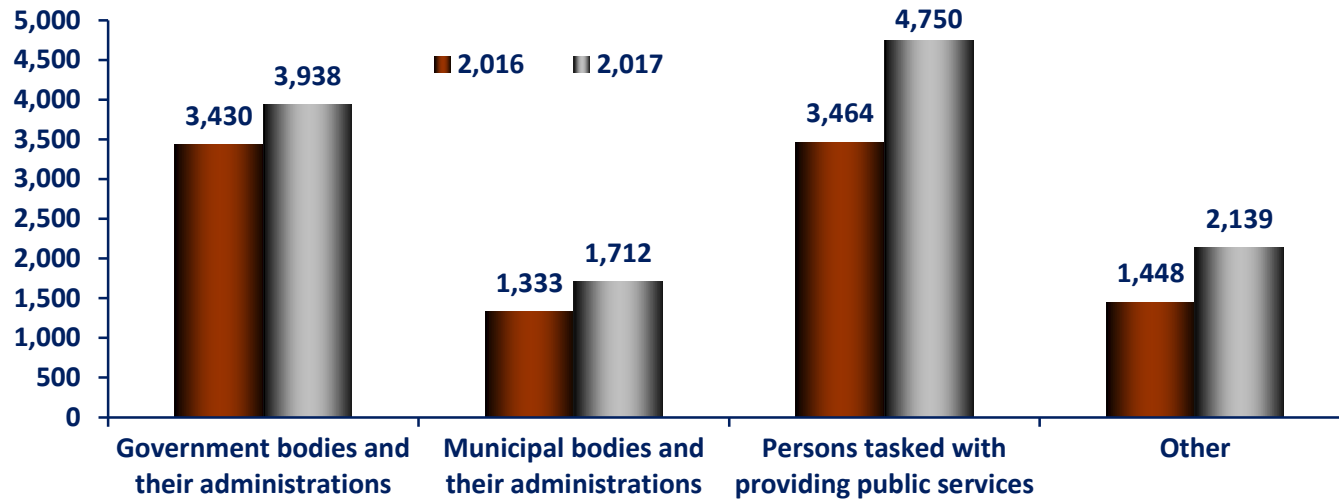
Complaints and alerts per month in 2017 (number)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1 030	1 463	1 171	921	1 132	1 054	1 067	978	913	987	1 019	900

Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

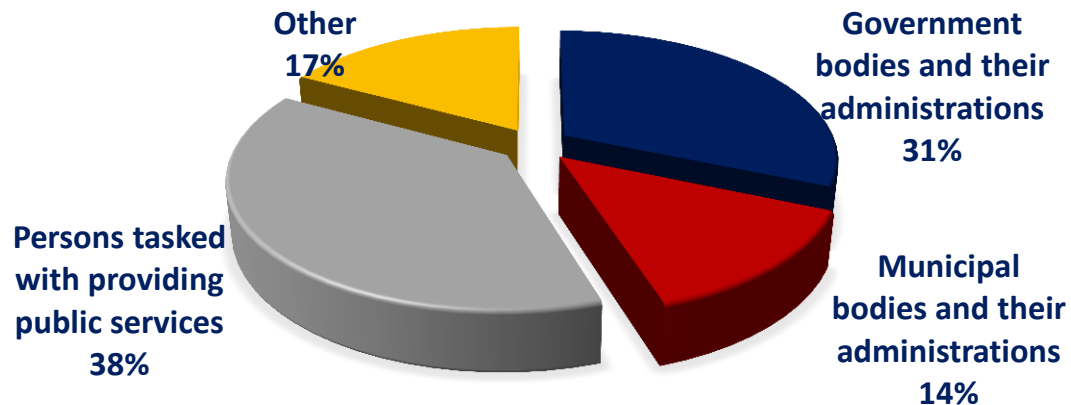
The Year in Numbers (4)

Finalised complaints and alerts broken down by the infringers concerned in 2016 u 2017, numbers



Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

Finalised complaints and alerts broken down by the infringers concerned in 2016 u 2017, %



Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

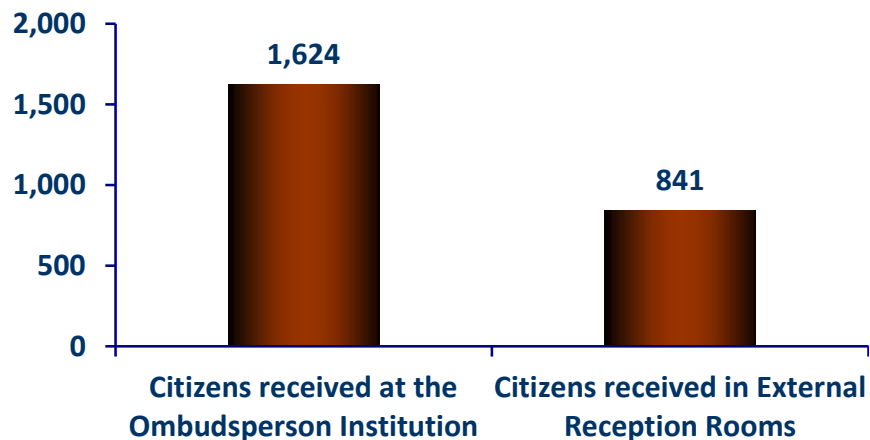
The Year in Numbers (5)

Number of citizens who sought assistance from the Ombudsperson in 2016 and 2017

Inquiries, number of citizens received and counselled	Number	
	2016	2017
Finalised inquiries following correspondence with citizens	9,675	12,539
Citizens received and counselled in the Reception Office of the Ombudsperson Institution	5,583	6,682
Advice, counselling and information provided over the phone	10,403	11,819
Citizens received by the Ombudsperson	1,109	2,465
Citizens received by a Deputy Ombudsperson	267	1,124
Citizens received by the Chief of Staff	N/A	156
Citizens received by the Secretary General	N/A	123



Number of citizens received personally by the Ombudsperson in 2017



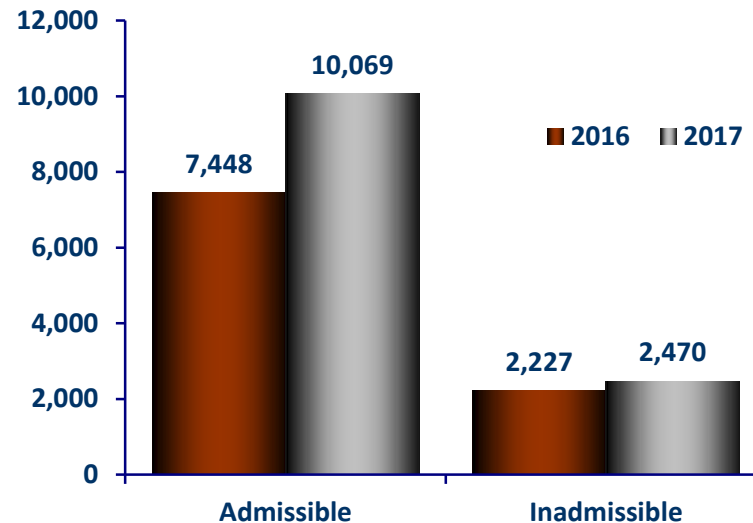
17 External Reception Rooms in 2017 – village of Hitrino, city of Kardzhali, city of Yambol, city of Ruse, city of Lovech, town of Isperich, village of Bratya Daskalovi, town of Gurkovo, town of Galabovo, town of Kazanlak, town of Maglizh, town of Nikolaevo, village of Opan, town of Pavel Banya, town of Radnevo, city of Stara Zagora and town of Chirpan.

The Year in Numbers (6)

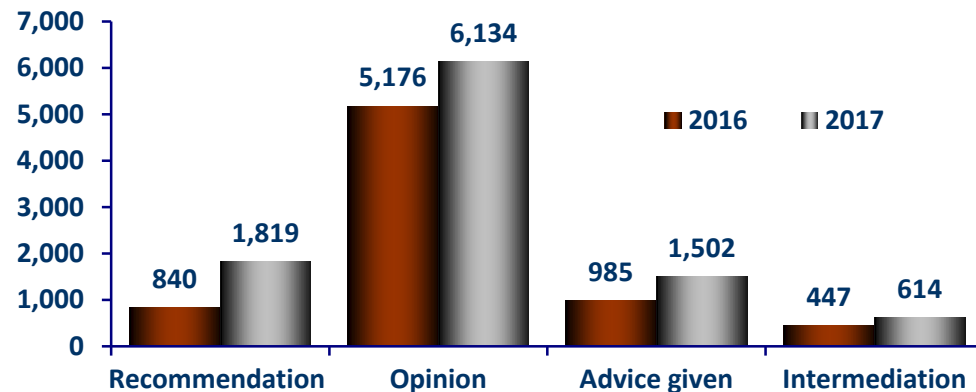
Breakdown of complaints and alerts filed in 2016 and 2017 by province, in numbers and percentage

Province	2016		2017	
	Number	%	Number	%
Blagoevgrad	243	2.28	311	2.46
Burgas	354	3.33	438	3.47
Varna	569	5.35	665	5.26
Veliko Tarnovo	261	2.45	323	2.56
Vidin	112	1.05	111	0.88
Vratsa	279	2.62	350	2.77
Gabrovo	180	1.69	166	1.31
Dobrich	167	1.60	177	1.40
Kardzhali	53	0.50	83	0.66
Kyustendil	272	2.55	260	2.06
Lovech	179	1.68	227	1.80
Montana	210	1.97	209	1.65
Pazardzhik	198	1.86	235	1.86
Pernik	218	2.05	290	2.30
Pleven	322	3.03	406	3.21
Plovdiv	654	6.15	797	6.31
Razgrad	71	0.67	96	0.76
Ruse	279	2.62	273	2.16
Silistra	66	0.62	67	0.53
Sliven	189	1.78	171	1.35
Smolyan	115	1.08	129	1.02
Sofia Province	250	2.65	282	2.23
Sofia Capital City	3,521	33.09	3,718	29.43
Stara Zagora	307	2.86	414	3.28
Targovishte	90	0.85	121	0.96
Haskovo	179	1.68	217	1.72
Shumen	126	1.18	161	1.27
Yambol	139	1.31	172	1.36
Unknown	1,037	9.75	1,766	13.97
Total:	10,640	100	12,635	100

Results of inquiries into complaints and alerts in 2016 and 2017, numbers (1)



Results of inquiries into complaints and alerts in 2016 and 2017, numbers (2)



CHAPTER ONE.

The Ombudsperson Safeguarding Citizens' Rights

Reception Office of the Ombudsperson
Children's rights
Consumer rights
Rights of the persons with disabilities
Social rights
The right to education
The right to healthcare
The right to property and economic freedom
The right to a clean and healthy environment
The right to good governance and good administration
The right to protection in enforcement proceedings
The right to protection against discrimination and hate speech
National Preventive Mechanism



1. Reception Office of the Ombudsperson

In 2017, public confidence in the Ombudsperson Institution continued growing owing to its proactivity and the results achieved in safeguarding citizens' rights and interests. It should be noted that this process is most discernible in the Reception Office of the Ombudsperson, where the daily number of visits by citizens is approximately 25 to 30, while the number of phone calls received daily exceeds 50.

Number of citizens received in 2017

Reception Day	Citizens Received
Ombudsperson	2,465
Deputy Ombudsperson	1,124
Chief of Staff	156
Secretary General	123

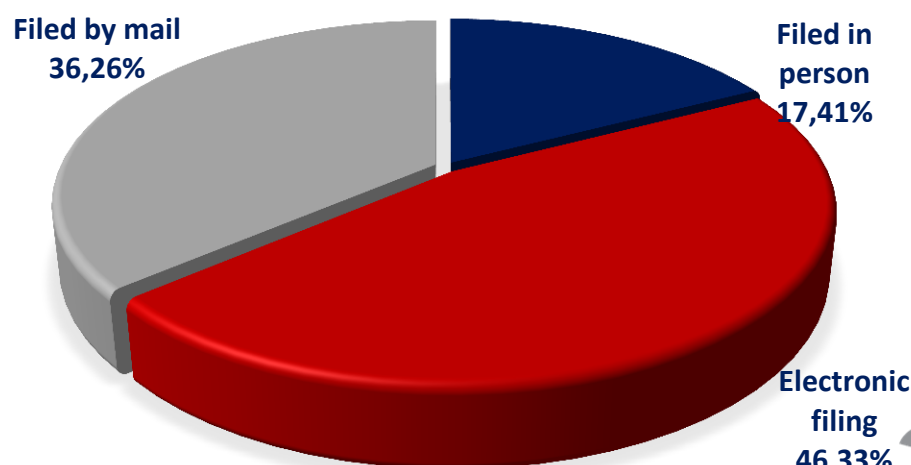
Visits and phone calls to the Reception Office of the Ombudsperson, number and %

Year	2016	2017	Growth, %
Visits	5,583	6,682	19,7%
Calls	10,403	11,819	13,6%

- Complaints and alerts received from foreign citizens – 28
- 14 requests from citizens for provision of information under the *Access to Public Information Act*

- 17 External Reception Rooms organised
- 841 citizens received, heard, and counselled
- Visits to more than 80 cities, towns, and villages to respond to outstanding problems faced by citizens
- Complaints and alerts filed with the Ombudsperson Institution – 12,635 in 2017 (10,640 in 2016)

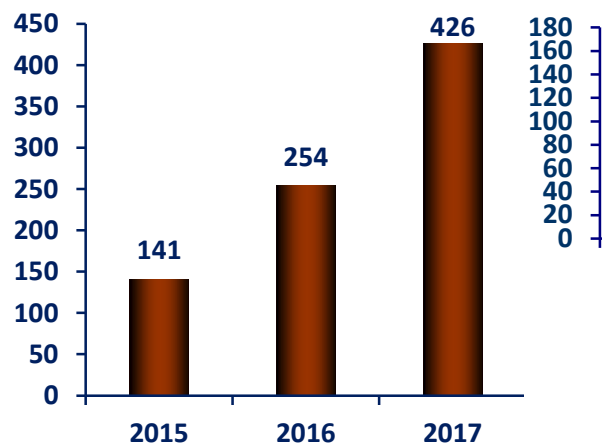
Complaints and alerts filed in 2017, %



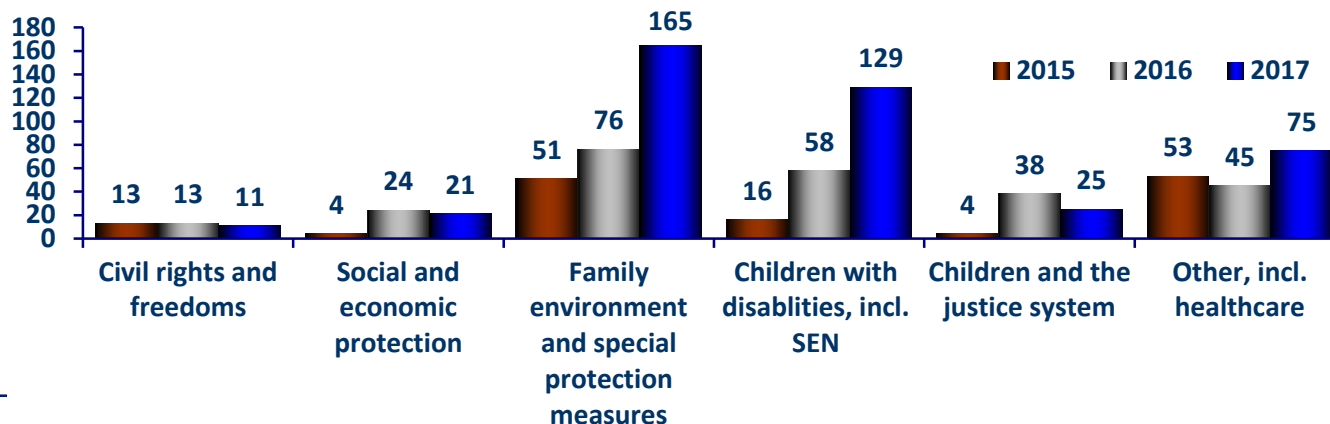
Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

2. Children's Rights (1)

Number of complaints concerning children's rights during the period 2015-2017



Number of complaints concerning children's rights during the period 2015-2017 by type of infringement



Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

- The highest number of complaints related to:
 - special protection – 165, incl. complaints concerning acts of protection bodies, parental conflicts, protection from violence and alternative care;
 - the rights of children with disabilities – 129, incl. complaints concerning the rights of children with special educational needs (SEN);
 - other complaints, incl. complaints concerning access to healthcare – 75.
- In 80% of all cases, an infringement of the rights or of the best interest of the child has been ascertained;
- This was the first year that saw an increase in the number of complaints filed by children with 20 such complaints filed in 2017.

2. Children's Rights (2)

➤ General observations:

- The best interest and the views of the child are not of paramount importance in the work of the child protection authorities.
- Lack of individual attention and approach to the problems faced by citizens and children, application of standard procedures without taking into account the specificity of each case.
- Poor case administration.
- Formal approach and lack of coordination between authorities.
- Learning environment not adapted to the needs of children with disabilities.
- Amendments to legislation resulting in bad practices.
- Slow judicial proceedings failing to take into account the best interest of the child.
- Child-unfriendly juvenile justice system.



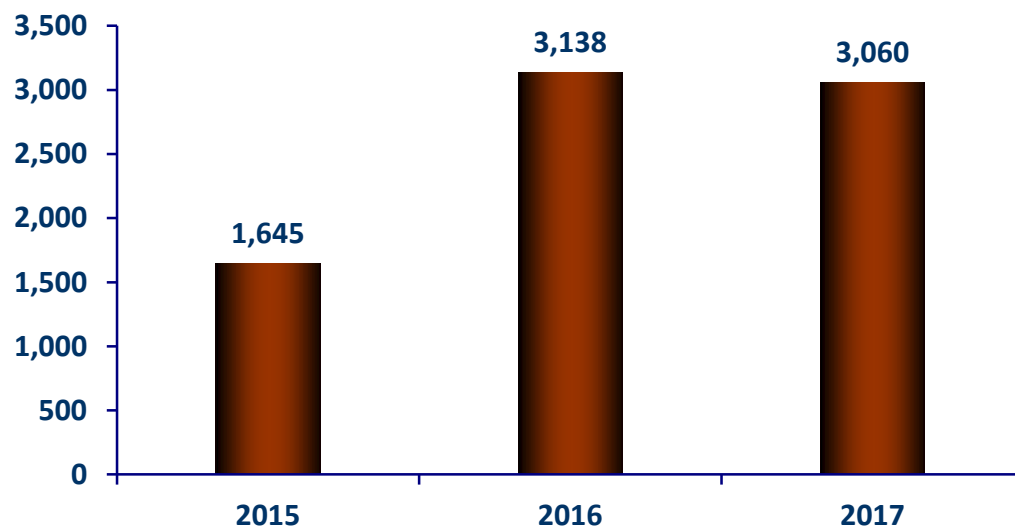
The Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

- There is a need for policies aimed at supporting families and the family environments.
- Establish a specialised standing parliamentary committee on children affairs.
- Improve childcare and the environment for children with disabilities, create opportunities for long-term integration.
- Targeted policy aimed at supporting children whose parents are labour migrants.
- Improve childcare in residential service settings, with a focus on the quality of care and on the protection of children's rights.
- Introducing a holistic approach to working with child victims of violence.
- A change in the policy of the media as regards reporting on cases involving or related to children.
- Urgent changes to the Family Code related to issues of responsible parenting, fathering, owning, and adoption.
- Debate and adopt new legislation on children and families based on an integrated sectoral approach.
- Decentralisation of the social child protection system.

3. Consumer Rights (1)

- The number of citizens addressing themselves to the Ombudsperson seeking protection of their consumer rights remains significant

Number of complaints filed by consumers during the period 2015-2017

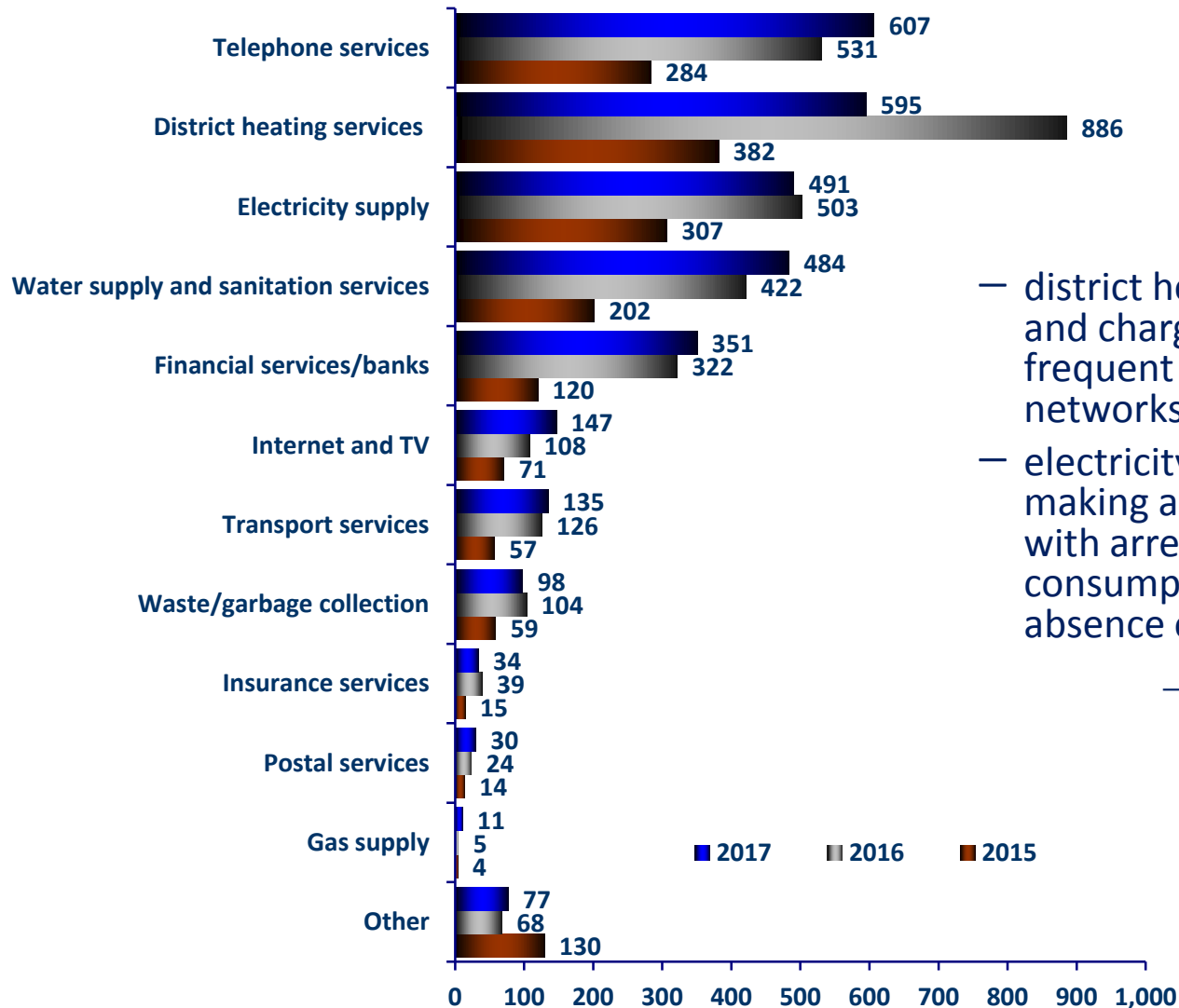


Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

- In 2017:
 - 3,341 complaints finalised; in 335 cases recommendations and suggestions were given; 285 of those have been implemented
 - Positions have been taken with respect to 2,076 complaints, advice was given in regard to 526 of those, successful intermediation was carried out in regard to 404 alerts
- In the first place – complaints against providers of electronic communications services, followed by the considerable number of complaints against the district heating companies, the electricity supply companies and the water supply and sanitation operators

3. Consumer Rights (2)

Number of complaints filed by consumers during the period 2015-2017 by sectors



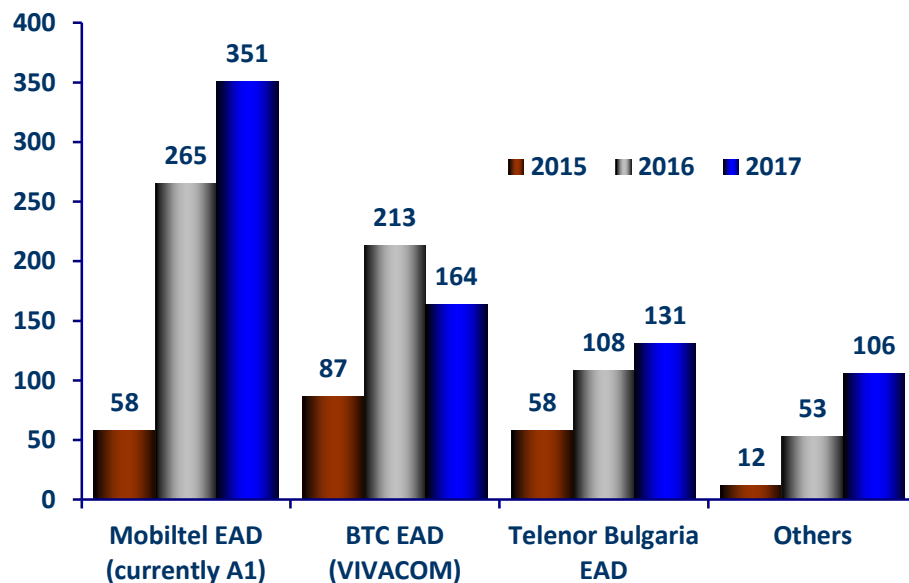
➤ Major problems:

- mobile services – charges for unsolicited services with value added; poor-quality services;
- district heating services – provision of and charges for unsolicited services; frequent failures of the district heating networks;
- electricity supply – poor-quality services; making adjustments to electricity bills with arrears; checks of power consumption measuring devices in the absence of customers;
- water supply and sanitation (WAS) services – economically unsubstantiated price increases; poor-quality services; allocation of the 'total consumption' quantities of water in co-ownership buildings.

3. Consumer Rights (3)

➤ Electronic Communication Services

Number of finalised inquiries into complaints and alerts against mobile service providers during the period 2015-2017



Number of recommendations/suggestions/counselling related to complaints against providers of electronic communication services in 2017

85	recommendations and suggestions
433	cases of counselling citizens
75	cases of intermediation carried out



The Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

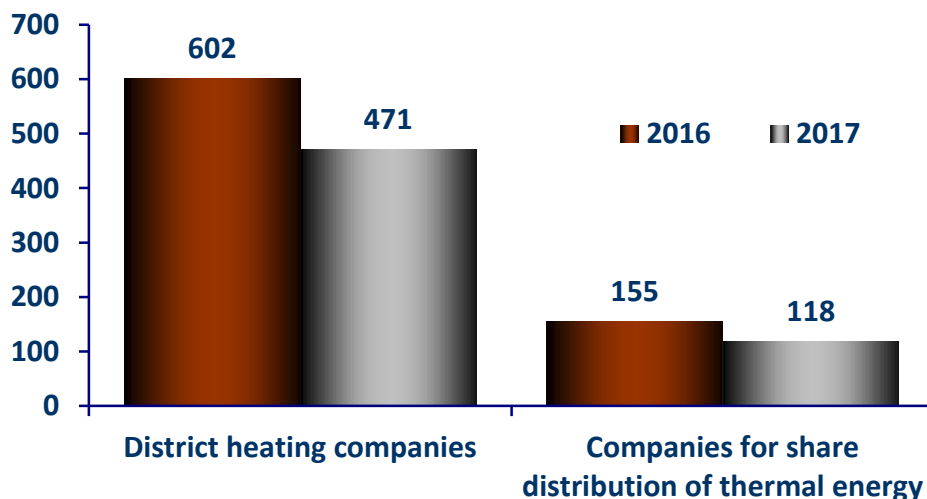
- Mobile internet usage must be activated solely upon receipt of the consumer's consent, which must be appropriately mentioned in the agreement for electronic communication services.
- The debit amounts in prepaid calling cards should not expire if unused over a certain period of time.
- Ensure digital signal coverage in all settlements and populated areas as well as increase the number of digital programme channels.

Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

3. Consumer Rights (4)

➤ District Heating

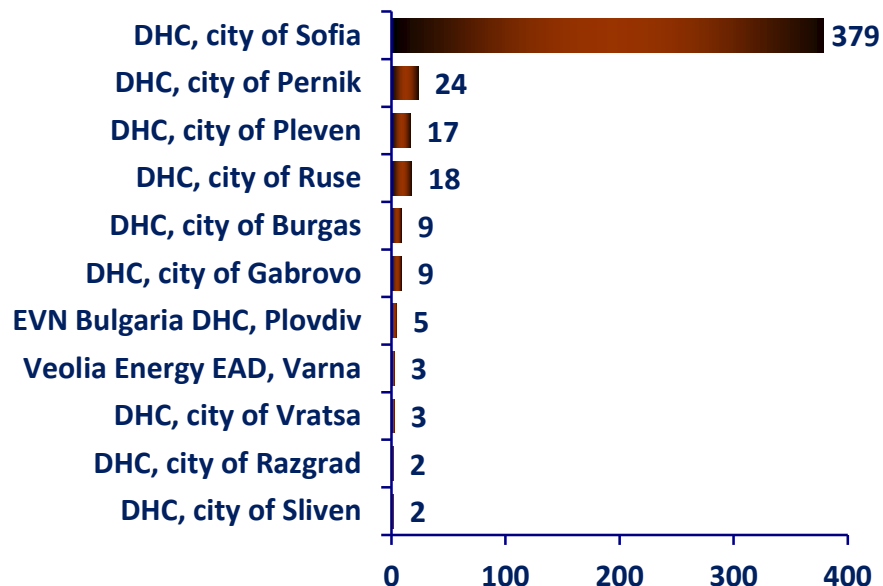
Number of complaints against district heating companies and companies for share distribution of thermal energy during the period 2015-2017



Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

- In 2017: 612 complaints were finalised; opinions were given in regard to 366 of those, advice was provided to 122 complainants, 15 recommendations were made, and intermediation was carried out in 15 cases.

Number of complaints filed against district heating companies (DHCs) in 2017



The Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

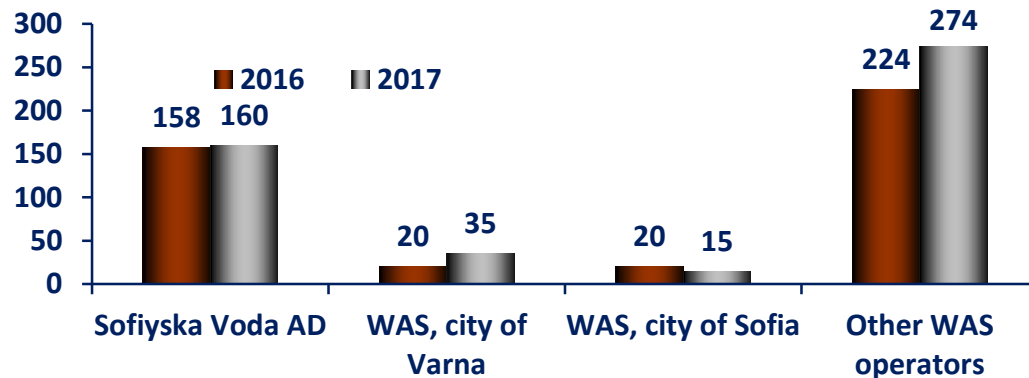
- Amend the *Energy Act* and the *District Heating Regulation* (DHR).
- Elaborate a fairer and clearer methodology under the DHR.
- Exercise effective control over district heating companies regarding the implementation of their maintenance, repair, and overhaul programs, as well as their investment programs.
- Create the conditions for competition in the production, supplies, and sale of heat.

3. Consumer Rights (5)

➤ Water Supply and Sanitation

488 complaints were received in 2017. Thus, the trend for an increase in the number of citizen complaints against operators in the WAS sector is becoming consolidated.

Number of complaints and alerts filed against water and sanitation (WAS) operators in 2016 and 2017



Number of recommendations/suggestions/counselling concerning complaints against operators in the WAS sector in 2017

72	recommendations and suggestions
281	opinions issued
72	cases of intermediation carried out
37	cases of counselling citizens

The Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

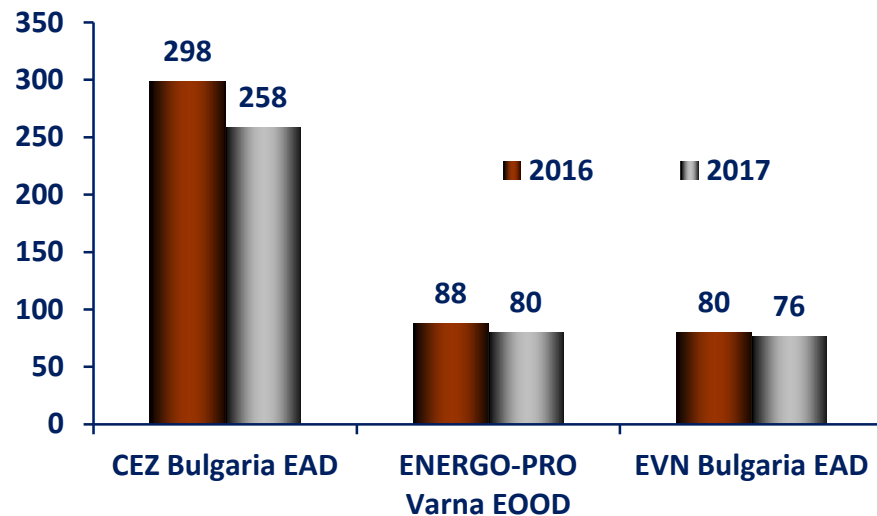
- Quality and equal access to drinking water ought to be made a major priority in the water sector.
- Emergency measures ought to be established to rehabilitate the WAS infrastructure in need of urgent repairs and overhaul.
- Ensure approval of economically substantiated prices of WAS services.
- Regulation No. 4 of 14 September 2004 ought to be reviewed and amended with a view to:
 - Correct water metering and invoicing of the 'total consumption' quantities – allow co-ownerships to make decisions regarding their allocation to the individual accounts;
 - Charging fees for water consumption *ex officio* on the basis of the number of occupants only in cases where it is technically impossible to install individual water meters.

3. Consumer Rights (6)

➤ Electricity Supply

491 complaints against operators in the electricity supply sector were received in 2017 – twice as much as in 2015 and 2014.

Number of complaints against electricity supply companies in 2016 u 2017



Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

Number of recommendations/suggestions/counselling concerning complaints against operators in the electricity supply sector in 2017

19	recommendations and suggestions
128	cases of counselling citizens
51	cases of intermediation carried out

The Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

- Review the rules governing the sector as regards operators' right to make *ex parte* adjustments to electricity bills.
- High-quality, reliable, safe, and failure-free power supply ought to be made a major priority in the power sector.
- The following provisions ought to be removed from the general conditions of contracts with electricity distributors and suppliers: a customer's obligation to recover the cost of cutting off and restoring power supply as a prerequisite for restoring the transmission of electricity; any terms attributing joint and several liability to consumers in cases other than those provided for by law.
- Customer registration of studio or atelier owners and tenants ought to be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the *Energy Act* as appropriate and depending on the needs.
- Electric power companies ought to guarantee their customers' rights when checking and replacing electricity metering devices by taking the necessary action to ensure their presence.

3. Consumer Rights (7)

➤ Public Transport

135 complaints were received in 2017 about infringements of consumer rights in the provision of transport services.

612 complaints were finalised, opinions were given in 37 cases, intermediation was carried out in 14 cases of alerts addressed to the Ombudsperson Institution.

- In 2017, the problems in the railroad sector remained unresolved:
 - cancellation of train services and reducing the frequency of trains;
 - failure to abide by advertised train timetables;
 - unprofessional and rude conduct, as well as ill treatment of passengers by train crews and employees of Holding BDZ Inc. (Bulgarian State Railways).
 - poor conditions suffered by train travellers – carriages in poor condition, poor sanitary conditions, poor toilet maintenance, and no air conditioning.

- The long-standing problems in the Sofia city public transit related to the ageing fleet, the insufficient number of vehicles along specific routes, the failure of both drivers and fare inspectors to properly perform their duties, have yet to be resolved.

The Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

- Train timetables ought to be designed in such a way as to guarantee the passengers' right to choose and to move freely and ought also to take due account of their work and school schedules.
- Advertised timetables ought to be complied with and in all cases of delay information ought to be provided in a timely fashion.
- Timely and adequate actions ought to be undertaken to improve the level of service provided to passengers and to improve the conditions of carriage.
- Problems in the area of public transit ought to be addressed with the active involvement of citizens, the unions, and the industry organisations of the sector.

3. Consumer Rights (8)

➤ Waste Collection and Removal Services

98 complaints were filed in 2017 concerning the fixing of household waste collection fees.

- Citizens' complaints were related to:
 - household waste collection fees are set without taking into consideration the quantity of waste going to disposal;
 - additional requirements have been introduced for exemption from waste collection and removal fee of properties that are not occupied and used year round;
 - waste collection and removal fees have to be paid even where waste collection and removal services are not provided or are of poor quality, e.g., lack of or insufficient number of waste containers, household waste is not hauled regularly.

Number of recommendations/suggestions/counselling related to waste collection and removal през 2017

4	recommendations and suggestions
70	opinions issued
23	cases of counselling citizens
3	cases of intermediation carried out

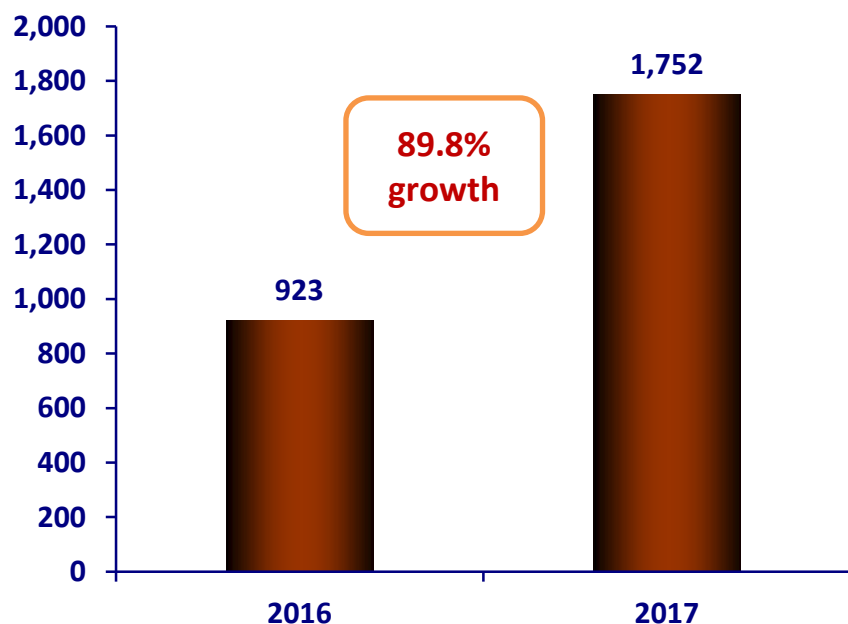
The Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

- The appropriate action ought to be taken by the municipalities and by the provincial governors aimed at amending the regulations providing for additional requirements for exemption from waste collection and removal fee;
- Municipal authorities ought to control the quality of waste collection and removal services provision, the number of containers needed for collecting household waste and the frequency of household waste removal ought to take into account the specific needs of each settlement.

3. Consumer Rights (9)

➤ Over-indebtedness

Number of complaints filed in 2016 u 2017 by citizens affected by over-indebtedness about infringement of their rights



Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

- The number of complaints filed against debt collection agencies was 164, i.e., 41% higher than in 2016.

The large number of complaints against bad banking practices indicates that citizens' rights are not sufficiently guaranteed. This warrants the submission to the National Assembly of a Bill to amend the *Civil Procedure Code*.

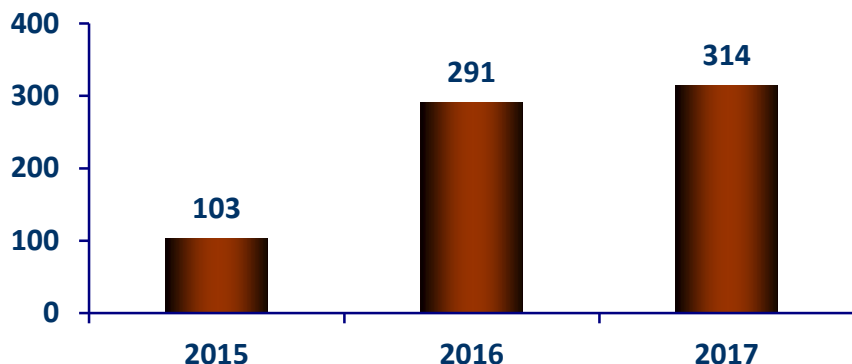
The Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

- Organise a discussion with the competent authorities and institutions on the issue of payday loans with the aim of clarifying all problems related to the conclusion and implementation of payday loan agreements and finding appropriate solutions to address such problems.
- Exercise effective control over the activities of payday loan companies.
- Banking charges ought to be in correspondence with the financial services provided.
- The activities of collection agencies ought to be regulated.
- The possibility for public utilities to transfer their overdue and delinquent receivables to outside collection agencies ought to be limited.
- Collection agencies ought to be obligated to provide clear and detailed information in their letters of invitation for out-of-court settlement (letters before action, letters of demand or debt collection letters).

4. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities

A considerable increase in the number of complaints about infringements of the rights of the persons with disabilities: 7,9% more in 2017 compared to 2016 and 204,9% more compared to 2015.

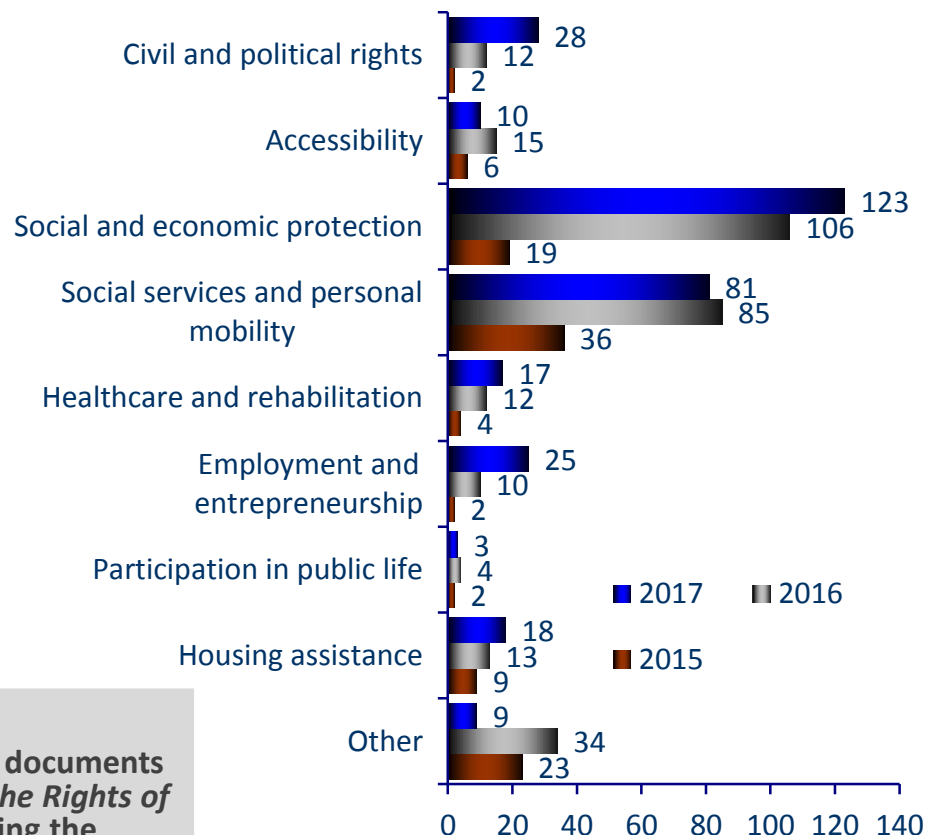
Number of complaints and alerts, both filed and finalised, concerning the rights of persons with disabilities during the period 2015-2017



The Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

- It is imperative to ensure the implementation of all strategic documents and plans for the implementation of the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* as adopted by the executive, including the enactment of a new *Integration of the Persons with Disabilities Act* and a new *Social Services Act*.
- It is imperative to accelerate the drafting of legislation regulating social services in a way that takes into consideration the individual needs of the persons with disabilities, incl. by provision of personal assistance.
- Other recommendations (see the 2017 Report)

Number of registered complaints and alerts concerning the rights of persons with disabilities during the period 2015-2017 by type of infringement

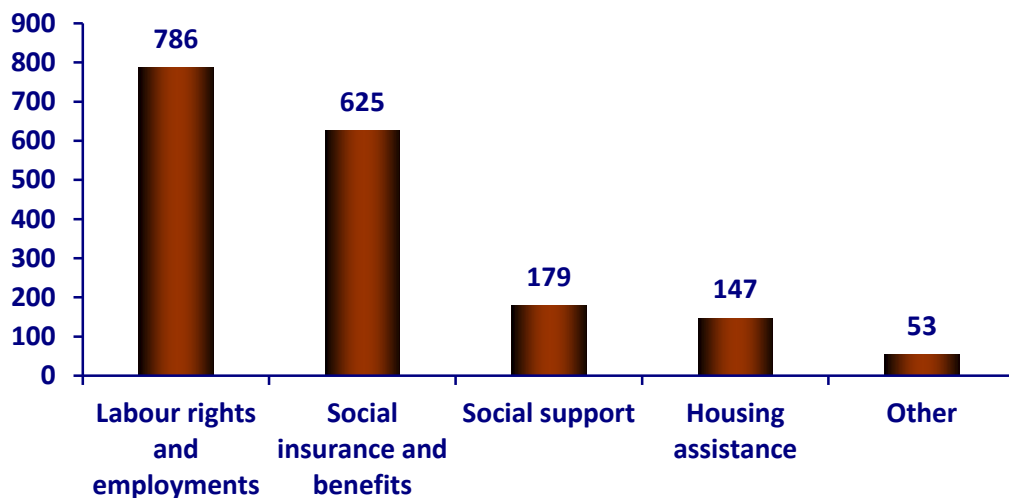


Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

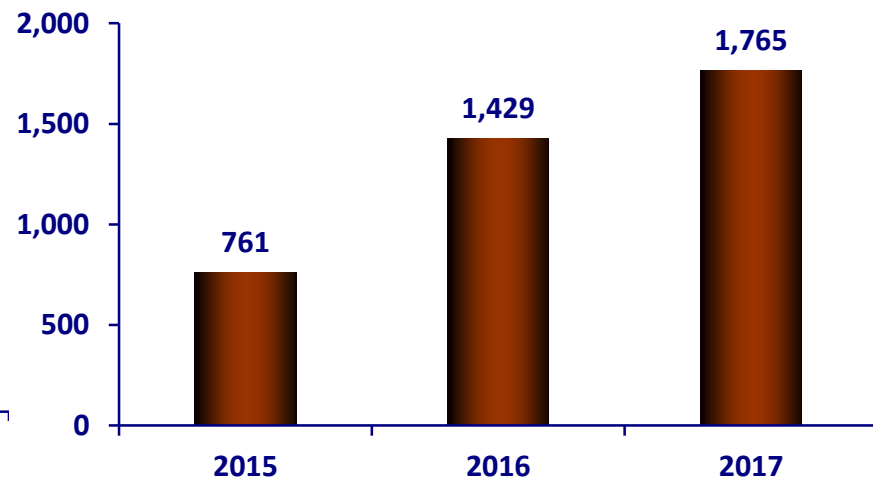
5. Social Rights (1)

1,790 complaints and alerts received in 2017, up 25% compared to the previous year. These constituted 14.17% of the total number of complaints and alerts filed with the Ombudsperson Institution.

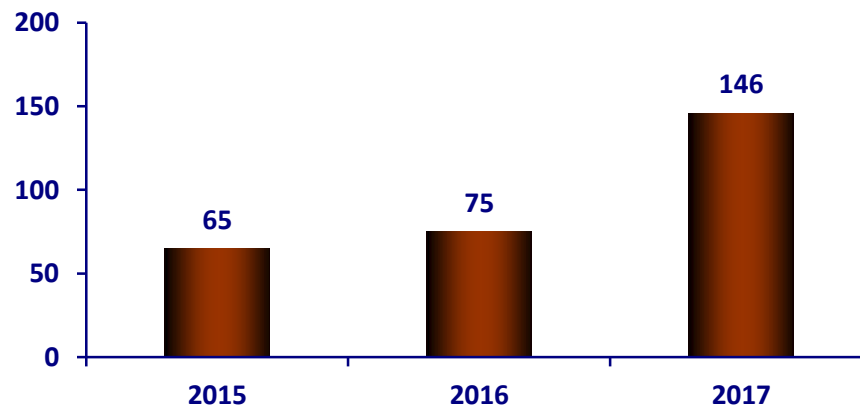
Number of complaints and alerts about social rights violations filed in 2017



Number of complaints and alerts concerning protection of social rights filed during the period 2015-2017



Number of complaints and alerts about violations of the right to access to employment filed during the period 2015-2017



Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

5. Social Rights (2)

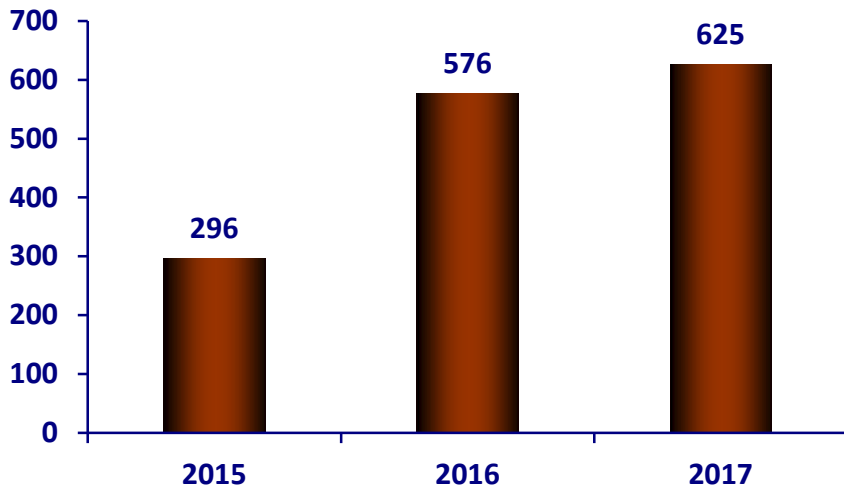
- Major infringements:
 - employers continue to blatantly violate citizen's labour rights;
 - workers and employees cannot receive their outstanding remuneration, benefits, and compensations either because their employers have no assets or because attachment orders have been granted against their assets, including under the *Registered Pledges Act*;
 - the large number of employers precludes a broader scope and a greater frequency of labour inspections, especially in enterprises where numerous and systemic violations have been ascertained as regards remuneration and compliance with the healthy patterns of work and rest prescribed by law;
 - the existing legal framework does not provide sufficient protection of citizen's labour rights;
 - Bulgarian citizens continue to move abroad for work without being familiar with the rules governing lawful employment.

Some of the Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

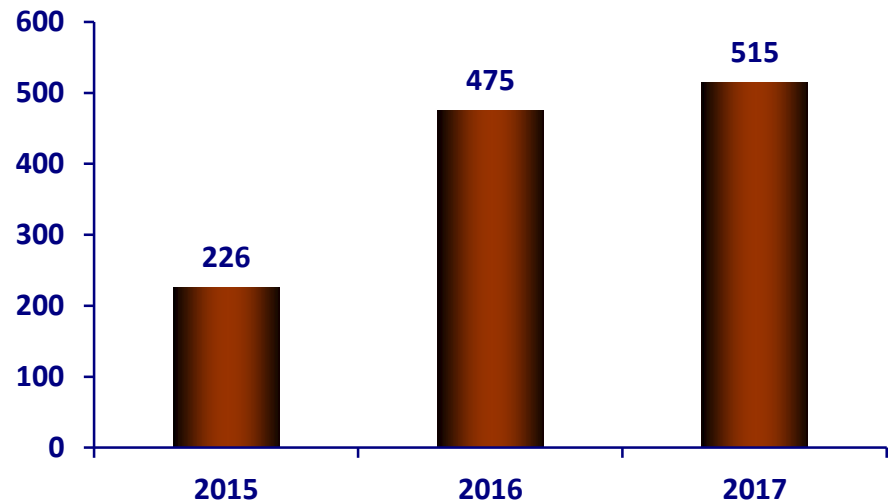
- It is imperative to amend the *Labour Code* provisions and the respective regulations governing: the establishment of summary calculations of the working time by regulating the conditions under which they may be established; reducing the period for such calculations from 6 to 4 months; determining the manner for their establishment; introducing a requirement that workers and employees should be handed personalised work schedules approved by their employer.
- It is imperative to increase the amount of the extra pay for night or weekend work, as well as for the time during which a worker or a employee is available to their employer while being away from the grounds of the enterprise in a location agreed between them.
- It is imperative to regulate the entitlement to extended paid annual leave of caregivers employed in long-term care institutions for elderly people with disabilities.
- It is imperative to improve the communication between the staff of the Labour Office Directorates and job seekers while determining their preferred areas of employment.

5. Social Rights (3)

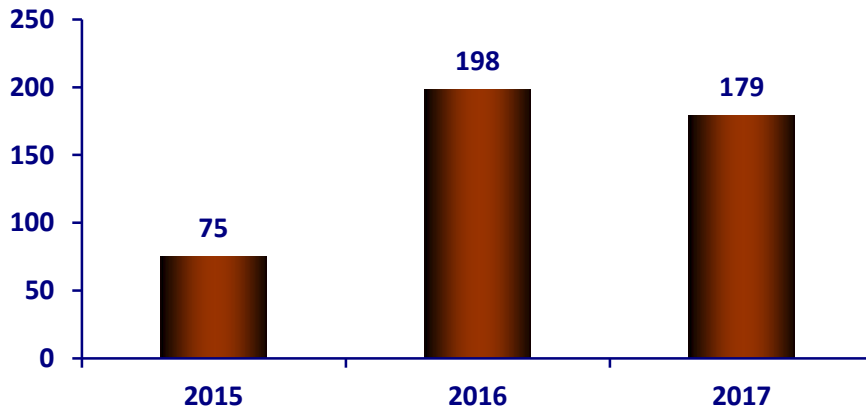
Number of complaints and alerts concerning the right to social insurance and benefits filed during the period 2015-2017



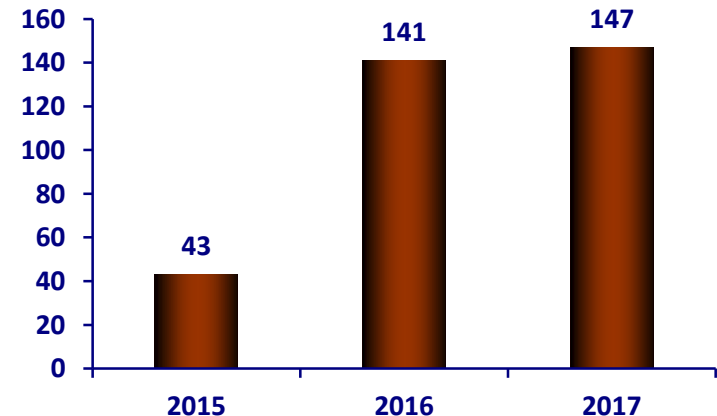
Number of complaints and alerts concerning the right to pension filed during the period 2015-2017



Number of complaints and alerts concerning social support filed during the period 2015-2017

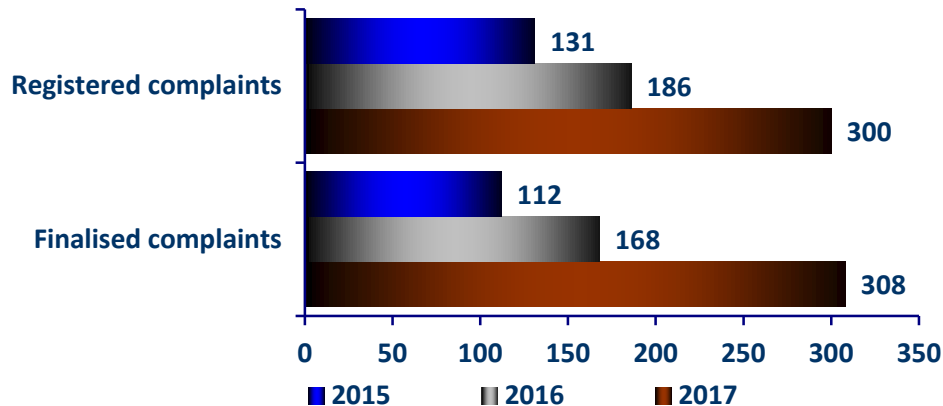


Number of complaints and alerts concerning housing assistance filed during the period 2015-2017

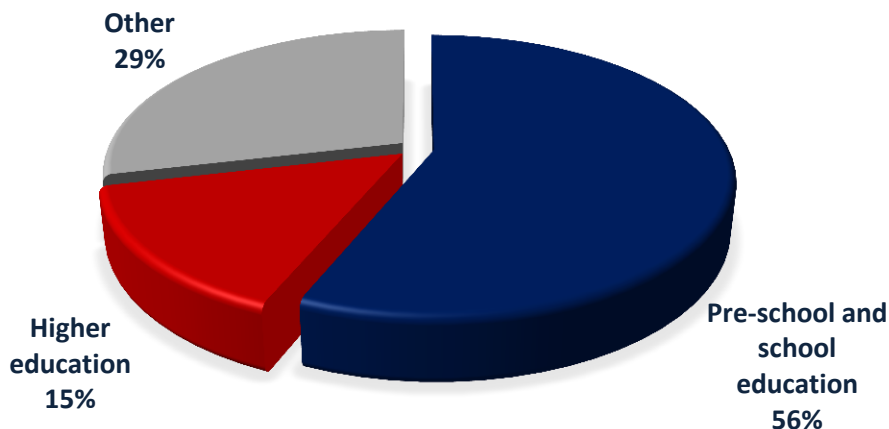


6. The Right to Education

Number of registered complaints and alerts and finalised inquiries in the field of education during the period 2015-2017



Registered complaints and alerts in the field of education in 2017, %



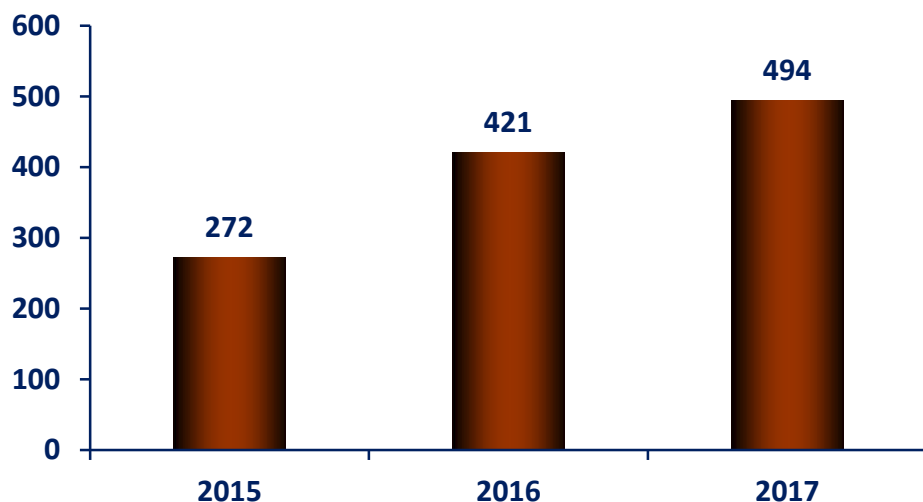
Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

Some of the Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

- Continuous improvement of the mechanism for joint operation of the competent institutions towards enrolment and retention in the education system of children and pupils of the compulsory pre-school and school age.
- It is imperative to work towards achieving high quality and accessibility of child care facilities.
- In cases where a child is not accepted into a state-run educational establishment, her or his parents ought to receive a subsidy fixed by the government.
- It is imperative to ensure that pre-school aged children are provided with a free educational service and to consider the possibilities for greater support by the government.
- It is imperative to introduce compulsory pre-school instruction for all 4-year old children and to provide for alternative forms of bringing up and schooling.
- It is imperative to improve the model for financing the schools in smaller towns and villages and in remote areas.
- It is imperative to modernise vocational education and training.
- It is imperative to ensure the existence of a system for efficient staff training.

7. The Right to Healthcare

Number of complaints and alerts concerning violations of citizens' rights in the healthcare sector filed during the period 2015-2017



Number of complaints and alerts about the healthcare sector filed in 2017 by the type of healthcare service



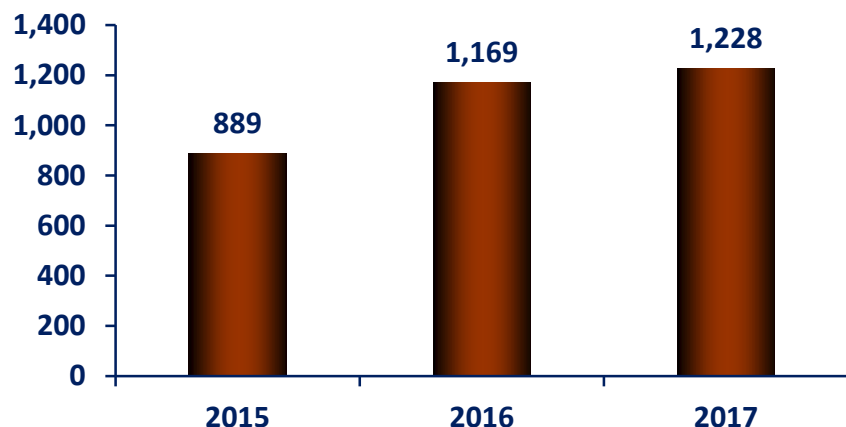
Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

Some of the Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

- It is imperative to establish a permanent dialogue in the healthcare sector to ensure that any changes are implemented upon agreement between all stakeholders.
- The currently imposed limits on payments by the National Health Insurance Fund for hospital and non-hospital healthcare procedures ought to be removed and all over-limit procedures carried out by the hospitals so far ought to be paid for (either in full or at least for all emergency cases).
- It is imperative to deliberate and take urgent measures for support, financial recovery and financial stabilisation of municipal and state-run hospitals under severe financial hardship.
- It is imperative to expand the scope of the categories of persons whose healthcare insurance premiums are paid for from the state budget to include also the long-term unemployed citizens.
- It is imperative to expand the scope of the government-funded activities related to assisted reproduction.
- It is imperative to take action to increase the amount of payment with public funds for medical devices as well as to ensure payment for new devices.
- It is imperative to reconsider the current limits provided for in the *Social Insurance Code* on the compensation paid for taking care of a sick family member.

8. The Right to Property and Economic Freedom

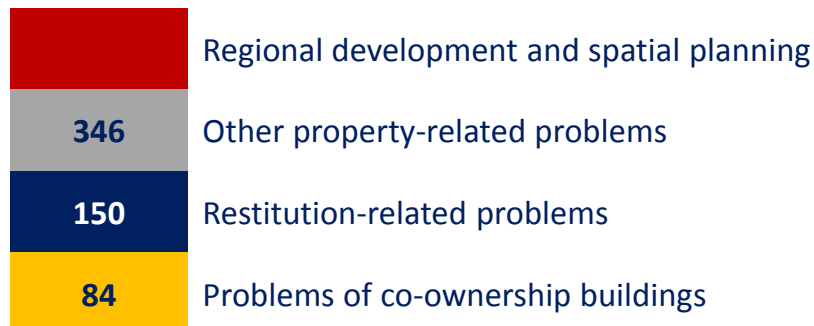
Number of complaints and alerts concerning the right to property filed during the period 2015-2017



Number of finalised inquiries into complaints and alerts related to regional development and spatial planning in 2017



Number of finalised inquiries into complaints and alerts concerning the right to property filed in 2017



The Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

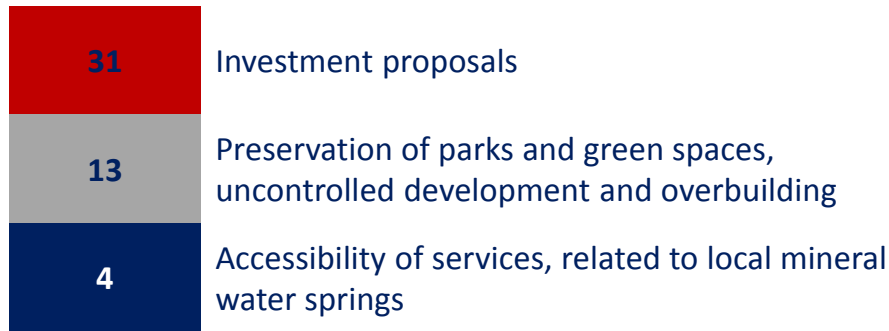
- It is imperative to align the land policy and the regulatory framework for agricultural land relations with the *Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security* issued by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).
- Further to the Decision of the National Assembly of 19 September 2017, measures ought to be taken against land monopolies along with mechanisms for ensuring effective protection to the 'weak party' in agricultural land relations.
- All strategic documents and all laws and regulations ought to be drafted in conditions of transparency and publicity, following wide public consultation and the involvement of all parties and stakeholders concerned.

Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

9. The Right to a Clean and Healthy Environment (1)

In 2017, environmental problems remained a constant focus of public attention. A total of 261 complaints were filed in 2017 compared to 190 in 2016.

Number of complaints and alerts filed concerning the environment



Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria



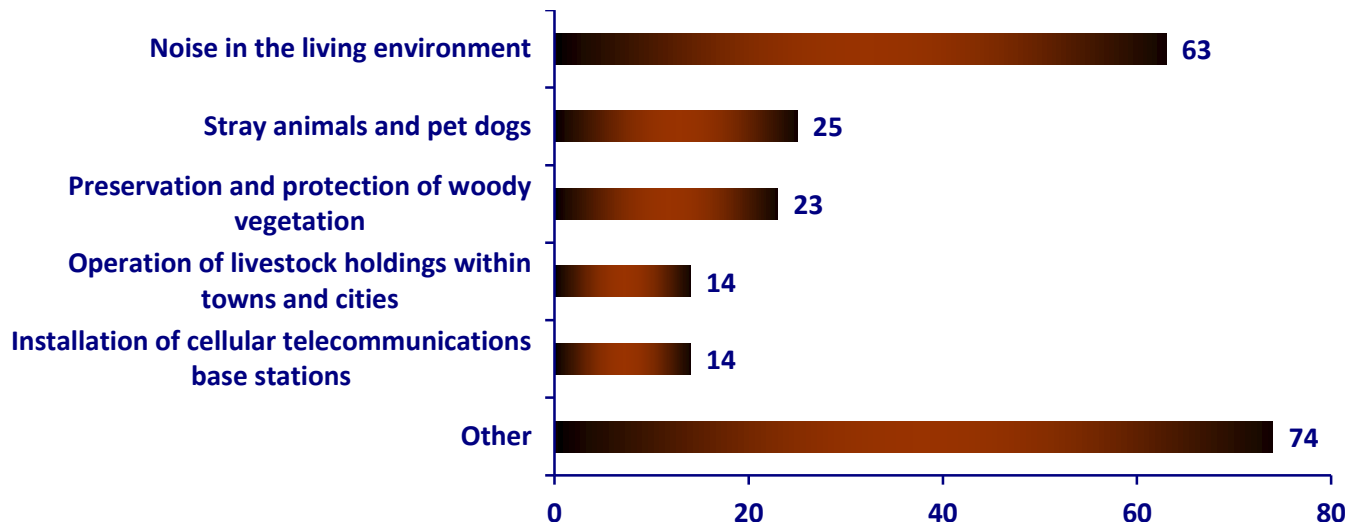
The Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

- The issue of the failure to adopt the health risk assessment criteria for the purpose of environmental impact assessments pursuant to Chapter Six of the *Environmental Protection Act* ought to be deliberated by the National Assembly's Healthcare Committee;
- Amendments to laws within the scope of Article 55 of the *Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria* ought to be drafted and made available for public consultation along with all regulations whose enactment is also envisaged for the purpose of their implementation;
- The time limit for raising objections to an environmental impact assessment report concerning investment proposals related to extraction of subsurface resources ought to be differentiated so that the public concerned would be duly informed and consulted.

9. The Right to a Clean and Healthy Environment (2)

In 2017, environmental problems remained a constant focus of public attention. A total of 213 complaints were filed.

Number of complaints and alerts filed concerning the environment



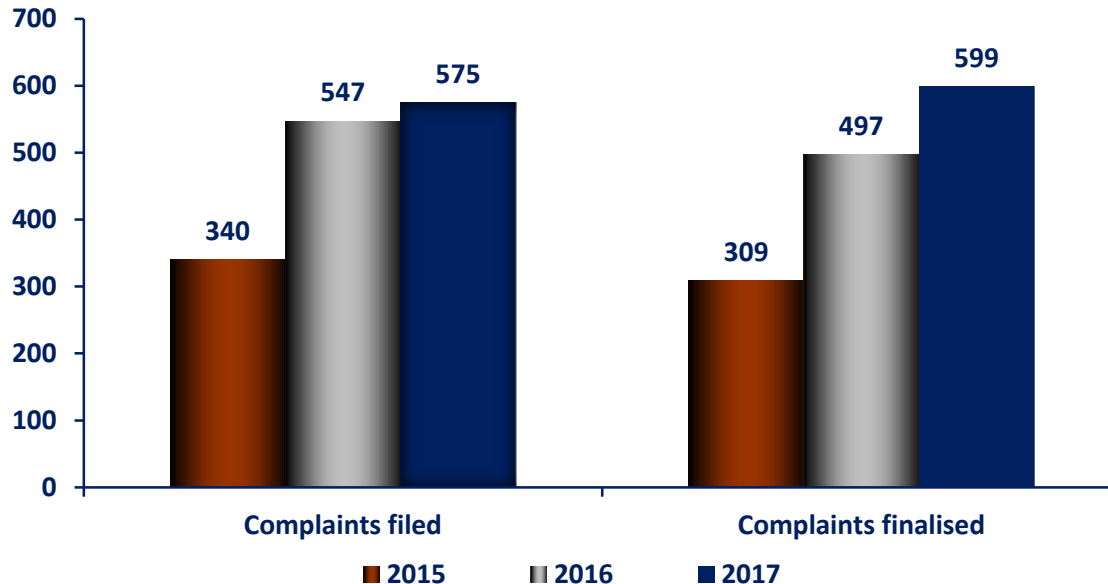
Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

The Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

- It is necessary to improve the legislation governing the operation of air-conditioning systems, as well as the installation of their outdoor units.
- It is imperative to exercise a stricter control on polluting exhaust emissions measured during the regular roadworthiness tests of heavy commercial vehicles; where changes to the organisation of vehicular traffic are effected, the routes need to be considered with respect to the intensity, capacity, and structure of vehicular traffic, as well as with the surrounding buildings.
- Striving to strike a balance between the country's economic development and the citizens' right to a clean and healthy environment ought to be a priority for the competent institutions.

10. The Right to Good Governance and Good Administration

Number of registered complaints and alerts, and finalised inquiries related to the provision of administrative service to citizens during the period 2015-2017



Number of recommendations/suggestions/counselling related to complaints about administrative service in 2017



Source: Ombudsperson of the Rep. of Bulgaria

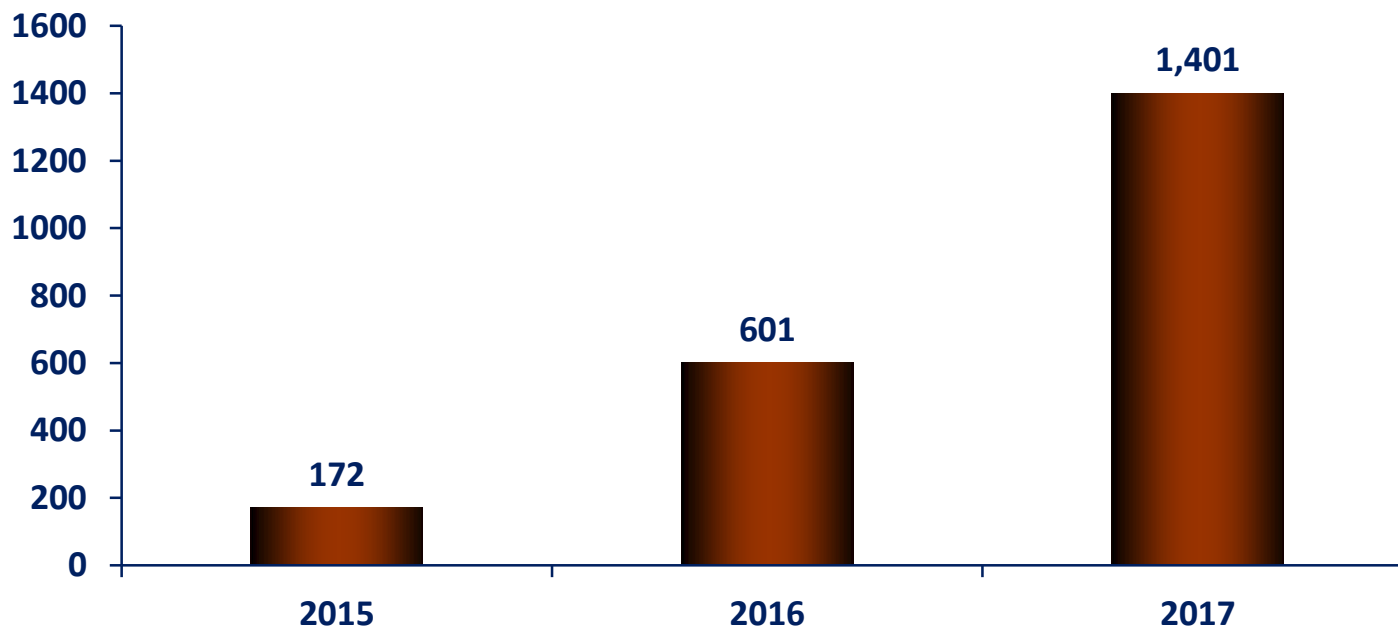
Some of the Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

- Increase the capacity of public administration employees.
- Establish efficient organisation, make relevant management decisions, take timely measures and report the results achieved.
- Maintain fair and open dialogue with citizens and take into consideration their suggestions and opinions.
- Improve the interaction between the competent institutions.
- Review and optimise the internal rules for the organisation of administrative services and align them with the requirements for good administrative service.
- Introduce a system for measuring client satisfaction.
- Expand the possibilities for decentralised provision of administrative services.
- Accelerated phasing-in of eGovernment.
- Compliance with the common standards for quality of administrative service across the public administration.

11. The Right to Protection in Enforcement Proceedings

2017 saw yet another increase in the number of complaints against enforcement officers (bailiffs) compared to previous years. **While the number of complaints concerning citizens' rights in enforcement proceedings was 172 in 2015 and 601 in 2016, in 2017 this number rose to 1,401, i.e. a 133% increase in just one year.**

*Number of complaints and alerts filed by citizens
against bailiffs during the period 2015-2017*

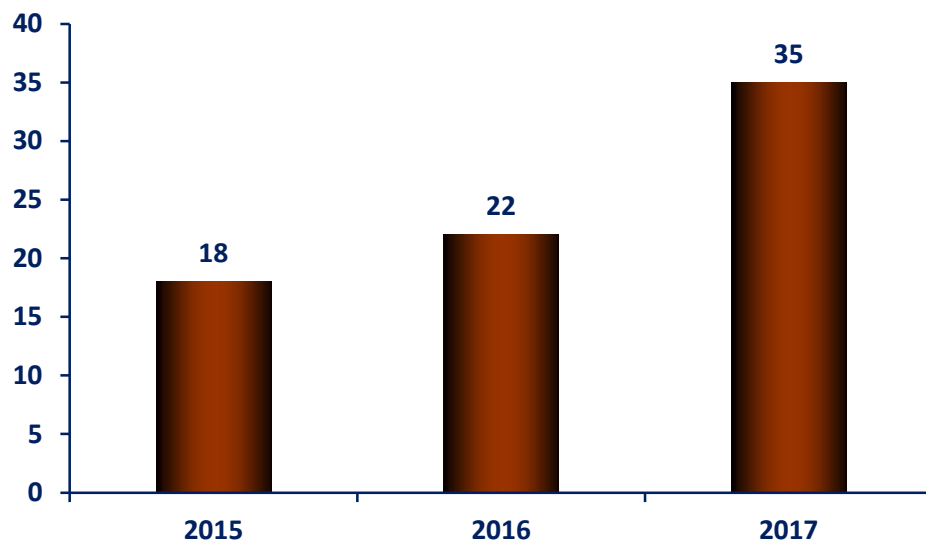


Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

12. The Right to Protection from Discrimination and Hate Speech

2017 saw an increase in the number of complaints filed by citizens who had suffered discrimination. The total number of such complaints in 2017 was 35, which was 13 more compared to 2016 and 17 more compared to 2015.

Number of complaints and alerts filed by citizens about discrimination against them during the period 2015-2017



Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

The Ombudsperson's Recommendations:

- It is imperative that the competent institutions assume their share of responsibility and take timely and adequate measures to implement the Ombudsperson's recommendations and the acts of the Commission for Protection against Discrimination concerning amendments to the existing legislation with a view to putting an end to violations and ensuring equal treatment of all citizens.
- It is imperative that appropriate action be taken to address the issue of insufficient recognisability and lack of response to the use of hate speech.

13. National Preventive Mechanism

- In 2016 and 2017, the NPM teams visited and inspected all places of detention with the exception of the remand centres in the cities of Kardzhali and Pernik, and the open prison facility in the city of Smolyan.
- A systemic problem was identified originating in the deficiency of social workers and the lack of adequate budgetary funding for meaningful activities.
- It was ascertained that some production norms were unfeasible as they had been set by an order of a Deputy Minister of Justice on the basis of a fixed national minimum wage.
- In 2017, the inspections carried out by the NPM were focused on the fight against communicable diseases in prisons.
- The inspections identified lack of adequate judicial remedies and established legal framework on the disciplining of prisoners.
- The inspections ascertained unlawful handcuffing of detainees in the remand centre at the National Investigation Service at G. M. Dimitrov Blvd. in Sofia anytime when detainees were taken out of the cells. The situation is similar at the specialised remand centre in the city of Sofia.
- In 2017, the NPM teams inspected a total of 21 Regional Police Departments (RPDs) within the Ministry of Interior in cities across North East Bulgaria.
- 3 inspections were carried out in 2017 at hospitals for psychiatric care: the State-run Psychiatric Hospital in the city of Lovech, the State-run Psychiatric Hospital in the town of Novi Iskar, and the Centre for Psychiatric Health in the city of Sofia, which serves the population of Sofia Province. The finding was that the state-run psychiatric hospitals were unreformed and the quality of health care was not improving.



ОМБУДСМАН
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CHAPTER TWO. Activities Aimed at Influencing Legislation

- Petitions to the Constitutional Court
- Requests for interpretation decisions
- Opinions and legislative proposals



Activities Aimed at Influencing Legislation

➤ Requests:

- 2 constitutional challenges have been lodged with the Constitutional Court regarding the possible unconstitutionality of legislation infringing on citizens' rights and freedoms:
 - a request to declare unconstitutional the provisions of §69 and §70 of the Transitional and Final Provisions of the *Act to amend the Ministry of Interior Act* (promulgated in the State Gazette, issue 81 of 14 October 2016);
 - a request to declare unconstitutional the provision of Article 245(1) of the *Labour Code* in its part reading “amounting to 60 percent of her or his gross remuneration but no less than the national minimum wage”.
- 2 requests filed with the Supreme Administrative Court to render interpretation decisions regarding the existence of conflicting jurisprudence:
 - a request to render an interpretation decision regarding the application of Article 44(6) and Article 44(9) of the *Aliens in the Republic of Bulgaria Act* in respect of unaccompanied minors and the application of §1(4) of the *Asylum and Refugees Act*;
 - a request to render an interpretation decision regarding issues related to the *Tax and Social Security Procedure Code* (TSSPC).

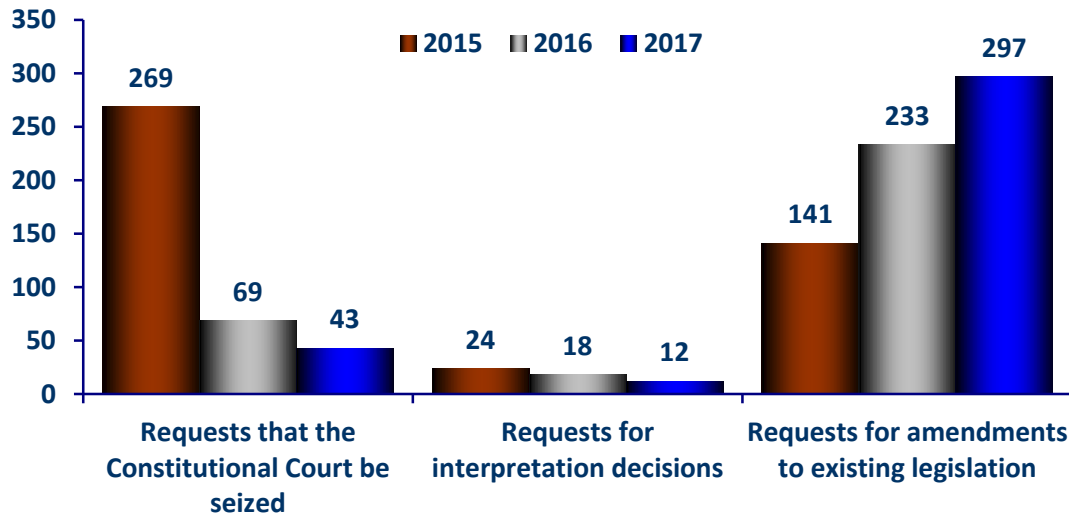


Opinions and Legislative Proposals

In 2017, the Ombudsperson Institution received: 43 requests that the Constitutional Court be seized; 297 requests for amendments to existing legislation, and 12 requests for interpretation decisions.

- **The defining events of the year were the successful campaigns run by the Ombudsperson to protect citizens' rights**

Number of citizens' requests relating to existing legislation filed during the period 2015-2017



Source: Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria

- Civil Procedure Code, International Commercial Arbitration Act
- Civil Procedure Code, Private Bailiffs Act
- Labour Code, Commerce Act, Guaranteed Receivables for Workers and Employees in the Event of Insolvency of the Employer Act, Public Procurement Act
- Road Traffic Act
- Ownership and Use of Farm Land Act, Agricultural Tenancies Act
- National Health Insurance Fund Budget Act
- Election Code
- Social Insurance Code

- Act Governing the Rights of Long-standing Building Savings Deposit Holders
- Physical Education and Sports Bill.



ОМБУДСМАН
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CHAPTER THREE. Monitoring the Implementation of the Relevant International Instruments

Reception Office of the Ombudsperson

Children's rights

Consumer rights

Rights of the persons with disabilities

Social rights

The right to education

The right to healthcare

The right to property and economic freedom

The right to a clean and healthy environment

The right to good governance and good
administration

The right to protection in enforcement
proceedings

The right to protection against discrimination
and hate speech



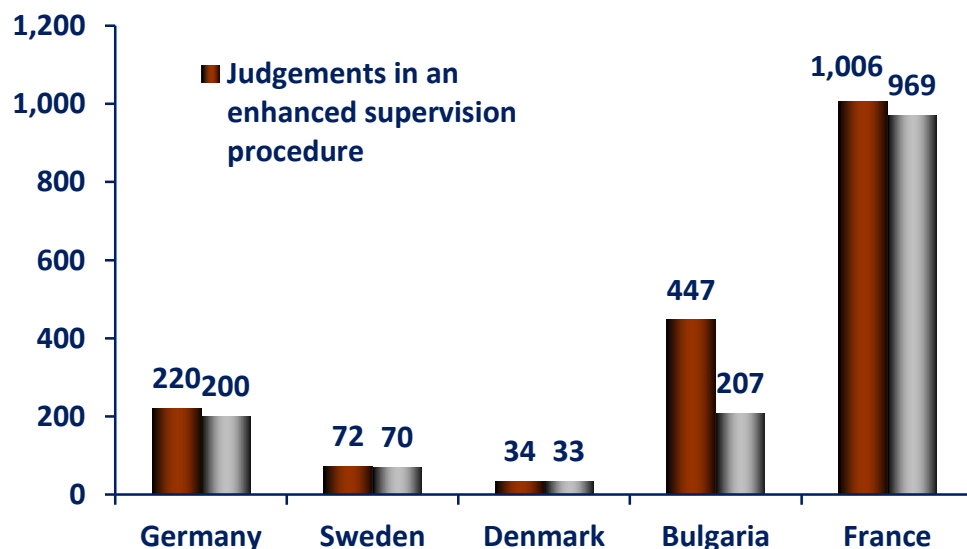
Supervision of the Execution of ECtHR Judgements

Amendments to the *Ombudsman Act* were made in early 2018 aimed at bringing the Institution in conformity with the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights as enshrined in the UN Paris Principles.

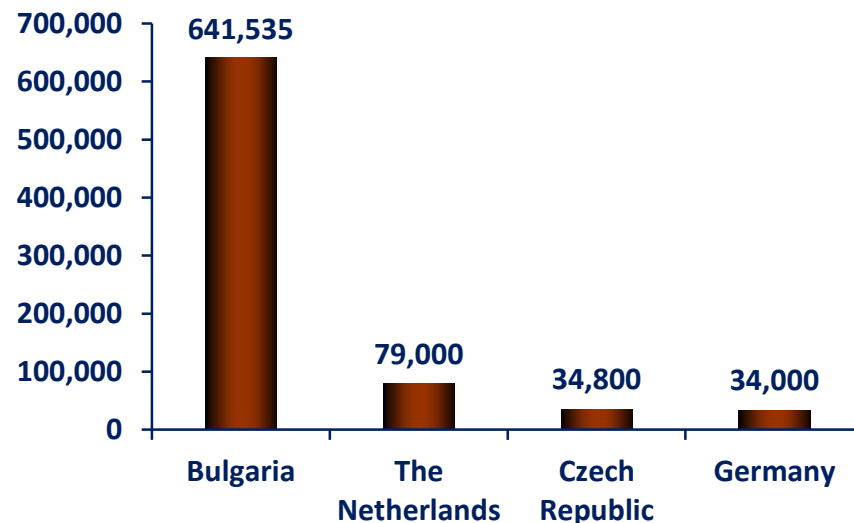
➤ In 2017:

- Supervision of the progress in the execution of the adverse judgements of the ECtHR in an enhanced supervision procedure and of the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers to the Republic of Bulgaria
- General observations regarding the execution of final judgments of the ECtHR in 2017 within the meaning of Article 46 of the ECHR

Total number of adverse judgements in an enhanced supervision procedure and closed by a final resolution as of December 2017 by countries



Amount of compensations paid as a result of the ECtHR adverse judgements in 2017, in Euro





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НА РЕПУБЛИКА БЪЛГАРИЯ

CHAPTER FOUR. International Activities and Projects



International Activities

- Full membership of the national Ombudsperson in international structures:
 - International Ombudsman Institute
 - European Network of Ombudsmen
 - Association des ombudsmans et médiateurs de la francophonie
 - European Ombudsman Institute
 - Council of Europe Network of the National Human Rights Structures
 - South East Europe Children's Rights Ombudsperson's Network (CRONSEE)
 - The Ombudsperson is also an associated member of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC)
- International co-operation for the protection of citizens' rights and freedoms
 - Putting an end to the discriminatory treatment and double standards in respect of Bulgarian consumers
 - Signed Declaration to the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council of Agriculture Ministers against the double standards on foodstuffs within the EU
 - Construction of a special centre for accommodation of alien children seeking asylum or protection in Bulgaria
- Finalised project titled *“Strengthening the Capacity of the Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria to Exercise Independent Monitoring and Promote Children’s Rights”* – a good foundation for the deployment of the National Ombudsperson’s functions as an independent monitoring body for protecting children’s rights and interests and promoting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

THE OMBUDSPERSON INSTITUTION WORKS IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH OVER 150 ORGANISATIONS FROM THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL SECTOR

Human Rights

1. Bulgarian Lawyers for Human Rights Foundation
2. Foundation for Access to Rights
3. Center for Legal Aid – Voice in Bulgaria
4. Bulgarian Helsinki Committee
5. Bulgarian Red Cross
6. Center for the Study of Democracy
7. “Youth Forum 2001” Association, city of Razgrad
8. Non-Governmental Organizations Center, city of Razgrad
9. Bulgarian Family Planning and Sexual Health Association
10. Bulgarian Institute for Legal Initiatives
11. Transparency International Bulgaria
12. Women Lawyers Association
13. Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation
14. Alliance for Protection against Gender Based Violence
15. Bulgarian Fund for Women
16. Access to Information Programme

THE OMBUDSPERSON INSTITUTION WORKS IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH OVER 150 ORGANISATIONS FROM THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL SECTOR

Children's Rights

17. Bulgarian Center for Not-for-Profit Law
18. UNICEF Bulgaria
19. National Network for Children
20. For Our Children Foundation
21. SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria Association
22. Lumos Foundation Bulgaria
23. International Social Service Bulgaria
24. Child and Space Association
25. Animus Association Foundation
26. Association for Pedagogical and Social Assistance for Children FICE-Bulgaria
27. Social Activities and Practices Institute
28. P.U.L.S.E. Foundation
29. Parents Association
30. National Association for Foster Care
31. Partners Bulgaria Foundation
32. Crime Prevention Fund - IGA Foundation, city of Pazardzhik
33. Re-Act Association
34. Tulip Foundation
35. Association Children with Onco-Haematological Diseases
36. Karin Dom Foundation, city of Varna
37. Caritas Bulgaria
38. Confederation for the Protection of Children's Rights
39. Samaritans Association, city of Stara Zagora
40. Bulgarian Association of Adopted Children and Adoptive Parents

THE OMBUDSPERSON INSTITUTION WORKS IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH OVER 150 ORGANISATIONS FROM THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL SECTOR

Consumer Rights

41. Bulgarian National Association Active Consumers (BNAAC)

42. Consumers' Federation in Bulgaria

43. Civil Movement for National Unity and Salvation (DNES)

44. Center for Social Rehabilitation and Integration of Persons with Disabilities

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities

45. Union of Disabled Persons in Bulgaria

46. Union of the Deaf in Bulgaria

47. Union of the Blind in Bulgaria

48. National Association of the Deafblind in Bulgaria

49. National Federation of Employers of Persons with Disabilities

50. National Organization Little People of Bulgaria

51. Association of Parents of Children with Impaired Vision

52. Association of Parents of Hearing Impaired Children in Bulgaria (ARDUS)

53. Bulgarian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (BAPID)

54. Bulgarian Association for Equality, Integration, and Sports

55. Balkan and Black Sea Area Federation of Adapted Physical Activity

56. Visually Impaired Persons Sports Federation

57. Center for Independent Living

58. Bulgarian Center for Not-for-Profit Law

THE OMBUDSPERSON INSTITUTION WORKS IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH OVER 150 ORGANISATIONS FROM THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL SECTOR

The Right to Education

59. Bulgarian Haemophilia Association

60. Association of Professional Geographers and Regionalists (APGR)

61. Gender Education, Research and Technologies Foundation

The Right to a Pension

62. Bulgarian Association of Pensioners

63. National University of the Third Age (U3A Bulgaria)

64. Union of Pensioners 2004, city of Ruse

The Right to Healthcare

65. Bulgarian Haemophilia Association

66. National Association Diabetes, Prediabetes and Metabolic Syndrome

67. Association Diabetes - Type 2

68. ARTRA Association, city of Veliko Tarnovo

69. Association of Thrombophilia Patients, city of Stara Zagora

70. Association of Physicians Serving on Territorial Expert Medical Commissions

71. Bulgarian Diabetes Association

72. National Association of Children and Young People with Diabetes

73. Association of Patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis

74. Bulgarian Ankylosing Spondylitis Patient Society

75. Bulgarian Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis Association (BCUCA)

76. Civic Association of Hepatitis Patients HepActiv

77. Coalition for Life without Tobacco Smoke

78. Bulgaria Without Smoke Association

79. MS – Moga Sam Foundation

80. Bulgarian Natural Healers Association



THE OMBUDSPERSON INSTITUTION WORKS IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH OVER 150 ORGANISATIONS FROM THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL SECTOR

- | |
|---|
| 81. Patients' Organizations With You |
| 82. Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Bulgaria (SBHB) |
| 83. Center for Protection of Healthcare Rights |
| 84. National Patients Association Health Protection Confederation |
| 85. National Private Hospital Association |
| 86. Association of Municipal Hospitals in Bulgaria |
| 87. Association For Insulin Pumps |
| 88. National Parents Network (NPN) |
| 89. Rodna Striaha (Home) Foundation |
| 90. National Association Diabetes, Prediabetes and Metabolic Syndrome |
| 91. Confederation of Health Protections (KZZ) |
| 92. Bulgarian Patients' Forum Federation |
| 93. National Patients' Organization (NPO) |
| 94. Bulgarian Association for Patients' Defence (BAPD) |
| 95. Bulgarian Organisation for Patients with Rheumatic Diseases (BOPRD) |
| 96. Bulgarian Hospital Association (BHA) |
| 97. The Association of Bulgarian University Hospitals |
| 98. National Association of General Practitioners in Bulgaria (NAGPB) |
| 99. Bulgarian Emergency Medical Services Association (BEMSA) |
| 100. Association of Health Insurance Companies |
| 101. Bulgarian Association for Patients' Defence (BAPD) |
| 102. Bulgarian Association of Health Care Professionals |
| 103. The Association of Bulgarian University Hospitals |
| 104. Bulgarian Emergency Medical Services Association (BEMSA) |
| 105. Alzheimer Bulgaria Association |
| 106. Bulgarian Paediatric Association |

2017 Events Calendar (1)

12 January 2017

The National Assembly adopted at second reading the amendments to the *Civil Procedure Code* tabled by the Ombudsperson, which excluded consumer disputes from the purview of the arbitration courts, and provided also a nearly six-fold reduction of jurisconsult fees.

17 January 2017

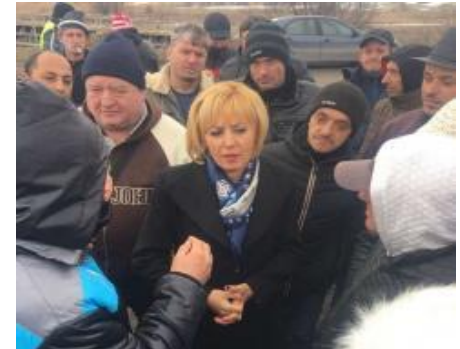
Letter addressed to the Parliament demanding that an interest rate ceiling be imposed in cases of debt default.

20 January 2017

Following the Ombudsperson's intervention, the late salary payments for the coal miners in the town of Bobov Dol were paid up three times faster than initially agreed.

31 January 2017

"The deinstitutionalization of children is a cause I will not back down on" – participation in a conference on the process of deinstitutionalization of children in this country.



2 February 2017

The Ombudsperson held an external reception room in the village of Hitrino. Over BGN 2 million was raised to support the residents in the aftermath of the 10 December 2016 train derailment and violent explosion.

2017 Events Calendar (2)

7 February 2017

Under the supervision of the Ombudsperson, the sewing machine operators in the clothing factory at the town of Dupnitsa signed an agreement with the Italian businessman Luigino Capriotti.



15 February 2017

The Ombudsperson put on pajamas in support of children with cancer and blood disorders.



23 February 2017

Following a discussion mediated by the Ombudsperson, the Ministry of Interior increased bonuses and benefits for police officers.

2 March 2017

The Ombudsperson met with the protesting workers at the shoe factory in the town of Vetren, who had sought her assistance with unpaid wages, vacation pay, and lay off compensation.



2017 Events Calendar (3)

7 March 2017

The Ombudsperson launched the National Charity Campaign *Easter for Everyone 2* with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Neophyte.



BGN 1 million worth of cash and food donations were raised in 2017. The money was converted into BGN 20 vouchers and given away to 33,000 pensioners to buy groceries from 5,000 establishments across the country.

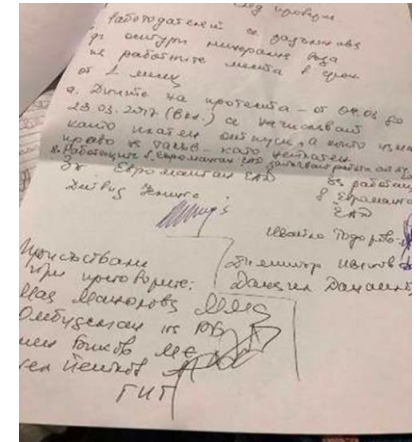
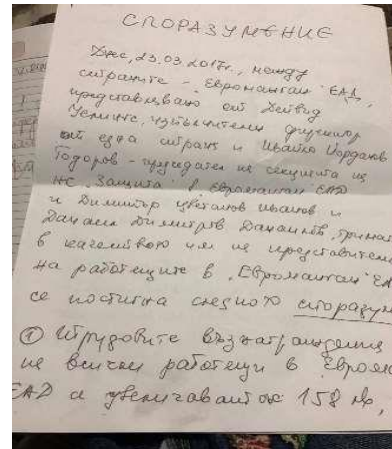
10 March 2017

Following a meeting hosted by the Ombudsperson, three ministries made a pledge that the *Value Added Tax on Donated Food Act* would be in full force and effect within a fortnight.

24 March 2017



An understanding to conclude a collective bargaining agreement was signed with the CEO of the concessionaire company Euromangan AD.



The employer signed a commitment letter to raise the salaries of all 230 employees at the Obrochishte manganese mine in north east Bulgaria by BGN 158.

2017 Events Calendar (4)

29 March 2017

The Administrative Court ordered Toplofikatsiya Sofia EAD, the district heating company serving the city of Sofia, to present to the Ombudsperson information on what their jurisconsult fees were being spent on.

10 April 2017

300 Bulgarian writers received medical treatment cards from the Ombudsperson and *Saint Anna* University Hospital.

10 April 2017

Bullying and Aggression in Schools – the topic of joint project initiated by the Ombudsperson and UNICEF Bulgaria.

12 April 2017

The Ombudsperson and the Bulgarian Food Bank donated the first few tonnes of food exempt from VAT.

20 April 2017

Little Niya was nominated the first ambassador of the Ombudsperson to the city of Silistra.



2017 Events Calendar (5)

21 April 2017

The Ombudsperson seized the Constitutional Court with a request to declare unconstitutional the provision of Article 245(1) of the Labour Code obligating employers experiencing financial hardship to pay their workers up to 60 percent of their outstanding remuneration.

25 April 2017

The Ombudsperson submitted to the Parliament proposed amendments aimed against the private bailiffs, banks, and monopolies.

3 May 2017

Meeting with residents of the *Trakia* neighbourhood in Plovdiv, who had seized the Ombudsperson with a complaint against the large-scale housing development in the housing complex located across from a day-care centre.

9 May 2017

The Ombudsperson and the students at the *Vasil Karagiozov* Foreign Language School in the city of Yambol elected a Student Ombudsperson.



2017 Events Calendar (6)

11 May 2017

BGN 1,810 worth of cash donations was raised during a charity night in support of children and young people with disabilities from the *Radiance* centers for family-type accommodation in the city of Kyustendil.

1 June 2017

The Ombudsperson, Bulgarian rapper 100 Kilos, singer Anelia, actresses Yana Marinova and Alex Sarchadzhieva, singer Mihaela Fileva, and the Bulgarian R&B boy band *SkandaU* launched the *Our Child* campaign.



9 June 2017

The Ombudsperson presented the first mobile ramp for persons with disabilities in the Sofia City Subway.



2017 Events Calendar (7)

19 June 2017

Participation in a final forum to conclude the project “*Strengthening the Capacity of the Ombudsperson of the Republic of Bulgaria to Exercise Independent Monitoring and Promote Children’s Rights*” implemented in partnership with UNICEF Norway and UNICEF Bulgaria

5 July 2017

A discussion on the issues of road safety and security organised by NGOs and relatives of road accident victims. The Ombudsperson supported the establishment of a Road Safety Agency.

7 July 2017

The Ombudsperson thanked the Members of Parliament from the floor of the National Assembly immediately after they had unanimously passed all four bills adding new provisions to the *Civil Procedure Code*.

4 August 2017

A meeting was held with employees of the *Piccadilly* retail store chain, whose latest employer was Select Trade EOOD, in connection with their complaints about unpaid remuneration since December 2016.



2017 Events Calendar (8)

9 August 2017

The Ombudsperson sent a reminder to the Central Election Commission to warn that there were less than five months left in which according to the election legislation in force three simulations of remote electronic voting should be conducted.

24 August 2017

Participation in a national round-table discussion held in the town of Assenovgrad to deliberate the need for real policies and efficient pursuit of problems related to ethnic integration.

4 September
2017

The Ombudsperson submitted to the Parliament proposed amendments aimed against fraud in farm land deals.

8 September
2017

EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel supported Ombudswoman Maya Manolova in her fight against the double standards on foodstuffs within the EU.

18 September
2017

Signing of a Declaration to the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council of Agriculture Ministers against the double standards on foodstuffs within the EU.



2017 Events Calendar (9)

18 October 2017

The Ombudsperson contributed to curtailing the powers of private bailiffs; the National Assembly enacted amendments to the *Civil Procedure Code*.

25 October 2017

The Ombudsperson and the Executive Director of the National Network for Children, George Bogdanov, gave a joint lecture to the trainees at the Bulgarian School of Politics '*Dimitry Panitza*'.



7 November 2017

The Ombudsperson and the Bulgarian Red Cross called on EVN, the company distributing and selling electricity in South-east Bulgaria, to write off the outstanding electricity bills of households affected by the floods in the municipality of Kameno;

Participation in a round-table discussion titled '*Challenges to and Recommendations for Guaranteeing the Rights of Child Victims of Violence*' organised by civil society organisations with the assistance of the Ombudsperson.

14 November 2017

The Ombudsperson called for a perpetual moratorium on oil and gas extraction in agricultural land.



2017 Events Calendar (10)

15 November
2017

The Ombudsperson supported the mayors of smaller towns and villages in their call for financial decentralisation.

16 November
2017

Opening event of the Fifth National Meeting of Representatives of Student Parliaments from across the Country – Youth Leadership Academy ‘*School of Tolerance*’ organised by the *Amalipe* Center

20 November
2017

The Ombudsperson and experts in the employ of the Ombudsperson Institution took part in the forum titled *Voice It 2017: Youthful Opinion That Matters*

21 November
2017

The Ombudsperson took part in a youth forum titled *Education, Training, and Employment Are the Road to Success*.

30 November
2017

Participation in a conference on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the ratification of the *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*.

1 December
2017

The Ombudsperson presented in the Parliament an exhibition of works by persons with disabilities titled *Beyond the Visible*.

3 December
2017

The Ombudsperson wore a student’s backpack full of books weighing a little over 6 kg – the typical weight a sixth grader usually wears on a daily basis and ran a few dozens of meters in Sofia’s Southern Park.

2017 Events Calendar (11)

6 December
2017

The Supreme Administrative Court dismissed the complaint filed by Toplofikatsiya Sofia EAD (the district heating company of the city of Sofia) and closed the case brought by the Ombudsperson against the company.

7 December
2017

The Ombudsperson seized the Prosecutor's Office of water prices.

13 December
2017

The Ombudsperson put an end to the “modern slavery” – the National Assembly adopted at second reading the amendments to the *Civil Procedure Code*, thus abolishing the practice whereunder unscrupulous employers would fail to pay salaries, benefits, and overtime, as well as to abide by their agreed commitments to their employees.

15 December
2017

The Ombudsperson delivered an open lesson to students in the city of Pernik and admitted to them that she herself also had a curfew.

21 December
2017

Re-opening ceremony at the day-care facility in the village of Cherni Vrah, the municipality of Kameno, which had been renovated in the aftermath of the floods in the Burgas Province. The BGN 23,000 for its overhaul were provided from unused vouchers in the *Easter for Everyone* charity campaign.

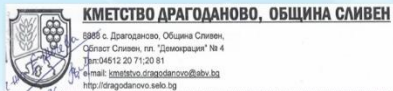
28 December
2017

Meeting with the Governor of the National Social Security Institute to submit proposed amendments aimed at protecting miners' pension rights.

29 December
2017

The Ombudsperson launched a campaign to support children with single parents.

LETTERS OF GRATITUDE



КМЕТСТВО ДРАГОДАНОВО, ОБЩИНА СЛИВЕН

8800 с. Драгоданово, Община Сливен,
Сливенски район, гр. "Демокрация" № 4
Тел: 04612 20 71; 20 81
e-mail: kmetstvo.dragodanovo@abv.bg
http://dragodanovo.sabv.bg

Их. №: 156/12.05.2017г.



ДО
ОМБУДСМАНА
НА РЕПУБЛИКА БЪЛГАРИЯ
Г-ЖА МАЯ МАНОЛОВА

Относно: Закриване на СПИ „Христо Ботев“ с. Драгоданово, обл. Сливен

УВАЖАЕМА Г-ЖО МАНОЛОВА,

За период от една година в село Драгоданово, област Сливен, започнаха протести от жителите на селото срещу незаконни действия на деца от СПИ „Христо Ботев“ Социално-педагогически интернат.

Иската беше подета от Вас, г-жо Манолова, след посещенията Ви в с. Драгоданово, в СПИ „Христо Ботев“, където бихте се запознали с обстановката, учителите, както и с жителите на селото и бихте придобили впечатление от разговори с възпитаниците на интерната.

На 11.05.2017 г. започна полемика от жителите на селото за прекратяване дейността на интерната, в резултат на което по инициативата на областната управа и омбудсманът на република България, беше проведена национална конференция за решаване на проблема в подобен тип учебни заведения.

1/2

За Г-жа Мая Манолова

Уважаема Г-жо,
Радостна съм, че имаме
с Вас писмо, което да
е. За първи път се разбра
рам, че не всички деца
управлявани са били
ди. Вашата мисъл, която
да мене е огромна, бидейки
не ми е спора вярно. Не
се срамувай, когато си
доказвателствата. Поради
заедно с нас и аз много
обичам, те ми помагат
да споделям до баба ми през
май, много се възхищавам.
Г-жо Мая, благодарна Ви
аз как да Ви благодаря? От
сърце ще Ви желая здраве
и щастие да сте, готова да

Нови борби с неправдата.
Това, което се бори, прелита
с студения дъжд, изгубва
а и отичва света с д
и и червени на земята
красиви цветя - като, се
и са малки деца, които
носат щастие и щастие
та. Велитата прелет.

С обич

Със сестра
Седно СОУ ОУЧ. Точна

Уважаема г-жо Манолова,

Във връзка с получения от Вас отговор изказвам своята и на колегите благодарност за намерението и професионално отношение при решаване на поставения от нас казус.

Надявам се, че компетентната институция ще вземе отношение за да решим конкретни случаи и да имаме яснота при последващи престопи с учителите ни изпити за придобиване на правоспособност с участието на Главна дирекция „Инспекция за държавен технически надзор“

С уважение:

Мария Баркова

Директор на Професионална гимназия по полемиза, строителна и транспортна техника

Още веднъж благодаря.

Поздравя,

Елисавета

LETTERS OF GRATITUDE

Омбудсман на Република България г-жа Мая Манолова;

От

Служителите на Селект Трейд ЕООД (Пикадили)

БЛАГОДАРСТВЕНО ПИСМО

Уважаема госпожо Манолова,

С настоящето писмо искаме да изразим огромната ни благодарност към Вашата институция и персонално към Вас, за оказаната подкрепа и бърза реакция относно нашия проблем. Ние знаем, че всички постигнати резултати са благодарение на Вашата решителна намеса и компетентност.

Вие ни доказвате, че институциите в България работят.

Ние няма да се откажем да се борим за правата си! За целта организирахме нов масовен протест, който ще се състои на 05.09.2017 г. от 10:00 часа пред Парламента. С колегите от Варна ще се обединим. Възнамеряваме да поканим и миньорите от Бобов дол, шивачките от Дупница, колегите от Макс Телеком, както и медиите.

Каним Ви най-често да ни подкрепите за пореден път, защото знаем, че заедно с Вас ще постигнем много повече.

Благодарим Ви предизпително и Ви пожелаваме градина, добра и успешна работа.

С уважение:

Веселина Иванова



СПОРТНА ФЕДЕРАЦИЯ НА ГЛУХИТЕ В БЪЛГАРИЯ
BULGARIAN DEAF SPORTS FEDERATION

Их. №: 134
Дата: 21.11.2017 г.

ДО
Г-ЖА МАЯ МАНОЛОВА
ОМБУДСМАН НА РЕПУБЛИКА
БЪЛГАРИЯ

УВАЖАЕМА ГОСПОЖО МАНОЛОВА,

Във връзка с Ваше писмо их. № 674020.11.2017 г., най-сърдечно Ви благодарим за замяната и застъпването Ви за правата на глухите спортисти и техните треньори.

Надяваме се, че с Вашата подкрепа ще бъдат направени изменения в Законопроекта за физическото възпитание и спорта и преставане на глухите спортисти и медиите от Диферентна разликa в зависимост и прав, които не се различават от тези на участниците в Паралимпийските игри.

Спортивна федерация на глухите в България е членка в Комитета по въпросите на децата, младежта и спорта към 44-то Народно събрание предвидено за изследване на покритието на спортни треньори само за 1 треньор класирана, който от което приемат.

Убедени сме, че и в бъдеще ще можем да разчитаме на Вашата подкрепа за защита правата на глухите спортисти.

С уважение,

ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛ,

Н. Николов



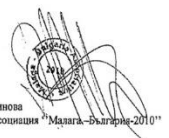
71, V. LEVSKI Blvd., 1000 Sofia, BULGARIA
Tel: +359 2 921 11 11, 921 11 12, 921 11 13
E-mail: bulgariandeafsports@abv.bg, www.bdf.bg



БЛАГОДАРСТВЕНО ПИСМО

Уважаеми дами и господа

От името на Асоциация „Малага-България-2010“ и Първо Българско Нездено Училище „Родина“ гр. Малага, Кралство Испания изразявам признателност и искрена благодарност на Вас и Вашите институции за загрижеността и съдействието, които оказвате по посрещането и подпомагането на работите по отношение наставяване на детето М. Вараме, че единствено с Вашата помощ детето ще намери своето място, за да расте и да се развива в спокойна семейна среда.



С уважение:
Петрица Костандинова
Прекседател на Асоциация „Малага-България-2010“
гр. Малага
Кралство Испания
12.04.2017г.

Direccion postal: c/ Los Millores 61.3, planta 6 piso 4, Nueva Málaga, Málaga 29010
tel.móvil: (00 34) 685 635 648; e-mail: papakostandinov@abv.bg

http://asociacion-malaga-bulgaria.com

Уважаема г-жо Манолова,

Уважаеми струдници от екипа на Омбудсман на Република България,

Подписани Ви монте и на семейството ми най-искрени благодарности за ефективната ни намеса във връзка с поддана жалба №3016/2017, относно съседно футболно игрище собственост на кметство Жельо Войвода, Съвременно от община Сливен върху 1/4 от игрището беше поставена хоризонтална мрежа, от страната на имота ни.

Почти осем години водихме борба с различни институции. Само празни обещания, особено предизборни. След Вашата намеса нещата се развива буквално в рамките на една седмица. Благодаря на Бог, че има такива хора като Вас, които отдават правото на несправедливост. Бъдете благословени Вие и екипът Ви! Още веднъж благодарности!

С уважение: Станислава Рачева



OMBUDSPERSON OF THE
REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

2018 PRIORITIES AND EVENTS

1. **Protect citizens in cases of over-indebtedness** and draft an *Insolvency of Natural Persons Bill*.
2. Run a campaign to **support citizens in their relations with banks** in view of the privileged position of banking institutions.
3. Advocacy to protect the **rights of citizens against the actions of collection agencies**.
4. Curb the possibilities for abusing **citizens' rights by payday loan companies**.
5. Organise and conduct a High Level Forum titled ***Double Standards on Foodstuffs within the European Union: Let's Put the Fish on the Table!***





OMBUDSPERSON OF THE
REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

How can I contact the National Ombudsperson?



**Address: 22 George Washington Str, 1202
Sofia, Bulgaria**

*Phone number: +359 28106955
+359 29809510*

Fax: +359 28106963

e-mail: priemna@ombudsman.bg

website: www.ombudsman.bg