

DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

# POLIT-BAROMETER

Year 23 Issue 4  
6<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> April

**Boris Popivanov**



The most realistic alternative to new pre-term elections - a government with the support of GERB and PP-DB - is currently in a state of deadlock.



The assassination attempt against the Chief Prosecutor Ivan Geshev is a worrying sign for the international reputation of Bulgaria.



The draft budget for 2023 highlights a new line of tension between the caretaker cabinet and parliament.

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## 1

## THE DYNAMICS OF FOREIGN POLICY

The global tension of the West vs Russia, expressed most clearly in the war in Ukraine, exerts a long-term impact on the foreign policy agenda of Bulgaria. The temporary stabilisation of the fronts reduces the immediate effect of this impact. Unlike in October 2022, foreign policy is not at the centre of the Bulgarian political debate. Despite everything, international processes do not remain in the shadows and can be traced in at least three directions.

**Energy** is a key sector, indicated as a priority by the head of state Rumen Radev. The meeting in Sofia which launched the Solidarity Ring (STRING) project, seems to be an important stage in the efforts of Bulgaria to receive and transit Azeri gas. The significance of the event in the context of the West-Russia conflict is refracted through contradictory comments. Bulgarian institutions insist that this is another step towards a real diversification of energy supplies, which will further limit the dependence of the country, the region and Europe on Russian gas. The first speech of the new US ambassador Kenneth Merten, who praised his hosts precisely for the progress in energy, sends a similar message. At the same time, various parties and experts advocate the opposite point of view. According to them, it is actually a continuation of the Russian project “the Turkish Stream”, for Russian gas, disguised as Azeri, which should bypass Ukraine with the cooperation of politicians such as Erdogan in Turkey, Radev in Bulgaria and Orban in Hungary.

**Economic reappraisals** dominate discussions more and more clearly a year after the Russian invasion of

Ukraine. Signals that the economies of Central and Eastern Europe were suffering from duty-free imports of Ukrainian products produced a kind of coalition between Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary, which simultaneously banned imports from Ukraine. What is remarkable is the participation of countries such as Poland and Romania, which politically unconditionally support Ukraine, but economically are not inclined to the same behaviour. The ban lasted only a week and was lifted after the decision of the European Commission itself to limit the import of certain Ukrainian goods. The intervention of Brussels was relatively quick and confirmed the official European unity on the issues affecting Ukraine. The “economisation” of the conflict, however, looks like a trend that has yet to gain momentum.

In Bulgarian society, **the rift between the individual geopolitical camps** seems to be deepening. Practically every foreign policy occasion is used to toughen positions. Such an example is the anti-Putin speech of director Theo Ushev before the Moscow Film Festival. There are also examples in the opposite direction. In Sofia and 33 other Bulgarian cities, there was the so-called All-Bulgarian march for peace and neutrality, which raised demands to stop any Bulgarian aid to Ukraine, including by organising a referendum on the subject. Initially, pro-Ukrainian and pro-Putin attitudes were promoted by political parties and leading media speakers. It is noticeable that they are already taking on a life of their own and intensifying social fragmentation in Bulgaria.

## 2

## THE INSTITUTIONS AND THE AGENDA OF SOCIETY

**The President.** After the parliamentary elections on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the head of state Rumen Radev finds himself in a delicate position, largely predetermined by the election campaign and the result of the elections. Again, as after October 2<sup>nd</sup>, there is no clear majority for a regular government. Accordingly, talk of Radev's "omnipotence" and allegedly hidden forces behind him has begun again. However, the past six months have also provoked certain changes. Internationally, largely thanks to the active work of Radev's opponents, the impression of a pro-Russian image of the Bulgarian President is in the process of being formed. There is almost no influential publication abroad that does not echo this view. We can cite the situation in energy as an example. During the previous elections, the interconnector with Greece was completed. This was welcomed by the European institutions, including with the visit of the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen. Now the "Solidarity Ring" has been launched, but now without clear and unequivocal public declarations of support from Brussels. Domestically, Radev's strained relations with most leading parties are not news. What is new is rather the attempts of parties to involve Radev in their scenarios, instead of the other way around. An example can be given with GERB. The party of former Prime Minister Boyko Borisov has not only been creating media suggestions for an understanding with Radev, but even inviting him to the negotiations for a cabinet and considering how his ministers can keep their posts in such a cabinet. But in parallel with this, GERB is in a hurry to propose a fundamentally different foreign policy from that of Radev. A few days after he was elected as the Speaker of the National Assembly, Rosen Zhelyazkov from GERB visited Prague and expressed firm support for Ukraine against Russian aggression. In this way, the "Euro-Atlanticism" of GERB should stand out against the background not only of the pro-Russian forces, but also of the President.

In the new 49<sup>th</sup> National Assembly, Rumen Radev is faced with a dilemma, which he himself characterises as the "time factor". In the previous parliament, Radev significantly delayed both the consultations provided for by the Constitution and the mandates for forming a government. In the current situation,

criticism was inevitable, whatever approach he chose. If the President acted the same way, he would be accused of wanting to perpetuate his personal power. If he acted more quickly, he would be accused of having the ambition to deliberately sabotage cabinet talks. Radev chose a midway option. He convened the National Assembly and conducted the consultations in an extremely short time frame (in two weeks after the elections, as opposed to two months last time), but he showed a tendency to delay, perhaps slightly, the procedure with the mandates.

Forming a regular government at least partially coincides with the interests of the head of state. If he does not have his own personal political plan, which he does not seem to have, he gains nothing from new elections and another caretaker cabinet - firstly, because of the socio-economic tension and the lack of levers in the official power for its effective mastery; and secondly, because the extremely complex organisation of the elections in the autumn (local, parliamentary and possibly a referendum) could turn into a serious negative. This is why Radev seems to be encouraging the parties to come to some kind of agreement (including through the budget proposal), but also is also seeking to secure for himself positions of power in a regular cabinet (for example, in energy, defence and foreign policy).

**The government.** In compliance with the law, Galab Donev's caretaker cabinet submitted a draft budget for 2023 to the new National Assembly. The parameters included sound startling, especially a deficit of 6.4% and a new loan of BGN 13.7 billion. The argumentation suggests an aspiration both for dialogue with the parties and for a critical attitude towards them. The Cabinet Office argued that there was no other realistic budget in the absence of a party majority for tax changes and to cut social spending. The unadopted laws under the Recovery and Sustainability Plan together with the request to revise the Plan itself in the Energy section motivate the cabinet to forecast zero revenues from European funds.

Even before it was introduced, the draft budget caused dissatisfaction among all the players involved. Employ-

ers and unions rejected it for opposing reasons - some because it raised some social spending and others because it kept social spending low. The two leading political forces, GERB-UDF and "We Continue the Change ('Produlzhavame Promianata') - Democratic Bulgaria" (PP-DB), disputed the deficit, which precludes euro-zone membership for Bulgaria, and declared themselves in favour of optimisation of spending. There are differences in the positions here as well. While GERB believe that the budget can be revised in parliament, PP-DB are of the opinion that it should be revised by the cabinet and resubmitted. The most categorical opposition to the budget was expressed by the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), which defined it as "anti-social".

It is obvious that the budget is becoming a "hot potato" in the relationship between the government (and the President who appointed it) and parliament (and the leading parties in it). Both sides will try to use it to gain benefits for themselves, and also to emphasise their responsibility to Bulgarian society. The unusual nature of the situation arises from the fact that for the first time a law on the state budget was discussed without a parliamentary majority, whose will it should express. At the same time, it should be pointed out that the entry of the budget into the agenda of the parliament gives an additional chance for an understanding on the framework of state government in the coming months.

**The Chief prosecutor.** The assassination attempt against the chief prosecutor Ivan Geshev is the first attempt in the democratic history of Bulgaria against the holder of a key state institution. This reinforces the general atmosphere of insecurity in the country. At the same time, it also puts the previous public activity of Geshev himself in a new context.

In the weeks leading up to the assassination attempt, the chief prosecutor seemed increasingly convinced

that Justice Minister Krum Zarkov's proposed control mechanism was not just directly aimed at him personally, but was a prelude to his removal from office. Geshev's concerns were apparently strengthened by the agreement reached between GERB and PP-DB to vote on the control mechanism in parliament. The impression was created that Geshev was losing his parliamentary "back". He tried to make up for it through a massive media and public campaign. Its main points were highlighted through statements by the prosecution, press conferences and media publications. First, there is a conspiracy of oligarchs, politicians and mafia against Geshev. Second, any attempts to control the institution are unconstitutional and liquidate the legal order in Bulgaria in general. Third, Geshev himself would not become a politician because he cannot lie, but he is ready to discuss such a hypothesis. And fourth, he is a pillar of Euro-Atlanticism, which is constantly proven, including during his visit to Ukraine.

The assassination attempt seemed to confirm both Geshev's personal importance in the fight against crime and the need for an even stronger prosecution. The polarised situation in Bulgaria, however, does not seem to give any chance of overturning the debate about Geshev and the place of the prosecutor's office. The camps "for" and "against" Geshev have been formed for a long time and, in connection with the attack, hastened to confirm their previous positions. Moreover, the political forces do not seem ready to change their agenda dramatically. The prosecutor's office still retains its levers to influence public opinion with upcoming revelations in the investigation that has been launched. From the perspective of the political process, the fate of the chief prosecutor's investigative mechanism is of utmost importance. The broad political consensus on the subject can easily be – and probably will be – attacked by arguing that at a time of threat to the prosecution, politicians want to limit it rather than strengthen it.

## 3

## CONDITION OF THE PARTY SYSTEM

**GERB-UDF.** The winners of the elections on April 2<sup>nd</sup> are taking an at least seemingly extremely concessive and compromising position in the political debate. Even in the election campaign, but especially after the vote itself, GERB have created the impression that they are ready for anything in the name of the realisation of a “Euro-Atlantic government”. This is what the series of successive steps backwards looks like, expressed as public statements: (1) the only stable government would be a coalition between GERB and PP-DB; (2) cabinet agreement with PP-DB would be needed before agreement on any policies; (3) GERB could not support a PP-DB government without participating in it; (4) GERB would be inclined to a common legislative programme with PP-DB before talks on a government; (5) the government could be made up of expert figures without necessarily being in a coalition format; (6) GERB would want to know the PP-DB ministerial candidates before deciding whether to support their independent government.

All this looks more like a tactical retreat oriented towards a future strategic victory. GERB are ready to freeze the negotiations with PP-DB with the argument that the other party is not giving in, but in fact the concessions of PP-DB in their current form are not at all unimportant for GERB. For now, the question of parliamentary support is limited to the staff of the Council of Ministers, but not to the other appointments regarding personnel and tasks in the various branches of the executive power. The term “general legislative programme” sounds too restrictive, but in practice it is not. Outside of the laws required under the Recovery and Resilience Plan, as well as those related to Schengen and Eurozone membership, the programme includes only three other bills, none of which is of fundamental significance for government policy. This frees up the hands of a possible parliamentary majority to dictate the agenda of a future cabinet as it wishes without violating any agreement.

GERB as a party and Boyko Borisov as their chairman are indirectly achieving a number of their goals by dint of the negotiations themselves. There is no longer any question of Borisov quitting Bulgarian politics.

GERB are not only not in political isolation, but they also have different government formulas. GERB and Borisov seem to be the only ones making real compromises in a complex situation. Their consenting to the rotational election of the Speaker of the National Assembly actually brings the opponents of GERB into collaboration with them, whatever intentions and messages conceal this situation. In short, GERB already have a way to justify themselves if it comes to new pre-term elections. Failing that, a government in the current parliament would be heavily dependent on them. Moreover, with the focus on Euro-Atlanticism, the Eurozone, Schengen and the Recovery and Resilience Plan, in no way have GERB deviated from their core agenda based on support for big capital and fiscal discipline.

Of course, the difficulties facing GERB should not be underestimated. Whatever negotiations are conducted with PP-DB, GERB as the winners are about to face the task of dealing with the first mandate, which will be handed to them by the President. If they return it unfulfilled, they will not give a good sign to the clientele close to them that they are ready to guarantee their interests. If they propose a government that has no chance of being elected, they will give a bad sign of their potential. But if they propose a government that has a chance of being elected, they will fall into the same trap into which they themselves are squeezing PP-DB. Everything depends on the skill of the leader Borisov to play this game of chess according to the specifics of the specific moment.

“We Continue the Change (Produlzhavame Promianata) - Democratic Bulgaria” (PP-DB). At first sight the setback in the elections of April 2<sup>nd</sup> appeared to block the coalition’s plans for an all-out minority government. Paradoxically, a month after the elections, it seems that this option has not yet been ruled out. The progress of the negotiations with GERB brought PP-DB closer to a tactical victory, which risks turning into a strategic defeat. Even if in the end PP-DB put forward a personal composition of the Council of Ministers without GERB ministers, but with the votes of GERB, this could turn out to be a Pyrrhic victory.

First, the “minority government” formula itself is extremely unsustainable. It can be “exploded” at any moment which suits others. Second, PP-DB is gradually losing its monopoly on the “narrative of the future”, in other words, the monopoly on the legacy of the 2020 protests. The ambition of PP-DB to exert pressure on GERB along Euro-Atlantic lines makes them a new edition of the “urban right wing”, and this will inevitably thin out their electoral base. Thirdly, PP-DB are faced with the classic problem of all right-wing projects in Bulgaria in the last 15 years, which has led to the collapse of all before them – the wavering attitude towards Boyko Borisov. There is a suggestion of internal divisions in various forms. Thus, for example, DB begin to appear more cooperative, and PP more intransigent. Divisions are fuelled by the media, not without the help of GERB, and also within the formations themselves. “Yes, Bulgaria” by Hristo Ivanov is presented as more cooperative, and “Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria” by Atanas Atanasov as more uncompromising; while in PP Kiril Petkov is forming the image of being cooperative, and Asen Vasilev of being implacable. And fourth, the insufficient political experience of the coalition reflects on an impression of inconsistency in the political debate. The PP-DB announcement that they will not participate in a coalition with GERB, but are ready to constructively support common policies, leaves everyone dissatisfied. Those who want (Euro-Atlantic) stability are disappointed that the PP-DB can, due to internal party issues, give power to President Radev for another 6 months with new elections. The petition of the 100 intellectuals demanding unity against the geopolitical threat is indicative of the division within the “Euro-Atlantic” camp itself. Some of the signatories, however, have given examples in the past of being close to PP or DB. Those who argue for a principled anti-GERB line and recall the very emergence of PP as an alternative to the “Borisov” model are, in turn, skeptical of the negotiations between PP-DB and GERB, the agreement on the Speaker of the Parliament, and the working groups on various policies.

PP-DB cannot decide whether Boyko Borisov or Rumen Radev is their main opponent. As long as this is the case, the chances of them winning the media battles over the interpretation of the political process are slim. Even their belief that they will win the local elections in the big cities of the country (especially Sofia and Plovdiv) is already facing serious uncertainty. The fact that they are no longer talking about future electoral supremacy over GERB on a national scale is indicative.

**“Vazrazhdane” (“Revival”).** The election results and the petition for the referendum to preserve the Bulgarian lev have already strengthened the self-confidence of “Vazrazhdane” that they have the potential to rule from leading positions in the near future. The party actively exploits two niches – being closest

to the people (due to the referendum) and the most authentic Bulgarian position (due to their distance from the Euro-Atlantic mainstream). The time is coming when the National Assembly will be forced to debate the “Vazrazhdane” referendum, giving them the initiative to dictate the political agenda. At the same time, “Vazrazhdane” have finally found a collective image of all the external forces that limit the sovereignty of Bulgaria, in the face of the American embassy. The thesis that the fundamental dividing line in the country is between the Bulgarian people and the US embassy is gaining official status in party propaganda. This activated traditional concerns in Bulgarian society about external influences, outweighing the current Russia-West tension by far. It is probably no coincidence that the Russian ambassador in Sofia, Eleonora Mitrofanova, explicitly emphasised that if she were a Bulgarian citizen, she would have voted for “Vazrazhdane”. The statement sounds like an understated diplomatic hint that Kostadin Kostadinov’s party is too fixated on its referendum and its party goals, and for this reason tends to ignore and belittle other issues, as well as Russian interests in Bulgaria. To what extent the anti-Western course of “Vazrazhdane” coincides with one which is pro-Putin remains an open question for the party.

**Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF).** The party is still not managing to assume its traditional balancing role in Bulgarian politics. The statement that dialogue in the country is possible only with the participation of MRF has the appearance of an incantation rather than a real political plan. Moreover, the claim that MRF will be the opposition to a possible government between GERB and PP-DB hardly expresses more than disappointment that the party is moving away from the levers of influence on governance. Of course, the severe mistrust between the two leading political forces gives hope to MRF that it will be able to restore its role in the not-too-distant future.

The international context also deserves attention. MRF undoubtedly want to capitalise on their close relationship with Turkey. The traditionally warm ties with the Kemalist opposition and the recently warmed contacts with the ruling party clearly encourage a complex game. Leading figures of MRF, including chairman Mustafa Karadai himself attended meetings with Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu in Shumen and with opposition presidential candidate Kemal Kulçdaroğlu in Kardzhali within a week. The outcome of the elections in Turkey will give a new perspective to Ankara’s policy towards Bulgaria, and hence probably to the local Bulgarian importance of MRF.

**Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP).** Yet another election defeat spurred the party leadership to even more rampant anti-presidential radicalisation. There is practically no negative factor for BSP that is not



explained by Rumen Radev's maliciousness. It seems that until recently there was a belief that precisely the anti-presidential position would be the main reason for BSP to be recognised as a partner by the leading parties. However, the (temporary) subsidence of impeachment rhetoric and the start of negotiations between GERB and PP-DB for a government seem to make the socialists superfluous in the possible combinations. This is how the angry speeches of the chairperson Korneliya Ninova against possible agreements between the two leading parties can be understood.

BSP are giving no signals that they are seeking to expand their narrow public influence in the left spectrum. Plans for "broad left coalitions" are not on the agenda. There are two other directions in which we can identify the ambitions of the Ninova team. The first is the referendum against gender ideology in school. The petition was officially registered at the end of April. There are reports that signatures were collected much earlier, although it is not clear if this complies with the law. BSP in this case are exploiting the authority of the figures in the initiative committee, who are not just members of the party, and who are clearly expected to spread the influence of the party itself in new conservative and nationalist spheres. The deadline of the end of July, by which the necessary signatures must be collected, in turn should probably serve to mobilise the socialists for a second consecutive set of (parliamentary and/or local) elections. Secondly, the speech of Korneliya Ninova at a round table on labour issues, organised on the occasion of May 1<sup>st</sup>, is important, where she dwells in detail on the threats from the introduction of artificial intelligence and outlines the need for BSP to protect workers from it. Struggle with gender-ideology and with artificial intelligence - this is what the current emphasis in the ideological profile of BSP looks like at this stage.

There has been no let-up in the party's erosion. Despite the electoral failure, the rival formation "The Left!" has not disintegrated and remains actively involved in the political debate. It is clear that the figures of the "The Left!" see no choice but to continue this political path of ineffective struggle for the legacy of the left. That is why the monopoly of BSP on the left is still not guaranteed. The negligible political weight of the left is also evident from Ninova's requests to come up with its own legislative programme, alternative to that of GERB and PP-DB. From the position of a fifth political force in relative isolation, such moves cannot bring positive added value. The information about the (temporary) suspension of the party television station BSTV and the (upcoming) transformation of the party daily *Duma* into a weekly is another example of an uncontrolled negative trend. A positive dynamic can be found, as it were, only in the activation of BSP MEPs on topics such as youth unemployment, artificial intelligence, climate change and European solidarity, but for now it remains peripheral in the general processes in the left political space.

**"There is Such a People" ("Ima Takuv Narod" - ITN).** The return of Slavi Trifonov's party to the parliament is for now the latest good news there. The petition for a referendum on a presidential republic ended in a dismal failure. The declarations of constructiveness seemed to make ITN a second, better version of the "Bulgarian Rise" party in the previous parliament - a small political force that can be counted on in a crisis to seek dialogue with everyone. In such a context, statements of ITN that they are ready to accept the President's third mandate to form a government if the first two are not crowned with success can be understood. For now, however, these are far-fetched hypotheses. Moreover, the image of Slavi Trifonov as a person more capable of breaking up parliaments than sustaining them undermines the new cooperative political style.

## 4

## MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND FORECASTS

Bulgaria's foreign policy seems predictable and moderate under the leadership of President Radev. The new 49<sup>th</sup> National Assembly seems to be able to at least partially correct it. Analysis of the political process suggests that this parliament will either produce a "Euro-Atlantic" government or dissolve itself. Other options are not ruled out, but are significantly less likely. Moreover, even if a "Euro-Atlantic" government is not formed, there is undoubtedly a "Euro-Atlantic" majority in the parliament. The parties gravitating towards this have an interest in declaring their foreign policy positions more clearly. Therefore, it can be assumed that the President and parliament will enter into a certain competition in the formulation of the foreign policy course of Bulgaria, and that this course may evolve towards more distinct pro-Ukrainian and anti-Russian tones. A radical change should not be predicted for the time being - firstly, because of Bulgarian public opinion, and secondly, because of attitudes of waiting for the long-announced upcoming Ukrainian counter-offensive in the war with Russia.

The assassination attempt against the chief prosecutor does not seem to have the potential to rearrange priorities in Bulgarian politics for the time being, but it will undoubtedly have an effect. Domestically, the debate on the fight against corruption and crime will intensify. Those who sympathise with Geshev will insist on the renunciation of any future political interference in the work of the judiciary and the prosecutor's office in particular. On the other hand, those with a negative attitude will argue that the assassination attempt against Geshev is a signal of the need for comprehensive changes. Negative consequences for Bulgaria on the international stage can also be foreseen. This event will damage Bulgaria's international reputation and may provoke additional difficulties for the country's ambitions for more complete European integration.

The first month of life of the 49<sup>th</sup> National Assembly reveals significant differences compared to the rather similar configuration in the 48<sup>th</sup> National Assembly. The initial clash to elect a chairman seemed to promise a repeat of the past. Now, however, there are two

new circumstances - the political debate took place within the framework of the two leading formations, GERB-UDF and PP-DB; and talks about a government and its programme actually did take place. The impression was created that we are moving towards a temporary solution to the political crisis through a regular government enjoying the parliamentary support of at least these two leading formations. GERB's desire for concessions in the name of a "Euro-Atlantic" government makes the formation of a cabinet with the first mandate very unlikely, even if the negotiations with PP-DB were to be frozen. Nor is the third mandate shaping up to be very productive. The *a priori* (self) exclusion of "Vazrazhdane", the negative image of MRF, the Euro-Atlantic disloyalty of BSP and the dubious trust in ITN do not give much hope for a combination with their mandate, even in some very broad format. Such a broad format (all without "Vazrazhdane") would be justified in an environment of exceptionalism and catastrophe, the likes of which have not yet begun to form. It is not impossible, but there are no indications of it. The second mandate remains, a PP-DB government. It would be difficult for this to be achieved without GERB, because the opposite suggests that the PP-DB should seek the support of at least MRF and BSP, and for this coalition this seems even more unjustified than the support of GERB. The devil is in the details. Whatever the platform of this government, if aired, it does not promise to lead the country permanently out of the political crisis. There are simply too many "time bombs" (of a political, social, and of course budgetary nature), and the momentum and legitimacy will not be strong. The position of the President also remains unclear. At this stage, we can say that with this pace of work, early elections are not realistic before August, and this would be a clear sign of further political destabilisation.

The social agenda also stands outside the attention of political factors. If we exclude a curious statement by the leader of MRF, Mustafa Karadayi, and the speeches of the chairwoman of BSP, Korneliya Ninova, which are uninteresting for the public, this topic is as if taken out of parentheses. And she has a very dangerous poten-

tial. The draft budget of the caretaker cabinet exposed a very clear dilemma - tax reform or new loans. Political parties show a third way out: cost optimisation, but this is not very convincing. Whatever happens with the budget in the Bulgarian parliament, the risk of its failure becomes enormous. The current governance priorities of the political elite do not offer long-term solutions for social and economic stabilisation.

In the last edition of Political Barometer, we formulated five unknowns that make it difficult to construct a clearer picture of Bulgarian politics: GERB's approach to forming a government; the internal tension in PP-DB; the presidential schedule of the constitutional pro-

cedure; the initiatives to change the Constitution; and the fate of the petition by "Vazrazhdane". In none of these five case studies did the month of April lead to unequivocal answers. GERB invariably advertise their efforts for a government, but with certain reservations and an alibi for a reversal; the tension in the PP-DB is there to see, but it has not yet provoked public disagreements; the President tends to rush and slow down the procedure depending on the moment; the ambitions for a constitutional commission in the parliament and for judicial reform are present, but as if in the background; The petition of "Vazrazhdane" has been submitted, but it is not known what will come about because of it. The political intrigue shifts to May.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Boris Popivanov**, PhD., is an Associate Professor of Political Science at St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia. His research is concentrated in the areas of political ideologies, theory and history of the left, as well as the Bulgarian transition.

## IMPRINT

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung | Office Bulgaria  
97, Knjaz Boris I St. | 1000 Sofia | Bulgaria

Responsible:  
Jacques Paparo | Director, FES Bulgaria  
Tel.: +359 2 980 8747 | Fax: +359 2 980 2438  
English translation: Keneward Hill  
[bulgaria.fes.de](http://bulgaria.fes.de)

Contact:  
[office@fes.bg](mailto:office@fes.bg)

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