

PROTECTION OF WHISTLEBLOWERS AND INFORMANTS

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Corruption and whistleblowing in Bulgaria

- Corruption - often cited as one of Bulgaria's most serious problems.
- Perception, reality and hard data
- Why there is so little hard data on specific corruption cases in Bulgaria?

In Practice...

- Organizational culture and procedures?
- Annually in the Bulgarian Anti-corruption Commission between 240 to 270 complaints were received.
- Twelve to fourteen cases annually forwarded to the prosecutor's Office.
- Are the people afraid to blow the whistle?

Elements of whistleblower protection in Bulgaria

- Legal protection for whistleblowers and witnesses
- All citizens may submit a complaint – or to disclose information – to a public service organization.
- Legal ban on victimization of whistleblowers. Right to compensation.
- Public servants must report wrongdoings.

The importance of open communication channels

- How do we gather information?
 - Mailboxes
 - E-mail
 - Hotlines
 - Client satisfaction surveys (including questionnaires)
 - Whistleblowers
 - officials, working for the organization
 - clients of the organization
 - other stakeholders

The importance of the follow-up

- Whistleblowing is a prerequisite for further procedures
- Political will
- Administrative capacity
- Is it possible to change the values in the society?
- Are there prescriptions that always work?

Question – do we care for whistleblowers or for whistleblowing?

- Do we protect the person or do we make sure that the information comes to us in a timely (though untraceable) fashion?
- Do we need the name of the whistleblower?
- Dangers of focusing on the person?

Possible answers and solutions?

Build institutions – that:

are trusted by the people;

receive the assistance of the public;

are well staffed with trained public servants;

have clear and detailed written procedures;

with adequate resources to achieve clear goals;

that are set by responsible political leaders...

Possible answers and solutions?

...And only then – it will be possible to effectively protect the ones that dare to stand against their superiors and often – against their colleagues and organization as a whole.

Conclusion

It seems it is important not only to give a chance to the people to blow the whistle...

But also to make sure there will be someone to hear it and to act accordingly.

In fact, the latter is probably more important.

Thank you!

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