

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO BULGARIA

BELGIUM

- Is Bulgaria considering ratifying the Optional Protocol on Children and Armed Conflict to the Convention on the Rights of the Child?
- What is the state of play of the ratification process of the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, which the Government of Bulgaria has signed in 2008?
- Is the Government of Bulgaria considering accepting the individual complaints procedure under the human rights conventions to which it is already a State party?
- Can the Government of Bulgaria specify what additional measures have been taken and/or are planned in order to strengthen the prosecution of perpetrators of trafficking in women and children to ensure that those guilty of this crime will be punished effectively?
- Which concrete steps are the authorities taking to ensure the investigation of all criminal cases with an alleged hate motive, or where there is reason to believe that such a motive may have played a part, even if the victim has not made an allegation of that nature?

CZECH REPUBLIC

- What steps have been taken to implement effectively the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OP-CAT) ratified by Bulgaria in 2011?
- Does the Government of Bulgaria consider including racist motivation as an aggravating circumstance to ordinary crimes in its Penal Code? What measures has Bulgaria adopted to ensure that hate speech or violence targeting sexual orientation or gender identity are effectively investigated and prosecuted?
- What measures have been adopted to strengthen its fight against domestic violence and to assist its victims? Do these include also public awareness raising campaigns? What support is available to victims of domestic violence in terms of shelters and access to counselling and justice?

GERMANY

- Refugees / Minorities
 - a) Can you please inform us what measures the government of Bulgaria is taking to improve the living conditions of refugees and migrants in your country – in particular with a view to making sure that access to the right of asylum is fully granted. What refugee integration strategy does Bulgaria pursue?

- b) We should be grateful to know what steps the government of Bulgaria will take to improve access and the provision of public services and facilities to the ethnic Roma population in Bulgaria in order to improve their standard of living?
- Children's Rights / Persons with disabilities / LGBTQI
- a) Please could you tell us what measures is the government of Bulgaria taking to improve the situation of children, particularly those under the age of three or with disabilities, within the state childcare system, in order to protect their basic rights?
- b) We should be grateful to know what procedures the government of Bulgaria uses to collect robust statistical data on the ethnicity, sexual orientation and disabilities of people accessing public services, or in public sector employment or in state social, custodial or medical care?
- c) Please can you inform us what measures is the government of Bulgaria taking to ensure the equal treatment and protection from discrimination of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community within Bulgaria?

NETHERLANDS

Preventing torture in penitentiaries

- Is the government of Bulgaria, in reaction to the public statement made by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) on March 26 2015, planning to implement the recommendations made by the CPT?

Combat corruption and conflict of interest

- Can the new unified independent Anti-corruption Agency operate independently from other institutions, in order to realize the goals of the government's National Anti-Corruption Strategy?

Protection of Roma people

- What measures will the government of Bulgaria take to prevent racism against Roma people? Which concrete measures will the Bulgarian authorities take to realize the education goals that were set out in the Roma integration strategy in order to fully integrate the Roma children into the Bulgarian education system?

Migrant children

- Will the Bulgarian authorities make sure that migrant children will be protected and treated according to Bulgaria's Law on Asylum and Refugees?

NORWAY

- Norway commends Bulgaria's effort to reform the justice sector. What is the timeline for implementing in practice the *Updated Strategy for continuing the reform of the judiciary*, adopted 21st of January 2015?
- Freedom of press is essential in any democracy. We are concerned that the ownership of Bulgarian media is not transparent enough and that this is detrimental to press freedom. What measures does the Government take to secure true freedom of the media and to promote diversification of media ownership?
- The Council of Europe's *Committee for the Prevention of Torture* recently published a critical report and a public statement on the poor conditions in prisons and detention centers in Bulgaria. What steps has the government taken to follow up the report?
- Many violent attacks targeting ethnic and religious minorities, including Roma, migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers, were reported by the media and NGOs lately. Does the Government have effective mechanisms to prevent and investigate acts of hate crime?

SLOVENIA

- What efforts is Bulgaria making to ensure adequate investigation and prosecution of hate crimes directed towards persons belonging to vulnerable groups (migrants, ethnic minorities, LGBT, Roma) and to prevent attacks against them?
- Please explain how you intend to strengthen prevention measures for human trafficking, address the root causes of this scourge and assure assistance to victims.
- While taking note of the recognition of ethnic diversity in the Constitution of Bulgaria, what measures is the country taking to ensure better access to education, employment, health and housing for Roma?

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

- Please could you provide information on measures that the Government of Bulgaria is taking to ensure that Roma families are enrolling their children in kindergartens and schools, and what is being done to both reduce the drop-out rate of Roma school children and increase the rate of secondary school graduation?
- What steps has the Government of Bulgaria taken to enhance children's rights by way of providing support to parents of children with disabilities or support for children within the state childcare system, and measures taken to guarantee an effective justice system for children, including provisions for children who are victims, witnesses and offenders?

- What measures is the Government of Bulgaria taking to provide appropriate living conditions for, and integration of, refugees?
- What action has been taken to address the issue of overcrowding in prisons following the Council of Europe Anti-Torture Committee's open announcement on Bulgaria issued in March 2015, and what measures are being taken to address instances of brutality and ill-treatment by law enforcement and custodial officials?
- What is the Government of Bulgaria doing to provide clarity in its penal code with regard to the wording and scope of sexual assault offences, including steps taken to reduce the number of conditions currently required to be met in order to constitute a lack of consent?