

# **THE PUBLIC IMAGE OF THE JUDICIARY**

**March 2008**



**54 Iskar Street, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria**  
**phone/fax: [+ 359 2] 9869075**  
**Phone/fax: [+ 359 2] 9869075**  
**e-mail: [headoffice@aresearch.org](mailto:headoffice@aresearch.org)**

<http://www.aresearch.org>

**CONTENTS**

MAIN CONCLUSIONS ..... 4

- 1. The Judiciary’s Public Image ..... 4
- 2. Information Policy..... 6

FINDINGS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC SURVEY ..... 9

- 1. Assessment of the Judiciary’s Performance ..... 9
- 2. Information Sources Instrumental in Forming the Judiciary's Public Image ..... 14
- 3. Areas of Communication ..... 16
- 4. Readiness to Take Court Action..... 18

OPINION OF THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY ABOUT THE JUDICIARY’S  
PERFORMANCE ..... 20

SUMMARY ..... 22

## **SURVEY CHARACTERISTICS**

### **Four individual surveys were conducted as part of this project:**

1. A survey of representatives of the judicial system: group discussions with judges, prosecutors and lawyers.
  
2. A survey of the general public:
  - 2.1. Group discussions with parties to lawsuits and with people who have not been in contact with the judiciary;
  - 2.2. A nationally representative survey of the population aged 18 or over, conducted among 1,145 Bulgarians aged 18 or over, using standardized face-to-face interviews at the respondents' homes.
  
3. A survey involving a group discussion with journalists who cover the judicial system.

The surveys were conducted between December 2007 and March 2008.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The surveys had the following main objectives:

- To find out to what extent the public is informed about the judiciary and the areas of interest to the general public;
- To outline the judiciary's image, both from the point of view of the general public and of people working in the judicial system;
- To study factors which have the strongest influence on the general public's opinions of the judiciary;
- To find out the level of the magistrates' commitment to communicating and presenting the judiciary's work;
- Based on the surveys, to draw up recommendations that can be instrumental in amending the magistrates' ethical and professional codes and in creating tools for publicizing their work.

## MAIN CONCLUSIONS

### 1. The Judiciary's Public Image

The independence, effectiveness and transparency of the judicial system are some of Bulgaria's most serious problems. Periodic public opinion surveys show that the attitude towards the court, the investigative and the prosecuting magistracy is consistently characterized by one of the lowest levels of public confidence.

Every single report of the European Commission during the pre-accession period contained criticisms of judicial reform and of the fight against corruption and organized crime. Likewise, criticisms persisted in the interim reports of 2007 and 2008, when Bulgaria was already an EU member.

In addition to external criticism, the system draws extensive internal criticism as well, both from the public and from people who work in the judiciary. These opinions and reactions could be summed up as follows: *everyone, including magistrates, is dissatisfied with the judicial system, but no one feels they must bring about change.*

The image of the judiciary turned out to be consistently negative. The opinions of the general public, which observes the judiciary's performance from quite a long distance, the views of parties to lawsuits and of the magistrates themselves very distinctly overlap in the following areas:

- **Corruption.** Both the public and magistrates believe corruption is unquestionably a problem of the judiciary. Opinions differ only about the proportions and scope of corruption. *The general public believes that corruption is widespread and pervades all levels of the judiciary, whereas the magistrates and parties to lawsuits hold that corrupt practices are typical of the top echelons of the judicial system.* The general public is strongly influenced by media stories about hotels owned by senior magistrates (or their wives and daughters), about magistrates arrested with marked money, lost or delayed cases and case files, etc. The image of magistrates who live a life of luxury on ill-gotten gains has stuck to the entire judiciary, and the examples cited in media stories are believed to be the norm, not an exception.

- **Poor selection of magistrates.** As in most public spheres, unsatisfactory staff selection adversely affects the overall functioning of the judiciary. *This selection affects both the performance quality and the motivation* for career growth of well-connected magistrates. This, in turn, acts as a disincentive to the rest, who rely on their professionalism alone.
- **Moral deficiency.** Both magistrates and the general public believe that the system works only if moral and conscientious people join it; however, *it is very open to unethical actions, unscrupulousness, poor professionalism and corruption.*
- **The system is unable to exercise internal control and to guarantee professionalism, accountability and effectiveness.** Not only has the judiciary failed to create successful mechanisms of staff selection and promotion, *it has also failed to put in place effective forms of internal control and accountability.* Delayed cases and lengthy trials seem to be the result of sloppy work or deliberate procrastination. In this context, no amount of invoking rights safeguards or procedural difficulties can allay public discontent.
- **Susceptibility to external pressure.** *Various forms of pressure exerted by political and economic interests or by criminal groups emerge as one of the main components of the judiciary's image.* Although there are “responsible magistrates, who are men of integrity,” the presence of even a small number of judges, prosecutors and investigators who yield to pressure creates enough loopholes for defendants to evade justice. (The replacement of the prosecutor responsible for a case is very often attributed to this.) This, in turn, renders pointless the efforts of the other members of the judiciary, demotivates them and has an extremely negative impact on the public’s opinion.

In one way or another, all this leads to a refusal to seek justice. The public considers the settlement of disputes and conflicts and the defence of rights to be a money- and time-consuming affair, involving much trouble and hassle. That is why people seek justice through the courts only in serious cases. This reluctance is quite indicative of the low level of public confidence in the judiciary and in its ability to administer justice in a convenient and efficient manner.

Although respondents who have been a party to lawsuits offer less extreme assessments of the judiciary, they, too, are strongly influenced by the image projected by the media. None of these respondents said he or she had been subject to corruption pressure. Most of

them said the judge appeared to be “*a conscientious, strict person.*” Still, they also believe the judiciary is “plagued” by the above problems. What they have to add to the negative image is *psychological discomfort* (a woman suing her husband for child support), *a bad attitude to the parties to lawsuits, a waste of time, lengthy and complicated procedures, etc.*

The lack of results in the fight against corruption and organized crime, and the absence of convincing results and effective sentences in a number of cases of public interest have accounted for the low public confidence in the judiciary for many years. Instead of gradually emerging from this negative image, the judiciary is sinking further into the mire of public discontent.

The last few years have seen concrete reforms in the regional and district courts, including the introduction of random case allocation, computer information systems, improved administrative services, and better information services through signs, notices at the desks, opening hours notices, etc.

*These changes, as well as the good personal experience of some of the people who have been in contact with the judiciary in recent years, have had a positive effect on respondents’ assessments, but not to the extent of changing their overall attitudes.*

## **2. Information Policy**

The judiciary’s image outlined above is very strongly influenced by the media. At the same time, the general public perceives them as the chief and most preferred information channel.

All stakeholders (including court reporters) believe that the media focus too heavily on criminal cases and provide scarce, if any, coverage of major important civil cases. The participants in the survey believe that a change in this direction is badly needed because the current practice tends to strongly distort the picture of the proportion of criminal cases in the sum total of cases handled by the judiciary. Thus the judiciary’s work is partly covered, and the public is not informed about the outcomes of important civil cases.

*The information published in the media is mostly criticized because the judiciary seems closed in a difficult professional lingo. All stakeholders identified this problem.* Hence, all respondents say it is extremely important, and it would be very useful if, having

completed a case of great public interests (altogether or at a certain stage), judges presented and explained to journalists their decisions and the reasoning behind them in simple language. This would improve understanding of individual cases and decisions, and would have a positive effect on the judiciary's image. However, it is very important to explain the legal requirements on which a court ruling is based (e.g., regarding the trial of the Marguin brothers, the general public cannot understand if the case was adjourned because the court was legally obliged to do so, and if the case was terminated or can be resumed). Unless the problem of provision of information by the judiciary is solved, its image will remain negative and public confidence in the judicial system will remain low. ***Therefore, in addition to solving various problems of the judiciary, much effort should be put into providing clear and understandable information about emblematic cases.*** Some judges share the view that *“a judge speaks through his or her decisions,”* just as some prosecutors believe that *“a prosecutors speaks through his or her acts”* – a position which does not contribute to communication with the general public and will not help to turn around the judiciary's image.

There is a very strong interest in “backroom” information about the judiciary – stories which explain in simple language how the judiciary functions, the main difficulties magistrates encounter, their obligations and duties, the magistrates' workload, what arguments are offered for a legislative or procedural requirement, etc. It should be noted that while the public is strongly interested in this topic, journalists believe it has already been covered and is rather boring. On this point the public significantly differs with a professional group (journalists), which, having devoted its daily efforts to providing information about the judiciary, believes that there is ample information about these topics and viewers/readers would find further coverage uninteresting. Stuck in the daily grind, journalists fail to analyse the interest of the public, presume one interest or another, and thus exaggerate the influence and lasting impact of earlier stories in the electronic and print media. Acting as an intermediary, they actually restrict coverage that could create a more detailed picture of the operation of the judicial bodies, and overemphasize the importance of covering individual cases.

It is precisely due to the availability of vast information and the huge diversity of sources of information that programmes about the judiciary should be made and transmitted by various media outlets at different times of the day for different target groups.

The idea of making and airing a series/feature film about the judiciary in Bulgaria (similar to “Ally McBeal” and “Boston Legal”) met with a very good reception. Such

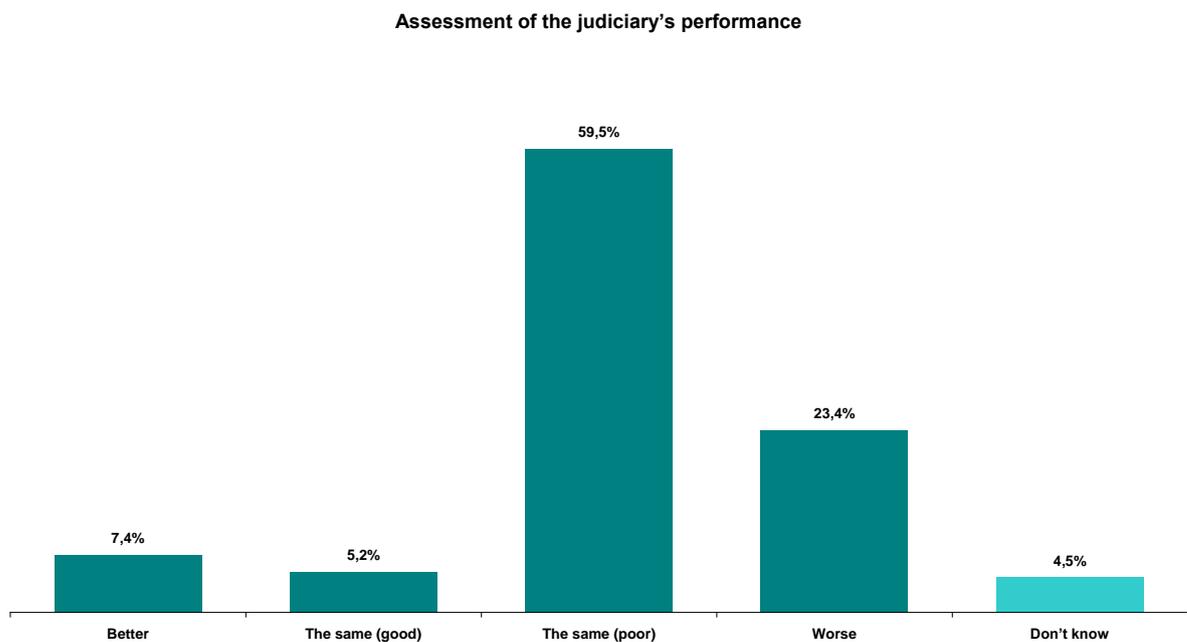
information would not only enhance the judiciary's prestige; it would cast light on various aspects of the administration of justice, e.g. the victim's rights, the risk of a miscarriage of justice, difficulties in collecting evidence, ethical issues, etc.

However, the reluctance of people in the judicial system to become actively involved and appear in the media is a major obstacle to implementing a broad-reaching information policy. *Insofar as this would require an extra effort from the magistrates, at this point they tend to believe that explaining the reasoning in a case to the media, provided there is journalistic interest, is a matter of personal decision by a judge or a prosecutor and not a recommended requirement. Prosecutors are particularly opposed to this.*

## FINDINGS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC SURVEY

### 1. Assessment of the Judiciary's Performance

The public's opinion of the performance of the judiciary is consistently negative. *The public is especially critical of the lack of tangible progress in the performance of the court, the investigating and the prosecuting magistracy – the predominant view (60%) is that the judiciary performs poorly and is not showing improvement.* The general assessments of the performance of the individual judicial bodies do not vary significantly across the socio-demographic spectrum. All social groups express the same (critical) opinion.

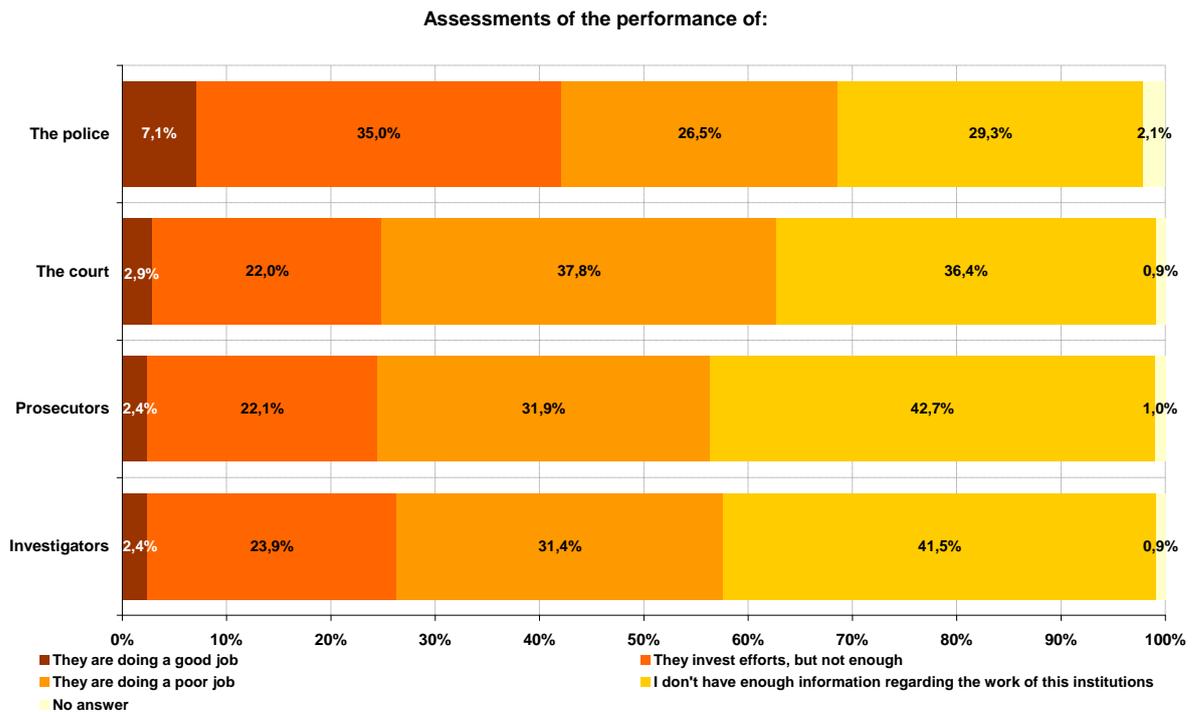


Differences appear to be more significant upon deeper analysis of the negative image and the causes of the judiciary's unsatisfactory performance. *Three very distinct groups* emerge, whose positions are consistent on a number of points and indicators.

- The first group consists of less educated, lower-status people, unemployed or employed in production (manual or unskilled work, the service industry, etc). Their position is much more superficial and is strongly dominated by the view that there is corruption in the judicial system, which accounts for the failures of the judicial bodies.
- The second group, well-educated, high-status people, with high or medium incomes, also identify corruption among judges, prosecutors and magistrates as a very

significant problem and an explanatory model, but they also demonstrate a stronger-than-average sensitivity to the more general systemic conditions which determine the performance of the judiciary, such as involvement with business interests and criminal groups, political pressure.

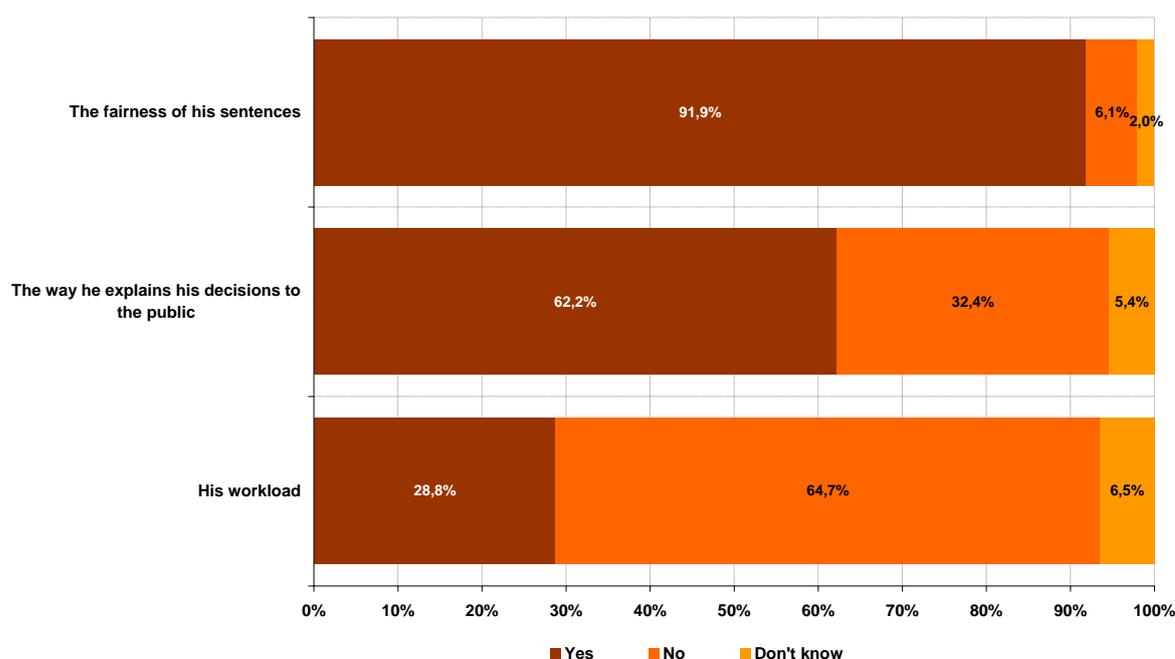
- The third group is the “micro” group of representatives of the liberal professions, intellectuals. Although small, this group of intellectuals is not homogeneous – many are lawyers or are part of micro communities, which meet and often communicate with magistrates locally, while others belong to the artistic community or are engaged in other types of intellectual activity, i.e. these are presumably local elites. Due to its heterogeneity, this minute group (about 3% of the population aged 18 or over) holds a distinctly more nuanced opinion of the judiciary’s performance. It is probably due to its closer contacts and relationships with magistrates and due to its more immediate impressions of the work of the judicial bodies that this group offers much more criticism of the functioning of the system, but also expresses slightly higher-than-average approval of the individual institutions, especially the court (10% of this group’s representatives notice an improvement in performance, compared with an average of 3%).



The average assessments (of all respondents) of the individual judicial and law-enforcement bodies are similar. The attitude towards them is equally critical, and no institution is “exonerated” by the public for failing to produce results in emblematic cases or in the fight against organized crime and corruption.

The general public considers the fairness of sentences to be the main indicator of the judiciary’s performance (92%). Next, also with very high support (62%), comes the indicator “providing reasoning to the public for the rulings in, and outcome of, cases of considerable public interest.”

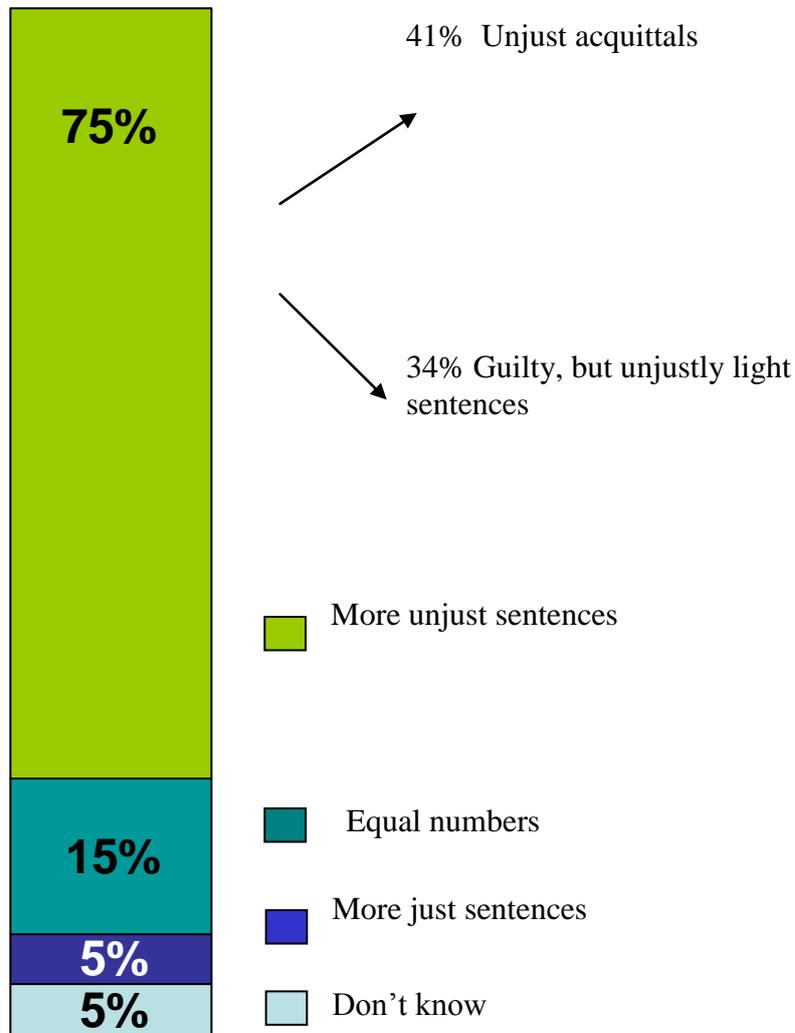
On what basis the quality of a judge’s performance should be evaluated?



Importantly, however, *the general public shares the view that most emblematic cases in recent years ended predominantly in unjust sentences<sup>1</sup> (acquittals or light sentences)*. This widespread view creates a strong sense of social injustice and inequality of citizens before the law. Hence the idea in the public consciousness that the judicial institutions are unable to perform their regulatory functions and to convince society that a rule of law and a State governed by the rule of law do exist. “*Those who pay will be acquitted,*” is one of the views most frequently expressed by the public.

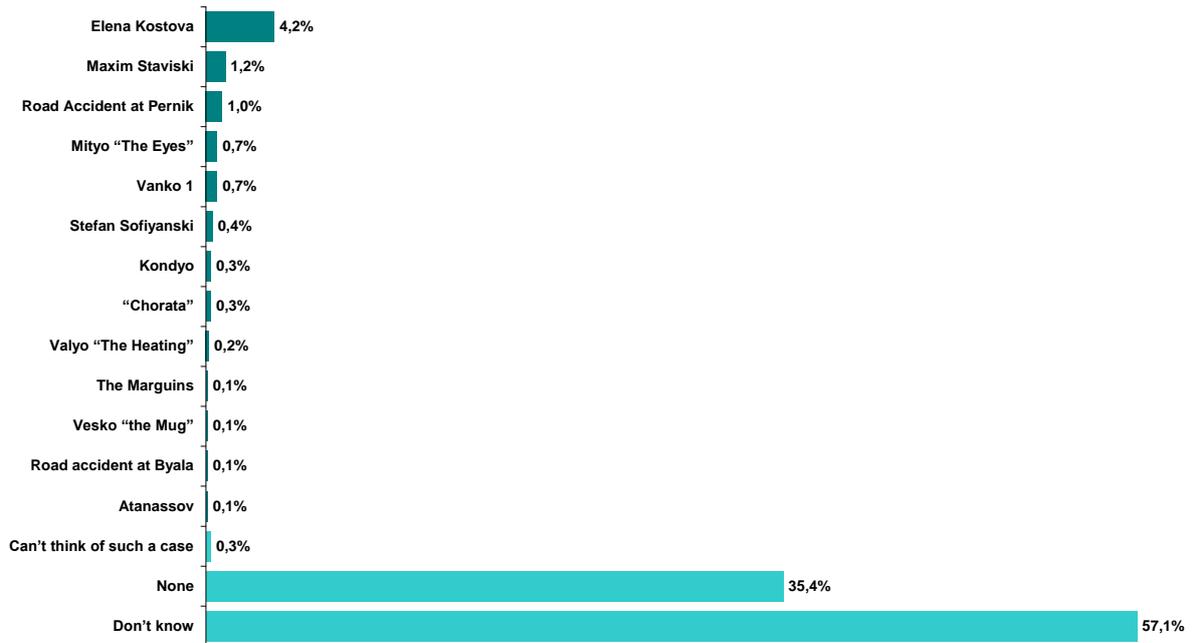
<sup>1</sup> Some of the cases cited by the general public were not completed at the time of the survey. This points to a more general problem – poor understanding of restraint measures – due to which release from custody is seen as completion of the case and “acquittal.” These issues will be discussed below.

**Would you describe the sentences passed in most completed significant cases as just or as unjust?**

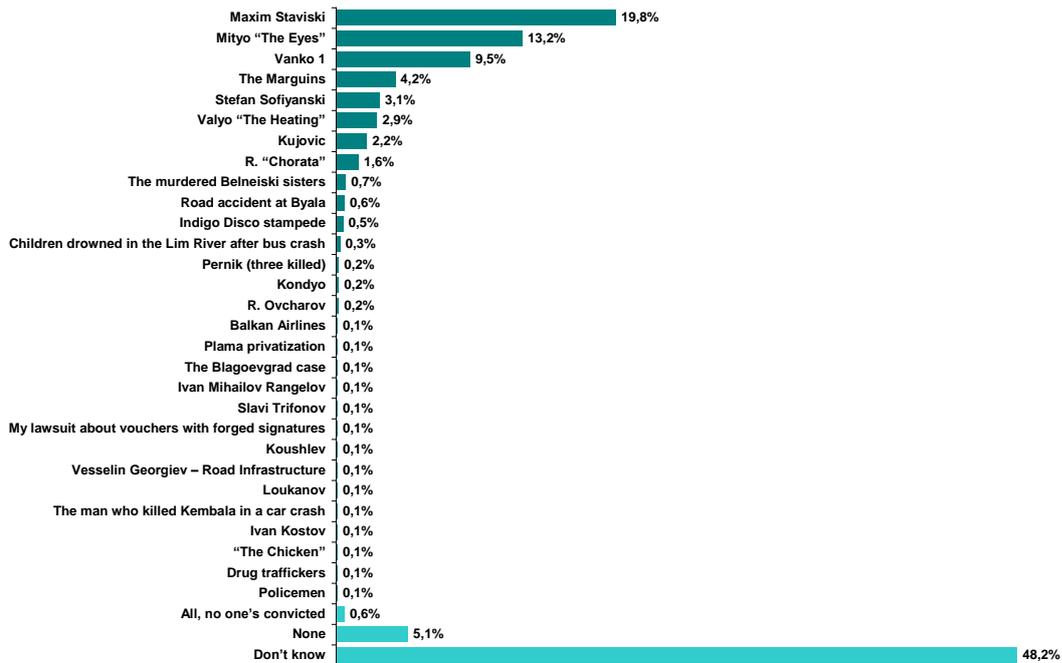


*The lack of properly functioning internal mechanisms of control, accountability and effectiveness is one of the most important problems the judicial system should address. Their absence now makes the system very open to pressure and unauthorized or unethical actions, which is a major prerequisite for eroding confidence in, and the public prestige of, the judicial bodies.*

An emblematic case with a just outcome:

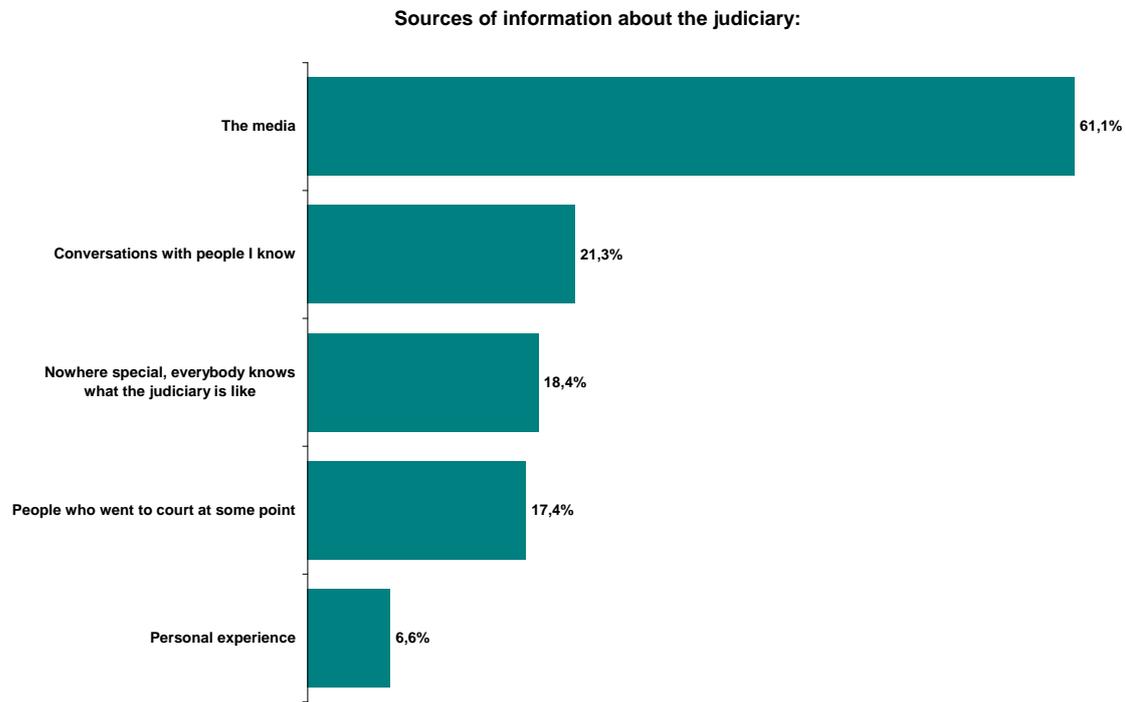


An emblematic case with an unjust outcome:



## 2. Information Sources Instrumental in Forming the Judiciary's Public Image

The survey identified two information factors with a very steady influence on the formation of the judiciary's public image.



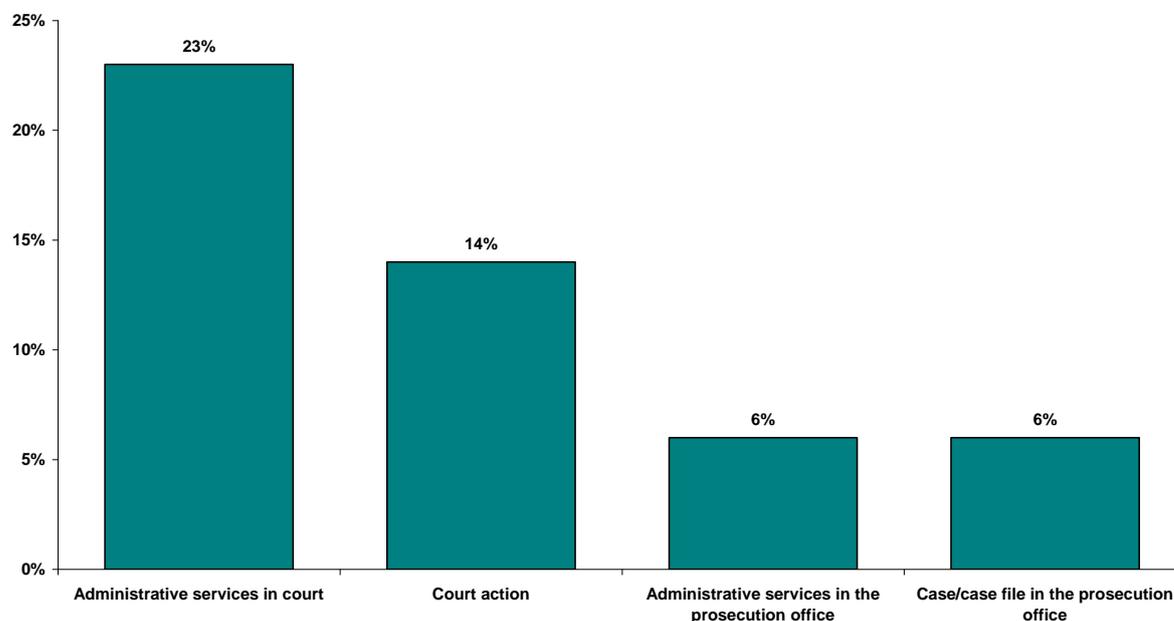
**The first factor is the information provided by the media.** This source is of a large proportions and scope, and in terms of content it lays a rather strong emphasis on problems in the judiciary's work and highlights cases of corruption, abuse and irregularities. Thus cases covered by the media are not perceived as an exception, but are extrapolated to the system as a whole.

Given the overly intensive flow of information (many media outlets, subjects and speakers) and the extreme complexity of legal matters, the general public cannot follow in detail the facts and arguments surrounding individual court cases. Information about the judiciary is predominantly provided by outsiders. Magistrates talk much more rarely, use professional terms or quote articles of the law. This greatly impedes communication with the general public. As a result, the public does not understand the arguments and the legal grounds for a ruling

*Consequently, the general public presumes corruption and/or external pressure in every case, while delay in the handling of cases is attributed to sloppy work or deliberate procrastination.* No amount of invoking rights safeguards or procedural difficulties can allay public discontent.

**The second factor is personal contacts** (parties to lawsuits, people who know magistrates, etc). This factor has a more positive effect but a very narrow scope. Twenty-seven per cent of the population aged 18 or over has had contacts with units of the judicial system.

Proportion of people who have been in contact with the court and the prosecuting magistracy – a total of 27% of the population aged 18+



	Level of satisfaction with the following activities:			
	Administrative services in court	Court action	Administrative services in the prosecution office	Case/case file in the prosecution office
Satisfied	<b><u>37%</u></b>	12%	5%	6%
Somewhat satisfied	47%	54%	59%	60%
Dissatisfied	16%	34%	36%	34%

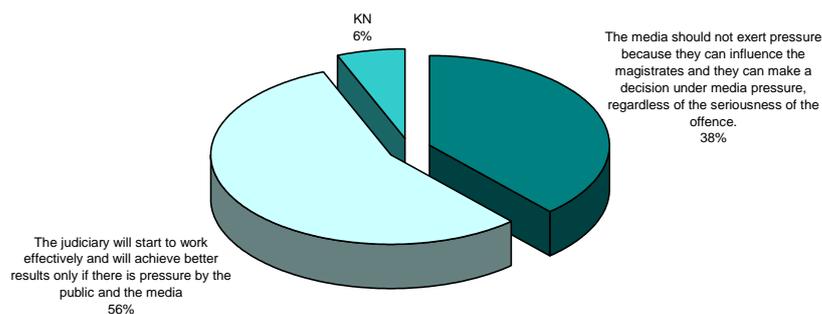
Both people who have been parties to lawsuits and those who have used administrative services offer moderate criticism. The majority of people of both groups are “somewhat satisfied,” which is a good indicator of the judiciary’s day-to-day performance. As noted above, however, the lack of results in cases emblematic of the Bulgarian transition is considered a major shortcoming and problem.

The assessment of administrative services is another key indicator of satisfaction. *It is comparatively high (37% satisfied and 47% somewhat satisfied). These opinions show that a series of efforts to improve administrative services (optimising their organization, training of court administrators, etc) have been useful and have achieved tangible results for the users of these services.*

### 3. Areas of Communication

Overemphasis on high-profile scandalous cases is a major problem of the information provided by the media. This coverage undoubtedly plays a very important role by exerting pressure on the institutions to fight abuse of power and corruption. The general public firmly supports media pressure because it believes this would make the institutions work better.

Which of the following two positions do you personally share?



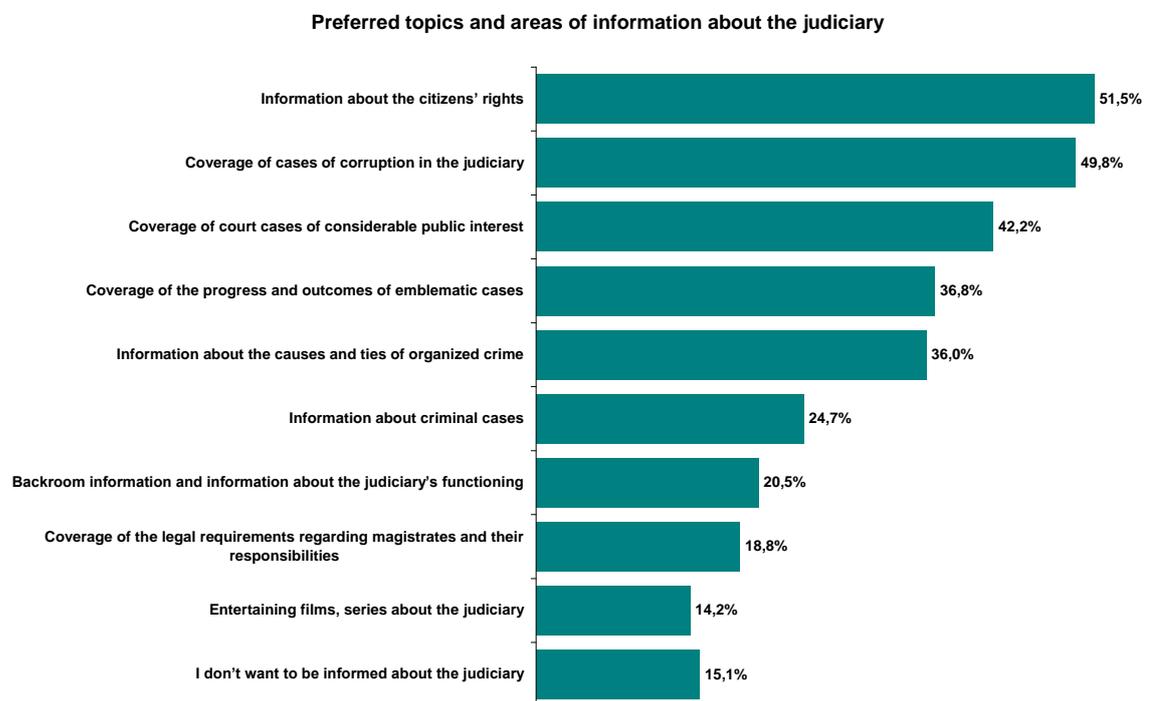
Overemphasis on topics relating to abuse, corruption and unauthorized contacts with organized crime has the drawback of creating an impression that these problems are the norm, not an exception, that corruption has pervaded the judiciary, affecting all magistrates rather than a limited range of actions.

While the general public finds such cases interesting and important, there is much more that is of interest to the public. *People are no less interested in stories and information*

*about their rights, important civil lawsuits and “backroom” information about the judicial system, to mention only a few topics.*

All stakeholders (including court reporters) believe that the media focus too heavily on criminal cases and provide scarce, if any coverage of major important civil cases. Participants in the survey believe that a change in this direction is badly needed because the existing practice tends to strongly distort the picture of the proportion of criminal cases in the sum total of cases handled by the judiciary. Thus the judiciary’s work is partly covered, and the public is not informed about the outcome of important civil cases.

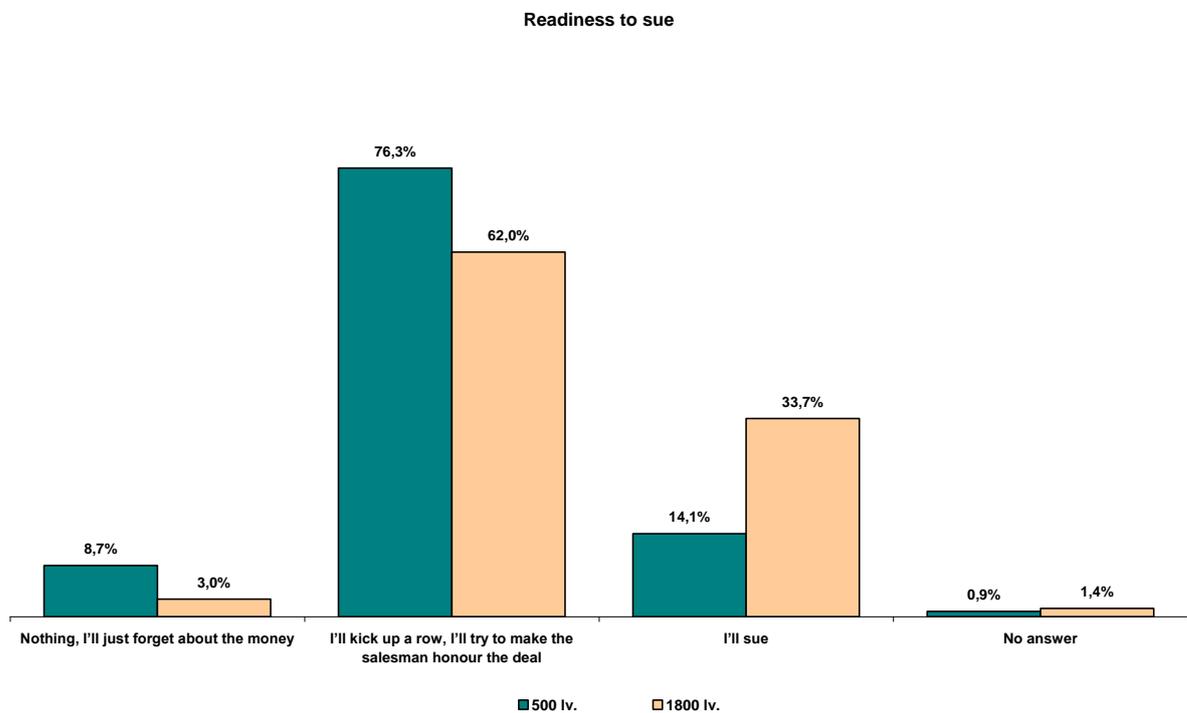
Highlighting a broader range of subjects would promote greater objectivity and differentiation of the public's opinion, which may lead to a higher level of public confidence in the judicial system and magistrates.



#### 4. Readiness to Take Court Action

A major aspect of public confidence in the judiciary is the public's willingness to take court action when a problem or a conflict arises. At present, injured persons only go to court about serious problems. A court action is believed to be money and time consuming.

Nevertheless, all magistrates (mostly in Sofia and the other large cities) complain they are overstretched. It can be expected that large cities will see a further rise in the number of lawsuits due to internal migration to the capital and the other cities, as well as due to economic stabilization and growth, which will inevitably lead to an increase in conflicting interests, not least because many companies will concentrate in these regions. Therefore better planning and allocation of staff, buildings and courtrooms will form an essential part of the reform of the judicial institutions.



We asked a tentative question only to find out that over two thirds of respondents would not take court action if their consumer rights were violated. Although even one third in absolute numbers would be enough to overstretch the courts, viewed as a public phenomenon this is an indirect indicator of low confidence and low assessment of the effectiveness of the judicial bodies.

*Case: Imagine you bought furniture for 500 leva/1,800 leva from a manufacturer, but a month after the agreed time the furniture has not been delivered yet and the manufacturer says he will deliver it in a few weeks. What would you do?*

A mere 14% of respondents would do something about it if the damage was 500 leva. In the case of the larger hypothetical damage, 33% of respondents would take some action.

## OPINION OF THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY ABOUT THE JUDICIARY'S PERFORMANCE

Besides the general public, one of the directly interested parties, lawyers, as well as the magistrates themselves, also offer numerous criticisms of the judiciary.

Opinions vary from one professional group to another; at times they even express completely opposite views, which is only to be expected in view of their different professional roles and different procedural obligations in a trial. We could not possibly critically analyse these positions. Instead, we will sum them up in this report the way they were put forward by the magistrates.

**1. Corruption.** The magistrates did not deny that this problem exists and has an adverse effect on the overall functioning of the judiciary. At the same time, they hold that *the proportions and scope of corruption are far smaller and that it affects only a small group of magistrates. They themselves felt to be on the receiving end of corrupt practices because low public confidence and generalizations of the type "they are all corrupt" act as a disincentive and create an unfavourable social and psychological working climate.*

For their part, the magistrates themselves are not ready to initiate change and create mechanisms of internal control and intolerance of these practices. The system cannot create a "purging" mechanism from the bottom up precisely because these practices are not sporadic actions of individual magistrates, but stem from more general involvement between people in the higher echelons of the judiciary, political circles and organized crime.

**2. Staff selection and qualifications.** Both lawyers and magistrates expressed serious concern about professional qualifications. The career growth of well-connected magistrates has a negative impact on the entire system and demotivates the rest. *This type of career growth is symptomatic of the principles and values upheld by people appointed in the judiciary in this manner, so when those people assume senior positions, the way they rose up the ladder is reflected in their leadership style and staff selection methods. "Everybody knows that the man in the street cannot become an MP, a judge or a prosecutor. Some favouritism is needed, which, however, leads to dependence and has a negative effect," said a lawyer.*

**Lawyers singled out the poor qualifications of police investigators as a particularly serious problem:** (*“The problem with police investigators and investigating magistrates is that ‘each of them has his own Code of Criminal Procedure in his pocket and interprets it in his own way.’”*<sup>2</sup>) Lawyers identified other serious problems, including the small number and poor qualifications of prosecutors, the judges’ sticking to formality (*“they often stick to the letter of the law”*) and the appointment of inexperienced judges while competent, experienced judges are pensioned off early.

### **3. Criticisms of procedural standards and the system’s principles of organization.**

The magistrates identified many and diverse problems. We have quoted the most important problems that many of them mentioned:

- “Lack of interpretative decisions” (a view expressed by judges)
- The principle of unity and indivisibility of the prosecuting magistracy is a complete absurdity. In some cases a prosecutor would say in the courtroom he does not support the indictment” (a lawyer’s opinion)
- “It happens very often that cases are read in the courtroom”
- “Political orders are executed at the highest level”
- “The statutory framework changes all the time”
- “The judiciary is overstretched”
- “We work in poor conditions, there are not enough courtrooms and conference halls, and the buildings are crowded.”

**4. Moral deficiency.** Both the magistrates and the general public believe that the system works only if ethical, conscientious people join it, but it is very open to unethical actions, unscrupulousness, poor professionalism and corruption. Once carved out, the niches of unethical and unlawful actions create prerequisites for defendants “to evade justice” and the rule of law begins to crumble. No system, however, can rely only on ethics as an internal regulator. *The lack of mechanisms of control and accountability is one of the main problems of the Bulgarian judiciary. Insofar as reports read like statistical summaries and no substantive indicators of quality and effectiveness are created, the system is at risk of continuing to work along the same principles.*

---

<sup>2</sup> Everybody administers justice following his own rules and standards, there is no general principle directly derived from the law to guarantee predictability.

**5. The system cannot exercise internal control and guarantee professionalism, accountability and effectiveness.** The judicial system has not only failed to build effective mechanisms of staff selection and career development, but it has also failed to adopt effective forms of internal control and accountability. The delay of cases and lengthy trials seem to be the result of sloppy work or deliberate procrastination. In this context, no amount of invoking rights safeguards or procedural difficulties can allay public discontent.

**6. Susceptibility to external pressure.** Various forms of pressure exerted by political and economic interests or by criminal groups emerge as one of the main components of the judiciary's image. Although there are “responsible magistrates, who are men of integrity,” the presence of even a small number of judges, prosecutors and investigators who yield to pressure creates enough loopholes for defendants to evade justice. (The replacement of the prosecutor responsible for a case is very often attributed to this.) This pressure is even more difficult to resist because, according to magistrates, it is usually accompanied by promises of promotion. This, in turn, renders pointless the efforts of the rest, demotivates them and has an extremely negative impact on public opinion.

## **SUMMARY**

Working on the project, we found out that the judiciary's image is subject to the same erosion and crisis as the other systems of social regulation in Bulgarian society: politics, morals, institutional norms, etc, only in much larger proportions. Being a system essentially called upon to administer justice, the judiciary draws much more criticism from the public, and is expected to meet much higher requirements. During the painful transition, the public expects the judiciary not just to quickly and effectively do its job by passing just sentences, but to impose order, rules and legality on all ill-structured, poorly organized areas of public life. Despite numerous objective prerequisites for inertia in the judiciary's image and for the slow change in public opinion, the survey registered at least three important mechanisms that could be changed in the foreseeable future:

- A much more systematic process should be established to inform people about their rights, about the ways and procedures of the judiciary's operation, about the legislation to which individual cases conform and the evidence collected in these cases. That fact is that no matter how much knowledge the public acquires, it will always pay more

attention to the results and not to the process of the judiciary's operation. One thing is certain: better legal awareness will make the public much more sensitive to topics including "media pressure," "defendants' rights," "compliance with procedures," "actions according to set rules." The judiciary's good practices of holding simulated trials for various social groups, especially young people, show that higher legal awareness gives rise to much more adequate expectations, assessments and requirements regarding the judiciary's performance.

- The judiciary should act faster and more resolutely to get rid of magistrates who act against the professional and ethical rules. All surveys show that the positive effect of a job well done is much smaller than the negative effect of an isolated instance of corruption or unscrupulousness. Both the public and the rank-and-file magistrates strongly insist on clear mechanisms of punishing corruption, appointments and promotions based on connections, and involvement of representatives of the judiciary with politicians and organized crime. Magistrates claim that the lack of a transparent system of accountability and control has a double negative impact – direct, on the outcome of concrete cases, and indirect, because the efforts of conscientious magistrates are rendered pointless and they are demotivated.
- After major emblematic cases are completed, magistrates should explain the sentences and the reasoning behind them to journalists and the public in simple, easy-to-understand language. Many magistrates remain unconvinced of the need for introducing this practice, but its lack is one of the main causes of a consistently negative public opinion. This is not just a matter of lack of proper communication; more importantly, this could dispel the public's (prejudiced) opinion that the judiciary is a closed entity guided by rules incomprehensible and alien to the man in the street, which run counter to the principles of justice and transparency. Of course, it is the magistrates themselves who should determine the concrete mechanisms, but it is imperative to act in this direction.