



World Justice  
Project



Funded by  
the European Union

World Justice Project  
**EUROVOICES**

2024

SELECTED FINDINGS  
AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL:

**Bulgaria**

# Introduction

**WORLD JUSTICE PROJECT EUROVOICES (WJP EUROVOICES)** measures people's perceptions of and experiences with the rule of law, justice, and governance in 110 subnational regions across all 27 EU Member States.

WJP EUROVOICES draws upon two original data sources:

## EXPERT SCORECARD

Reflecting more than 8,000 responses from local and independent legal experts in the EU.

Scores range from 0 to 1, where 1 signifies the highest possible score and 0 signifies the lowest possible score.<sup>1</sup>

## PEOPLE'S VOICES

Based on regionally representative surveys of over 64,000 respondents from the general population.

Data is presented at the question level, shown in percentages, and can be further disaggregated by income, gender, age, and degree of urbanization.

Noting the diversity of institutional designs across EU Member States, this project's survey questions focus on the individuals' experiences related to justice, governance, and the rule of law. These experiences and their ultimate outcomes result from their interactions with a complex network of institutions at local, national, and supranational level.

In this sense, the questionnaires minimized references to government institutions, focusing instead on the perceptions and experiences of people in the city, town, or village where they live. Regional information was produced following the framework of territorial divisions of the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) system.

WJP EUROVOICES builds upon the well-established and tested methodology of the WJP Rule of Law Index, but uses an expanded conceptual framework adapted to reflect the institutional architecture in the EU. In addition, it presents data from the public and legal experts separately (thus, **the WJP Rule of Law Index and WJP EUROVOICES are not comparable**).

WJP EUROVOICES features dozens of indicators organized into three thematic areas: "Democracy and Fundamental Rights", "Justice and Safety", and "Transparency and Corruption". This data, which can be analyzed both at the country<sup>2</sup> and local level, provides actionable insights to guide policymaking, strengthen institutions, and foster inclusive, and sustainable development across the EU.

WJP EUROVOICES reports with key findings, interactive dashboards, and full datasets, published in November 2024, are available at: <https://eurovoices.worldjusticeproject.org/>

<sup>1</sup> To ensure data reliability, expert scores for certain regions are excluded from the Expert Scorecard due to insufficient responses for robust calculations.

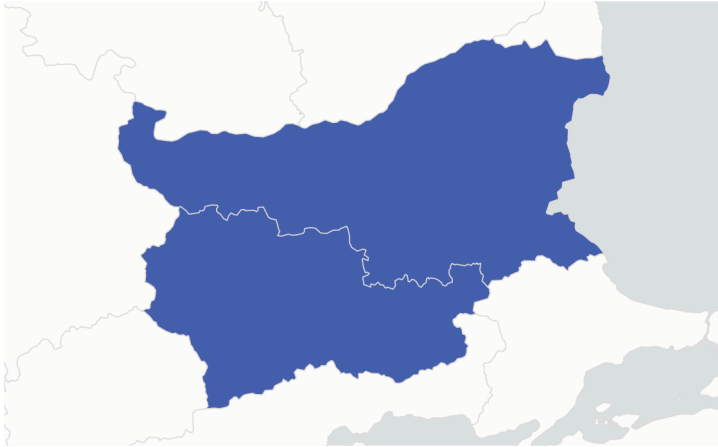
<sup>2</sup> For all indicators, country-level data, when presented, is calculated using weighted averages of region-level scores based on population size.

## Regions analyzed and completed surveys per EU country

COUNTRY	# OF REGIONS ANALYZED	COMPLETED EXPERT SURVEYS	Household surveys			
			METHODOLOGY	POLLING PARTNER	COMPLETED SURVEYS	DATA COLLECTION PERIOD
Austria	3	122	Online	Bilendi & Respondi	2,310	02/27-04/09/24
Belgium	3	109	Online	Bilendi & Respondi	1,521	03/01-04/12/24
Bulgaria	2	420	Face-to-face	Alpha Research Ltd.	1,500	01/19-02/24/24
Croatia	4	198	Face-to-face	ACT	2,000	02/15-03/28/24
Cyprus	1	99	Face-to-face	Pulse Market Research	1,010	11/10/23 - 03/20/24
Czechia	4*	200	Online	Ipsos	2,024	02/26-04/10/24
Denmark	5	148	Online	Bilendi & Respondi	2,522	03/01-04/23/24
Estonia	1	56	Online	Ipsos	1,044	02/26-04/11/24
Finland	4*	115	Online	Ipsos	2,218	02/26-04/14/24
France	13*	489	Online	Ipsos	6,195	02/26-04/16/24
Germany	16	1,089	Online	Bilendi & Respondi	8,055	03/01-04/24/24
Greece	4	232	Face-to-face	D3 Systems, Inc.	2,009	01/08-04/04/24
Hungary	3	306	Online	Talk Online	1,750	02/07-02/29/24
Ireland	3	101	Online	RED C Research	1,288	02/01-04/30/24
Italy	5	1,368	Online	Bilendi & Respondi	3,844	03/01-04/01/24
Latvia	1	68	Face-to-face	ACT	1,003	03/01-03/31/24
Lithuania	2	90	Face-to-face	ACT	1,500	03/01-04/21/24
Luxembourg	1	38	Online	ILRES	605	02/02-02/23/24
Malta	1	42	Face-to-face	Misco International	500	01/02-03/13/24
Netherlands	4	148	Online	Bilendi & Respondi	3,050	03/01-04/17/24
Poland	7	434	Face-to-face	ACT	5,252	03/01-05/10/24
Portugal	3	277	Face-to-face	Intercampus	1,562	01/23-04/02/24
Romania	4	475	Face-to-face	ACT	3,018	03/09-05/12/24
Slovakia	4	264	Online	Talk Online	2,200	02/07-02/29/24
Slovenia	2	99	Online	Ipsos	1,019	02/26-04/10/24
Spain	7	858	Online	Ipsos	3,536	02/26-04/17/24
Sweden	3	197	Online	Ipsos	1,554	02/26-04/11/24
Total	110	8,042			64,089	

Note: Regions in Czechia merged from 8 to 4 and in Finland from 5 to 4. In France, the Départements d'Outre-Mer was dropped (reducing the number of regions from 14 to 13).

# Bulgaria



Region	Code
North and South-East	BG3
South -West/-Central	BG4

## Democracy & Fundamental Rights

### EXPERT SCORECARD

#### CHECKS ON GOVERNMENT POWERS\*

	EU	Bulgaria
Legislative oversight	0.59	0.47
Judicial independence	0.67	0.48
Independent oversight	0.57	0.38
Independent prosecution	0.60	0.36
Free, fair, and secure elections	0.75	0.57
Non-governmental checks	0.70	0.56

\*Only at national level

#### GOVERNMENT RESPECT FOR CHECKS ON POWER\*

Government respect for...	EU	Bulgaria
The constitution and political opponents	0.71	0.57
Judicial independence	0.68	0.57
Independent oversight	0.63	0.46
Independent prosecution	0.62	0.38
The electoral system	0.76	0.54
Civil liberties	0.69	0.53

\*Only at national level

#### CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Civic participation	EU	Bulgaria
	0.70	0.56
BG3		
0.58		
BG4		
0.54		

#### FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Prohibition of torture and inhuman treatment	EU	Bulgaria
	0.82	0.63
BG3		
0.66		
BG4		
0.60		

Prohibition of slavery and forced labor	EU	Bulgaria
	0.74	0.64
BG3		
0.64		
BG4		
0.65		

Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion	EU	Bulgaria
	0.80	0.72
BG3		
0.70		
BG4		
0.74		

Freedom of assembly and association	EU	Bulgaria
	0.75	0.62
BG3		
0.62		
BG4		
0.61		

Freedom of opinion and expression	EU	Bulgaria
	0.70	0.54
BG3		
0.57		
BG4		
0.51		

Right to property	EU	Bulgaria
	0.66	0.53
BG3		
0.52		
BG4		
0.54		

**Right to asylum**

EU	Bulgaria
0.69	0.63

BG3	BG4
0.66	0.60

**Equality before the law**

EU	Bulgaria
0.71	0.63

BG3	BG4
0.63	0.63

**Workers' rights**

EU	Bulgaria
0.67	0.55

BG3	BG4
0.54	0.56

**Right to vote and to stand as a candidate at elections**

EU	Bulgaria
0.79	0.64

BG3	BG4
0.68	0.61

**Right of access to documents**

EU	Bulgaria
0.67	0.58

BG3	BG4
0.58	0.58

**Right to petition**

EU	Bulgaria
0.80	0.68

BG3	BG4
0.70	0.65

**Right of movement and of residence**

EU	Bulgaria
0.85	0.74

BG3	BG4
0.73	0.75

**Due process of law**

EU	Bulgaria
0.63	0.52

BG3	BG4
0.53	0.51

**PEOPLE'S VOICES****Freedom to vote without harassment or pressure**

Percentage of respondents who agree that people can vote freely without feeling harassed or pressured.

EU	Bulgaria
77%	74%

BG3	BG4
72%	75%

**Freedom of the media to criticize government policies**

Percentage of respondents who agree that the media can freely express opinions against government officials, policies, and actions without fear of retaliation.

EU	Bulgaria
55%	53%

BG3	BG4
59%	48%

**Freedom of civil society organizations to criticize government policies**

Percentage of respondents who agree that civil society organizations can freely express opinions against government policies and actions without fear of retaliation.

EU	Bulgaria
58%	57%

BG3	BG4
63%	52%

**Political parties' freedom to express opposition to government policies**

Percentage of respondents who agree that political parties can freely express opinions against government policies and actions without fear of retaliation.

EU	Bulgaria
64%	70%

BG3	BG4
73%	67%

**Freedom to express opinions against the government**

Percentage of respondents who agree that people can freely express opinions against the government.

EU	Bulgaria
71%	76%

BG3	BG4
80%	72%

**Use of misinformation to shape public opinion**

Percentage of respondents who agree that top government officials of the national government use misinformation to shape public opinion in their favor.

EU	Bulgaria
62%	74%

BG3	BG4
70%	78%

### Government collaboration with civil society

Percentage of respondents who agree that the government collaborates with civil society organizations in designing public policy.

EU	Bulgaria
44%	36%
BG3	BG4
41%	30%

### Experiences of discrimination

Percentage of respondents who reported experiencing discrimination or harassment during the past 12 months.

EU	Bulgaria
36%	11%
BG3	BG4
7%	14%

Source: World Justice Project EUROVOICES 2024.

Note: Some indicators are only shown at the national level.

## Justice & Safety

### CIVIL JUSTICE

Legal capability	EU	Bulgaria	BG3	BG4
	0.58	0.48	0.49	0.47

Access to legal aid and representation in civil disputes	EU	Bulgaria	BG3	BG4
	0.64	0.60	0.61	0.60

Accessible, appropriate, and timely dispute resolution	EU	Bulgaria	BG3	BG4
	0.49	0.49	0.53	0.44

Impartial and independent dispute resolution	EU	Bulgaria	BG3	BG4
	0.70	0.55	0.55	0.54

Effective and outcome-oriented dispute resolution	EU	Bulgaria	BG3	BG4
	0.57	0.50	0.51	0.49

Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms	EU	Bulgaria	BG3	BG4
	0.58	0.49	0.50	0.48

### CRIMINAL JUSTICE

#### Effective and impartial criminal investigation

EU	Bulgaria
0.60	0.42
BG3	BG4
0.44	0.41

#### Effective and impartial prosecution and pre-trial proceedings

EU	Bulgaria
0.60	0.43
BG3	BG4
0.45	0.41

**Effective and impartial criminal adjudication**

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
0.63	0.49
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
0.51	0.48

**Alternative criminal justice mechanisms**

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
0.52	0.41
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
0.38	0.43

**Victims' rights**

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
0.52	0.39
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
0.44	0.35

**Due process of law**

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
0.63	0.52
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
0.53	0.51

**Rights of persons deprived of liberty**

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
0.66	0.53
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
0.58	0.47

**Awareness of legal rights**

Percentage of respondents who agree that people in their country are aware of their rights when they face a legal problem.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
36%	45%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
54%	36%

**Access to affordable legal assistance and representation**

Percentage of respondents who agree that people in their country have access to affordable legal assistance and representation when they face a legal problem.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
40%	50%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
60%	41%

**Affordability of state dispute resolution mechanisms**

Percentage of respondents who agree that people in their country can easily meet the costs of turning to a state dispute resolution mechanism (courts, small claims courts, administrative agencies, etc.) when they face a legal problem.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
24%	20%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
30%	11%

**Equality and fair treatment in the civil justice system**

Percentage of respondents who agree that all parties are treated equally and fairly within the civil justice system of their country.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
37%	24%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
31%	18%

**Effectiveness of criminal prosecution**

Percentage of respondents who agree that the criminal justice system is effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
47%	35%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
42%	28%

**Respect for the rights of victims**

Percentage of respondents who agree that the criminal justice system respects the rights of victims.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
51%	38%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
47%	30%

### Respect for suspects' basic rights

Percentage of respondents who agree that the basic rights of suspects are respected by the police.

EU	Bulgaria
66%	56%
BG3	BG4
64%	49%

### Presumption of innocence

Percentage of respondents who agree that the criminal justice system treats those accused of a crime as 'innocent until proven guilty'.

EU	Bulgaria
54%	46%
BG3	BG4
54%	38%

### Respect for the rights of persons deprived of liberty

Percentage of respondents who agree that the criminal justice system guarantees the safety and human rights of people deprived of their liberty.

EU	Bulgaria
54%	44%
BG3	BG4
54%	35%

### Equal functioning of the justice system regardless of where people live

Percentage of respondents who agree the justice system functions the same regardless of where they live.

EU	Bulgaria
48%	37%
BG3	BG4
44%	30%

### Perceptions of safety when walking in the neighborhood at night

Percentage of respondents who feel safe walking in their neighborhood at night.

EU	Bulgaria
71%	78%
BG3	BG4
82%	74%

### Police and community safety

Percentage of respondents who agree that the police resolve safety problems in their communities and treat all people with kindness and respect.

EU	Bulgaria
40%	54%
BG3	BG4
62%	46%

Source: World Justice Project EUROVOICES 2024.

## Transparency & Corruption

### CONTROL OF CORRUPTION

Absence of bribery	EU	Bulgaria	BG3	BG4
	0.74	0.46	0.50	0.42

Absence of corrupt procurement practices	EU	Bulgaria
Only at national level	0.54	0.25

Absence of embezzlement	EU	Bulgaria	BG3	BG4
	0.60	0.32	0.24	0.39

Absence of favoritism	EU	Bulgaria	BG3	BG4
	0.53	0.27	0.25	0.29

Absence of corrupt electoral practices	EU	Bulgaria	BG3	BG4
	0.57	0.24	0.19	0.28



## TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Transparency and access to information

EU  
0.67

Bulgaria  
0.58

BG3  
0.58

BG4  
0.58

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS, REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT, AND RIGHT TO PROPERTY

Simple, predictable, and timely administrative proceedings

EU  
0.61

Bulgaria  
0.47

BG3  
0.49

BG4  
0.45

Right to property

EU  
0.66

Bulgaria  
0.53

BG3  
0.52

BG4  
0.54

Regulatory enforcement

EU  
0.66

Bulgaria  
0.60

BG3  
0.62

BG4  
0.59

### PEOPLE'S VOICES

#### Perception of corruption in Parliament/Congress

Percentage of respondents who believe that most or all members of Parliament/Congress are involved in corrupt practices.

EU  
42%

Bulgaria  
74%

BG3  
75%

BG4  
73%

#### Perception of corruption in the national government

Percentage of respondents who believe that most or all officials working in the national government are involved in corrupt practices.

EU  
33%

Bulgaria  
65%

BG3  
65%

BG4  
65%

#### Perception of corruption in the local government

Percentage of respondents who believe that most or all officials working in the local government are involved in corrupt practices.

EU  
25%

Bulgaria  
38%

BG3  
32%

BG4  
44%

#### Perception of corruption of judges and magistrates

Percentage of respondents who believe that most or all judges and magistrates are involved in corrupt practices.

EU  
23%

Bulgaria  
61%

BG3  
61%

BG4  
61%

#### Perception of corruption of criminal investigation prosecutors

Percentage of respondents who believe that most or all prosecutors in charge of criminal investigations are involved in corrupt practices.

EU  
21%

Bulgaria  
60%

BG3  
59%

BG4  
61%

#### Perception of corruption of public defense attorneys

Percentage of respondents who believe that most or all public defense attorneys are involved in corrupt practices.

EU  
20%

Bulgaria  
35%

BG3  
31%

BG4  
39%

### Perception of corruption of police officers

Percentage of respondents who believe that most or all police officers are involved in corrupt practices.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
17%	35%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
30%	41%

### Perception of corruption of land registry officers

Percentage of respondents who believe that most or all land registry officers are involved in corrupt practices.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
18%	20%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
16%	24%

### Perception of corruption of car registration or driver license agency officers

Percentage of respondents who believe that most or all car registration or driver license agency officers are involved in corrupt practices.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
16%	36%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
32%	39%

### Perception of corruption in political parties

Percentage of respondents who believe that most or all political parties are involved in corrupt practices.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
53%	76%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
77%	74%

### Perception of corruption in EU's institutions and agencies

Percentage of respondents who believe that most or all officials working in the EU's institutions and agencies are involved in corrupt practices.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
29%	44%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
47%	41%

### Perception that citizens can make a difference in the fight against corruption

Percentage of respondents who believe citizens can make a difference in the fight against corruption.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
58%	31%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
25%	37%

### Effectiveness of measures against corruption

Percentage of respondents who agree that the national government's measures to combat corruption are effective.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
24%	13%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
14%	12%

### Access to information on people's rights

Percentage of respondents who agree that local authorities provide people with information about their rights.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
51%	48%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
59%	38%

### Access to information in simple formats

Percentage of respondents who agree that local authorities provide information for people in a simple, easy-to-read way.

<b>EU</b>	<b>Bulgaria</b>
47%	45%
<b>BG3</b>	<b>BG4</b>
56%	35%

Source: World Justice Project EUROVOICES 2024.  
Note: Some indicators are only shown at the national level.