

PENAL PROCEDURE CODE

In force from 29.04.2006

Prom. SG. 83/18 Oct 2005, amend. SG. 46/12 Jun 2007, amend. SG. 109/20 Dec 2007, amend. SG. 69/5 Aug 2008, amend. SG. 109/23 Dec 2008, amend. SG. 12/13 Feb 2009, amend. SG. 27/10 Apr 2009, amend. SG. 32/28 Apr 2009, amend. SG. 33/30 Apr 2009, amend. SG. 15/23 Feb 2010, amend. SG. 32/27 Apr 2010, amend. SG. 101/28 Dec 2010, amend. SG. 13/11 Feb 2011, amend. SG. 33/26 Apr 2011, amend. SG. 60/5 Aug 2011, amend. SG. 61/9 Aug 2011, amend. SG. 93/25 Nov 2011, amend. SG. 19/6 Mar 2012, amend. SG. 20/9 Mar 2012, amend. SG. 25/27 Mar 2012, amend. SG. 60/7 Aug 2012, amend. SG. 17/21 Feb 2013, suppl. SG. 52/14 Jun 2013, amend. SG. 70/9 Aug 2013, amend. SG. 71/13 Aug 2013, amend. SG. 21/8 Mar 2014, amend. and suppl. SG. 14/20 Feb 2015, amend. SG. 24/31 Mar 2015, amend. and suppl. SG. 41/5 Jun 2015, amend. and suppl. SG. 42/9 Jun 2015, suppl. SG. 60/7 Aug 2015, amend. and suppl. SG. 74/26 Sep 2015, amend. SG. 79/13 Oct 2015, amend. and suppl. SG. 39/26 May 2016, amend. and suppl. SG. 62/9 Aug 2016, suppl. SG. 81/14 Oct 2016, suppl. SG. 95/29 Nov 2016, amend. and suppl. SG. 13/7 Feb 2017, amend. and suppl. SG. 63/4 Aug 2017, suppl. SG. 101/19 Dec 2017, amend. and suppl. SG. 7/19 Jan 2018, amend. and suppl. SG. 44/29 May 2018, amend. SG. 87/19 Oct 2018, amend. and suppl. SG. 96 /20 Nov 2018, amend. and suppl. SG. 7/22 Jan 2019, suppl. SG. 16/22 Feb 2019, suppl. SG. 83/22 Oct 2019 , amend. and suppl. SG. 98/17 Nov 2020, amend. and suppl. SG. 103/4 Dec 2020, amend. and suppl. SG. 110/29 Dec 2020, amend. SG. 9/2 Feb 2021, suppl. SG. 16/23 Feb 2021, amend. SG. 20/9 Mar 2021, amend. SG. 41/18 May 2021, amend. SG. 80/24 Sep 2021, amend. SG. 85/12 Oct 2021, amend. and suppl. SG. 32/26 Apr 2022, suppl. SG. 62/5 Aug 2022

Part one.

GENERAL RULES

Chapter one.

TASKS AND LIMITS OF EFFECT

Tasks of the Penal Procedure Code

Art. 1. (1) The Penal Procedure Code shall determine the order under which the penal procedures shall be carried out with the purpose to provide detection of crimes, revealing the culprits and proper application of the law.

(2) By performing the tasks under Para. 1, the Penal Procedure Code shall ensure the defence against criminal encroachments against the Republic of Bulgaria, the life, freedom, honour, rights and legitimate interests of citizens, as well as against the rights and legitimate interests of legal persons, and shall help for the prevention of crimes and consolidation of legality.

Effect by Subject

Art. 2. (1) (Suppl. - SG 103/20) The Penal Procedure Code shall apply to all criminal cases

instituted by the authorities of the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as for those instituted by the European Public Prosecutor's Office, insofar as nothing else is provided for in Council Regulation (EU) 2017/1939 of 12 October 2017 implementing enhanced cooperation on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office ('the EPPO') (OJ, L 283/1 of 31 October 2017), hereinafter referred to as "Regulation (EU) 2017/1939".

(2) The Penal Procedure Code shall also apply in the execution of Court orders of another country, placed by virtue of an agreement or under the terms of reciprocity.

Effect by Time

Art. 3. The provisions of the Penal Procedure Code shall also be applied from the moment they become effective to the procedural acts impending on uncompleted penal proceedings.

Effect by Location

Art. 4. (1) Penal proceeding instituted by a body of another country, or the effective verdict passed by a Court of another country, and not recognized under the order of this Code, shall not be an obstacle to the institution of penal proceedings by the authorities of the Republic of Bulgaria regarding the same crime and against the same person.

(2) (amend. – SG 15/10) The effective verdict passed by a Court of another country and not recognised under the order of the Bulgarian legislation shall not be subject to execution by the authorities of the Republic of Bulgaria

(3) The provisions of Para. 1 and Para. 2 shall not apply, if stipulated otherwise in an international treaty to which the Republic of Bulgaria is a party, which has been ratified, promulgated and has entered into force.

Effect with regard to persons enjoying immunity

Art. 5. With regard to persons enjoying immunity concerning the criminal jurisdiction of the Republic of Bulgaria, the proceedings provided for in this Code shall be performed in accordance with the regulations of international law.

Chapter two. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Administration of justice on criminal cases solely by the Courts

Art. 6. (1) Justice on criminal cases may only be administered by the Courts established by the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria.

(2) Courts of emergency jurisdiction on criminal cases shall not be allowed.

Central place of the Court procedure

Art. 7. (1) The Court procedure shall take central place in the penal procedure.

(2) Pre-trial procedure shall be of preparatory nature.

Participation of jurors in the Court body

Art. 8. (1) In the cases and under the order as provided by this Code, jurors shall take part in the Court body.

(2) Jurors shall enjoy the same rights as judges.

Requirement for appointment

Art. 9. In the penal procedure only judges, Court jurors and investigating bodies shall participate, appointed under the established order.

Independence of the bodies in the penal procedure

Art. 10. While carrying out their functions, the judges, Court jurors, the prosecutors and the investigating bodies shall be independent and shall be subservient only to the law.

Equality of citizens in the penal procedure

Art. 11. (1) All citizens who participate in the penal procedure shall be equal before the law. No privileges or restrictions based on race, nationality, ethnic belonging, sex, origin, religion, education, convictions, political belonging, personal and social or property status shall be allowed.

(2) The Court, the prosecutor and the investigating bodies shall apply the laws precisely and equally to all citizens.

Competitiveness. Equal rights of the parties

Art. 12. (1) The Court procedure shall be competitive.

(2) The parties in the Court procedure shall have equal proceedings rights, except in the cases, provided by this Code.

Detection of the objective truth

Art. 13. (1) The Courts and the investigating bodies shall, within the limits of their competence, be obligated to take all measures to ensure the detection of the objective truth.

(2) The objective truth shall be detected following the order and through the means provided by this Code.

Taking decisions by inner conviction

Art. 14. (1) The Court and the investigating bodies shall take their decisions by inner conviction, based on objective, thorough and complete inspection of all circumstances of the case, under the guidance of the law.

(2) Evidence and the instruments of their finding shall not have preliminarily determined force.

Right of defence

Art. 15. (1) The defendant shall be entitled to defence.

(2) The defendant and the other persons participating in the penal procedure shall be provided with all procedural remedies necessary for the defence of their rights and legitimate interests.

(3) The Court, the prosecutor and the investigating bodies shall make clear to the persons under Para. 2 their procedural rights and shall provide them with the possibility to exercise those rights.

(4) The victim shall be provided with the needed procedural remedies for the defence of his/her rights and legitimate interests.

Presumption of innocence

Art. 16. The defendant shall be considered innocent until the conclusion of the penal proceedings with an effective verdict establishing the contrary.

Inviolability of person

Art. 17. (1) No measures of coercion shall be taken against the persons taking part in the penal proceedings, except in the cases and following the order stipulated by this Code.

(2) No person may be detained for more than 24 hours without permission of the Court. The prosecutor may order detainment of the defendant till he/she is brought before the Court.

(3) The respective body shall immediately notify a person, named by the detained, about the detainment.

(4) If the detained is a foreign citizen, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall be informed immediately about the detainment.

(5) The Court, the prosecutor and the investigating bodies must release every person who has been unlawfully deprived of freedom.

Immediacy

Art. 18. The Court and the investigating bodies shall base their decisions on evidencing materials, which they shall collect and examine in person, except in the cases provided for by this Code.

Oral penal procedure

Art. 19. The penal procedure shall be carried out orally, apart from the cases provided for by this Code.

Publicity of Court sessions

Art. 20. Court sessions shall be public, apart from the cases provided for by this Code.

Language, in which the penal procedure shall be conducted

Art. 21. (1) The penal procedure shall be conducted in the Bulgarian language.

(2) The persons, who do not speak Bulgarian language, may use either their native or another language. In such case, an interpreter shall be appointed.

Hearing and deciding the cases within a reasonable term.

Art. 22. (1) The Court shall hear the cases within a reasonable term.

(2) The prosecutor and the investigating bodies shall be obliged to provide the conduction of the pre-trial procedure within the terms stipulated by this Code.

(3) The cases over which the defendant has been arrested, shall be investigated, considered and decided with a priority before the rest of the cases.

Chapter three.

INSTITUTION, DISCONTINUATION AND SUSPENSION OF THE PENAL PROCEEDINGS

Obligation for instituting penal procedure

Art. 23. (1) Where the conditions provided for in this code are Art. 23. (1) Where the conditions provided for by this Code are present, the competent state body shall be obligated to institute penal proceedings.

(2) In the provided by this Code cases, the penal procedure shall be considered instituted by the first action of initiation of the investigation.

Grounds, excluding the institution of penal proceedings and grounds for its discontinuation

Art. 24. (1) No penal procedure shall be instituted or the instituted procedure shall be discontinued, where:

1. (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) the act has not been committed or does not constitute a criminal offence;
2. The perpetrator is not liable to criminal proceedings because of amnesty;
3. The criminal liability has been terminated by elapse of time limitation;
4. The perpetrator has died;
5. After the perpetration of the offence, the perpetrator has fallen into continuous mental disorder, which excludes sanity;
6. Concerning the same person there is an uncompleted penal procedure, an effective verdict, a decree or an effective Court ruling for discontinuation of the case;
7. in the provided by the Special Part of the Penal Code cases of general nature, a complaint by the victim to the prosecutor is missing.
8. (Amend., SG, No. 50/2003 – takes effect three days after May 30, 2003) in the cases provided for by the Special Part of the Penal Code, before commencement of the Court proceedings, the victim makes a motion that the penal proceedings are discontinued.
8. the perpetrator is discharged from criminal liability through implementation of educational measures;
- 8a. (new – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) the perpetrated deed is an administrative violation, for which the administrative procedure has been finalized;
9. in the cases provided by the Special Part of the Penal Code cases, before commencement of the Court investigation, the victim or the damaged legal person makes a motion for discontinuation of the penal procedure before the first-instance Court.

10. regarding the person a transfer of penal procedure is admitted to another state;

11. (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010)

(2) In the cases under Para. 1, Items 2, 3 and 9, the penal procedure shall not be discontinued if the defendant makes a motion for its continuation. The amnesty or the time limitation shall not be obstacle for renewal of the penal case, if the sentenced makes a motion about it or the prosecutor tables proposal for absolatory verdict.

(3) The procedure on cases of general nature shall be also discontinued where the Court approves agreement on deciding the case.

(4) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The penal procedure shall be terminated under Para. 1, item 8a, if in the cases under Art. 25, item 5 within 1-month term from the termination no proposal for renewal of the administrative penal procedure has been made, or the proposal has not been granted.

(5) (Former Para. 4 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Apart from the cases under Para. 1, no penal procedure shall be instituted for an offence, subject to prosecution on a complaint of the victim, and the instituted procedure shall be discontinued also, where:

1. there is no complaint;

2. the complaint does not satisfy the requirements referred to in **Art. 81**;

3. the victim and the perpetrator have become reconciled with one another, except if the perpetrator has failed to fulfil the terms and conditions of the reconciliation without valid reasons;

4. the private complainant withdraws his /her complaint;

5. the private complainant was not found at the address stated by him/her her or did not appear before the Court without valid reasons; this provision shall not apply if for the private claimant, his/her attorney appears before the Court.

(6) The criminal proceedings shall also be terminated on the grounds of Para. 5, item 1 in the cases under **Art. 25, Para. 1, item 6**, if within six months following the receipt of a notice of suspension the victim of the criminal offense does not file a complaint under Art. 81.

Suspension of the penal procedure

Art. 25. (1) Former text of Art. 25 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017). The penal procedure shall be suspended:

1. where, following the commitment of the offence, the defendant person has fallen into a brief mental disorder, which excludes sanity, or in case he/she suffers from another severe disease, which impedes carrying out the proceedings;

2. if the hearing of the case in the absence of the defendant would impede detection of the objective truth.

3. the perpetrator is a person, enjoying immunity.

4. (new – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) the court extends a pre-judicial question to the EU Court of Justice;

5. (new – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) for the same act, which is a crime, an administrative procedure has been finalized.

6. (new – SG 7/19) at the pre-trial procedure it is established that the criminal offense is prosecuted following the victim's complaint.

(2) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The penal procedure may be terminated, where an answer to a submitted request for international legal aid is expected.

Suspension of the penal procedure for crimes committed in complicity

Art. 26. In case of crimes committed in complicity, where the requirements for splitting do not

appear, the penal procedure may be suspended with regard to one or several accused persons, if that would not impede the detection of the objective truth.

Chapter four. COURT

Section I.

Function and body of the Court in the Court procedure. Court acts.

Function of the Court in the Court procedure

Art. 27. (1) After the prosecutor tables the indictment act or the victim by the crime person submits a complaint, the Court shall govern the procedure and shall decide all matters on the case.

(2) In the pre-trial procedure, the Court shall carry out the powers as provided by the special part of this Code.

Body of the Court

Art. 28. (1) The Court shall hear the penal cases as first instance in panels of:

1. one judge, if for the crime a penalty to five years of imprisonment or other lighter punishment is provided;
2. (amend. – SG 109/08) one judge and two jurors, where for the crime a punishment more than five years of imprisonment is provided;
3. two judges and three Court jurors, where for the crime a punishment of not less than fifteen years of imprisonment or other heavier punishment is provided;

(2) While hearing the cases as an instance of appeal, the Court shall sit in panels of three judges;

(3) While hearing the cases as an instance of cassation, the Supreme Cassation Court shall sit in a body of three judges.

(4) (new – SG 93/11; amend. - SG 42/15) In proceedings under Chapter Thirty-Three, the competent court shall sit in panels of three judges, and when reviewing judgments under **Art. 354, para 2, item 2 and para 5**, the court shall sit in panels of five judges.

(5) (prev. text of para 4 – SG 93/11) The Chairperson of the Court, the reporting judge and the presiding judge shall pronounce in person in the cases, provided by this Code.

Grounds for challenging the judges and the jurors

Art. 29. (1) In the body of the Court may not participate a judge or juror, who:

1. has participated in the body of the Court, and has pronounced:
 - a) a verdict or a decision in the first, appeal or cassation instance or in the renewal of the penal case;
 - b) determination of approval of the agreement on deciding the case ;
 - c) determination of suspension of the penal procedure;
 - d) (repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)
2. who has carried out investigation on the case;
3. who has been a prosecutor on the case;
4. who has been defendant, trustee or guardian of the defendant, defender or attorney on the case;

5. who has been or may join the penal procedure as a private prosecutor, private complainant, civil claimant or civil defendant;

6. (amend. – SG 9/21, in force from 06.02.2021) who has been witness, witness of procedural actions, translator, interpreter in Bulgarian sign language of information or an expert- technical assistant on the case;

7. who is a spouse or a close relative of the persons under Items 1 – 6;

8. who is a spouse or a close relative of another member of the Court body;

(2) In the Court body may not participate a judge or a juror, who due to other circumstances may be considered prejudiced or interested directly or indirectly in the outcome of the case.

Grounds for challenging the Court secretary

Art. 30. The persons under **Art. 29** may not participate in a Court session in the capacity of Court secretaries.

Procedure of challenging the judges, jurors and the Court secretary

Art. 31. (1) In the cases as provided in **Art. 29** and **Art. 30**, the judges, Court jurors and the Court secretary shall be obliged to request themselves to be struck off the list of the body .

(2) The parties may make challenges until the commencement of the Court investigation, unless the grounds thereof have occurred or have become known to them later.

(3) The motions for being struck off the list must be motivated.

(4) The Court shall rule on the challenges and the motions for being struck off the list immediately, in a secret meeting, with the participation of all members of the Court body.

Types of Court acts:

Art. 32. (1) The Court shall pronounce:

1. a verdict, where acting as the first or appeal instance decides the matters on the guilt and liability of the defendant;

2. a decision, where rules on the grounds of a complaining or a challenge or a request for renewal of the penal case;

3. a determination - in the rest of the cases.

(2) The Chairperson of the Court, the reporting judge and the judge, presiding the Court body shall pronounce injunctions.

Order of pronouncing the acts. Form of the court acts (Title suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021)

Art. 33. (1) The Court shall pronounce the acts in a secret session.

(2) The judges and the jurors shall be obliged to keep the secret of the session.

(3) The jurors shall make statements and vote before the judges. The judge, presiding the Court body shall make statements and vote last.

(2) The Court shall pronounce by a simple majority, and the members of the body shall have equal vote.

(5) Each member of the body shall have the right to state a special opinion, which shall be motivated. Where the reporting judge states a special opinion, the motives shall be made out by another

member of the body.

(6) In the Court session the determinations and the injunctions of the Chairperson shall be pronounced in oral and shall be entered into the protocol.

(7) (New - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) Court acts shall be drawn up as electronic documents in the unified information system of the courts and shall be signed with a qualified electronic signature.

(8) (New - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) When signatures of parties are to be affixed, the court act shall also be drawn up on paper. These acts shall then be put in electronic form in the unified information system of the courts.

Content of the acts

Art. 34. Each act of the Court shall contain: data about the time and place of its issuance, the name of the Court which issues it, the number of the case on which it is issued, the names of the members of the body, of the prosecutor and the Court secretary, motives, disposition and the signatures of the members of the body.

Section II. Jurisdiction

Criminal cases under the jurisdiction of the regional Court and of the district Court acting as first instances

Art. 35. (1) Under the jurisdiction of the regional district Court shall be all criminal cases, except those, which are under the jurisdiction of the district Court.

(2) (Amend. - SG 27/09, in force from 10.04.2009; amend. and suppl. – SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012; amend. - SG 33/11, in force from 27.05.2011, amend. – SG 61/11; amend. and suppl. - SG 42/15; amend. - SG 74/15, suppl. - SG 101/17, amend. - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) Under the jurisdiction of the district Court acting as first instance shall be the cases for criminal offences referred to in Articles 115, 116, 118, 119, 123, 124, Art. 131, Para. 1, item 8 and Para. 2, items 1 and 2, Art. 142, Art. 142a, Para. 2, sentence two, Art. 149, Para. 5, Art. 152, Para. 4, Art. 155, Para. 5, item 1, Art. 156, Para. 3, item 1, Art. 159, Para. 5, Art. 159d, sentence two, Art. 162, Para. 3, sentence one and Para. 4, Art. 195, Para. 1, item 9, sentence two, 196a, 199, 203, Art. 206, Para. 4, Art. 208, Para. 5, sentence one, Art. 212, Para. 5, Art. 213a, Para. 2, item 5, sentence two, Para. 3 and 4, Art. 214, Para. 2, Art. 219, 220, 224, 225b, 225c, Art. 235, Para. 4, sentence one, Art. 242, 243 - 246, 248 - 250, 252 - 260, 260a - 260c, 277a – 278e, Art. 280, Para. 2, item 5, Art. 282 – 283b, 287a, 301 - 307, 319a – 319f, 321, 321a, Art. 330, Para. 2 and 3, Art. 333, 334, 340 - 342, Art. 343, Para. 1, letter "c", Para. 3, letter "b" and Para. 4, Art. 346, Para. 6, sentence two, Art. 349, Para. 2 and 3, Art. 350, Para. 3, Art. 354a, Para. 1 and 2, Art. 354b, Art. 354c, Para. 2-4, Art. 356b, Para. 2, Art. 356f – 356i, Art. 357 - 360 and Art. 407 – 419a of the Penal Code.

(3) (New - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) Under the jurisdiction of the district court acting as first instance shall also be the cases for criminal offences of general nature under Art. 201 - 205, Art. 212, Para. 1 - 4, Art. 212a, 226, 251, 285, 287, 288 and 289, committed by:

1. Deputy-Ministers;

2. chairmen of state agencies and state commissions, Executive Directors of executive agencies and their deputies;

3. the Director of the National Social Security Institute, the Director of the National Health Insurance Fund, the Executive Director and the Directors of the territorial directorates of the National

Revenue Agency;

4. the Director-general of the Customs Agency, heads of customs, customs bureaus and checkpoints;

5. the members of the Commission for Combating Corruption and Confiscation of Illegally Acquired Property and the National Bureau for Control of Special Intelligence Means;

6. regional Governors and Deputy-regional governors;

7. members of the Supreme Judicial Council, the Chief Inspector and the inspectors in the Inspectorate to the Supreme Judicial Council;

8. the Mayors and Deputy-Mayors of municipalities, the Mayors and Deputy-Mayors of regions and the chairmen of municipal councils.

(4) (Amend. - SG 42/15, previous Para. 3, amend. - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) Under the jurisdiction of the Sofia City Court as a first instance shall be the cases of criminal offences of general nature, committed by judges, prosecutors and investigators, by other persons enjoying immunity, by members of the Council of Ministers, as well as the cases for criminal offences under Chapter One of the special part of the Penal Code, unless the special rules of Chapter Thirty-one apply.

(5) (New - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) The Sofia City Court shall also have jurisdiction over cases within the competence of the European Prosecutor's Office.

(6) (Previous Para. 4 - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) When criminal liability is mitigated due to subsequent circumstances, this shall not be taken into account in determining the jurisdiction.

Jurisdiction per place of commitment of the criminal offence

Art. 36. (1) The case shall be under the jurisdiction of the Court within the region of which the criminal offence has been committed.

(2) Where the criminal offence has begun in the region of one Court and has continued in the region of another, the case shall be under the jurisdiction of the Court in the region of which the criminal offence has been finalized.

(3) Where the place of commitment of the crime cannot be determined, or the indictment is for several criminal offences, committed in the region of different Courts, the case shall be under the jurisdiction of the Court, in the region of which the pre-trial procedure has been finalized.

Jurisdiction over crimes perpetrated abroad

Art. 37. (1) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The cases for crimes perpetrated abroad shall be under the jurisdiction:

1. of the Courts in Sofia, if the person is a foreigner or the crime was committed with the participation of a foreigner;

2. of the Court by the place of residence of the person, if he/she is a Bulgarian citizen, or where the participants are Bulgarian citizens with residence within the jurisdiction of the same Court;

3. of the Court, in the district of which the pre-trial proceedings have been finalized, provided that the conditions under Items 1 and 2 are not met;

2. Of the Sofia Courts, in case the person is a foreigner.

(2) Where the crime has been perpetrated on a Bulgarian ship or an aircraft beyond the boundaries of this country, the case shall be under the jurisdiction of the Court, in the district of which is the port or the airport to which the ship or the aircraft belongs.

(3) In the cases for crimes perpetrated by members of the armed forces or by officers serving with the Ministry of the Interior, who participate in international military or police missions abroad, shall be under the jurisdiction of the Sofia Martial Court.

Jurisdiction in case of several crimes perpetrated by the same person

Art. 38. Where an accusation has been brought against one and the same person for several crimes falling under the jurisdiction of Courts of various ranks, the case for all crimes shall be under the jurisdiction of the higher ranking Court, and where the Courts are of the same rank – under the jurisdiction of the Court, under the jurisdiction of which falls the case for the gravest crime.

Jurisdiction in case of determining an aggregate punishment under several verdicts

Art. 39. (1) Where an aggregate punishment shall be determined for several crimes, for which there are effective verdicts passed by different Courts, competent shall be the Court, which has passed the last verdict.

(2) Where under one or more of the verdicts, the defendant has been acquitted from serving the verdict according to the procedure referred to in [Art. 64, Para. 1](#) or [Art. 66 of the Penal Code](#), the Court, which determines the aggregate punishment, shall also decide on the issue of serving the verdict.

(3) (suppl. - SG 27/09, in force from 01.06.2009, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) In the cases of the Para. 1 and Para. 2, the Court shall also determine the initial regime of serving the punishment.

Jurisdiction in case of connivance

Art. 40. Where several persons have been defendant in having committed one or several crimes and one of the accomplices is subject to the jurisdiction of a higher Court, the case shall fall under the jurisdiction of the higher Court.

Jurisdiction in case of relation among various cases of various crimes against various persons

Art. 41. (1) (Suppl. - SG 19/12, in force from 06.03.2012) Where two or more cases for different crimes or crimes against different persons have relation between themselves, they shall be joined, in case their proper clarification so necessitates.

(2) Where one of the cases falls under the jurisdiction of a higher Court, that Court shall hear the joint case and where the cases fall under the jurisdiction of Courts of equal ranking – by the Court under whose jurisdiction the case of the gravest crime falls.

(3) The Court may join two or more cases for several crimes against one and the same defendant until the Court investigation has not started on either of them. If some of the cases falls under the jurisdiction of a higher Court, the case shall be heard by that Court.

Determining the jurisdiction and forwarding the penal case to the competent body

Art. 42. (1) The Court shall rule on the matter of the jurisdiction, on the base of the circumstantial part of the indictment.

(2) (Amend. – SG 13/11, in force from , amend. – SG 61/11, amend. - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) If the Court finds that the case will fall under the jurisdiction of a Court of equal ranking, it shall discontinue the Court procedure and forward the case to this Court, and where the Court finds that the case will fall under the jurisdiction of a higher court or a military court – it shall discontinue the Court

procedure and forward the case to the respective prosecutor.

(3) If the Court finds that the case will not be heard by a Court but by another body, the Court shall discontinue the procedure and forward the case to the respective body.

Hearing of penal cases by another Court of equal ranking

Art. 43. The Supreme Cassation Court may decide that the case shall be heard by another Court of equal ranking, if:

1. a lot of defendant or of witnesses reside the region of the other Court;
2. the defendant or the victim is a judge, prosecutor or investigator form the region of the Court, which the case falls under the jurisdiction of;
3. the Court where the case falls under the jurisdiction of, cannot form a body.

Disputes on jurisdiction

Art. 44. (1) Disputes on jurisdiction between the Courts shall be decided by the Supreme Cassation Court.

(2) Till the dispute on jurisdiction stays, the bodies before which the case is pending shall carry out the urgent actions only.

Jurisdiction under the appeal and cassation instance

Art. 45. (1) The penal cases, decided by the regional Court, shall be heard by the district Court as a Court of appeal, and the decided by the district Court acting as a first instance – by the appeal Court acting as instance of appeal.

(2) The penal cases shall be heard under cassation order by the Supreme Cassation Court.

Chapter five. PROSECUTOR

Functions of the prosecutor in the penal procedure.

Art. 46. (1) The prosecutor shall bring and maintain the accusation in crimes of general nature.

(2) In execution of his/her tasks under Para. 1, the prosecutor shall:

1. rule the investigation and carry out a permanent supervision of its lawful and due execution as a monitoring prosecutor;
2. may carry out investigation or separate actions of investigation and other procedural actions;
3. participate in the Court procedure as a state prosecutor;
4. take measures for removal of the admitted breaches of the law, following the order as established by this Code and shall exercise supervision of lawfulness upon execution of the compulsory measures.

(3) (New - SG 103/20) The functions of the prosecutor provided for in this Code shall also be performed by the European Prosecutor and the European Delegated Prosecutors in accordance with their competence under Regulation (EU) 2017/1939.

(4) (Suppl. - SG 42/15, amend. – SG 62/16, in force from 09.08.2016, previous Para. 3 - SG 103/20) Prosecutor form the higher prosecution may ex-officio cancel or amend in written the decree of a prosecutor from the lower degree prosecutor's office, which was not discussed in court. His/her written and

reasoned instructions shall be obligatory for them. In these cases he/she may execute by him/herself the needed actions of investigation and other procedural actions.

(5) (New - SG 42/15, previous Para. 4, amend. - SG 103/20) The prosecutor, who has received the instructions under Para 4, may object to them before a prosecutor of the higher prosecution office.

(6) (New - SG 103/20) The provisions of Para. 4 and 5 shall not apply to the rulings and procedural actions of the European Public Prosecutor and the European Delegated Prosecutors when they perform functions under Regulation (EU) 2017/1939.

(7) (Prev. text of Para 04 - SG 42/15, previous Para. 5, suppl. - SG 103/20) The General Prosecutor of the Republic of Bulgaria shall perform supervision of lawfulness and methodical ruling of the activity of all of the prosecutors, except for the activities of the European Public Prosecutor and the European Delegated Prosecutors when they perform functions under Regulation (EU) 2017/1939.

(8) (New – SG 16/21, declared unconstitutional with Decision of the Constitutional Court № 7 of 2021 - SG 41/21) **The provisions of Para. 4, 5 and 7 shall not be applied when an investigation or separate actions of the investigation and other procedural actions are carried out by the prosecutor of the investigation against the Prosecutor General or his deputy.**

Grounds and order of challenging the prosecutor

Art. 47. (1) The interested persons may challenge the prosecutor in the cases of **Art. 29, Para. 1, Items 1, 4 - 8 and Para. 2.**

(2) In the cases under Para. 1, the prosecutor shall be obliged to beg to be struck off from the list by him/herself.

(3) The challenge and the begging to be struck off from the list shall be motivated.

(4) On the grounds of the challenge and of the begging to be struck from the list in the pre-trial procedure a prosecutor from the higher prosecution shall pronounce, and in the Court procedure – the Court which shall hear the case.

Joining the prosecutor to a procedure on cases of crimes, subject to prosecution on complaint of the victim.

Art. 48. (1) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) In those cases, where the victim, due to helpless status or dependence on the perpetrator of the crime, cannot defend his/her rights and legitimate interests, the prosecutor may join the procedure instituted by a complaint of the victim in each stage of the case and to take on the accusation. In these cases, the penal procedure may not be discontinued on the grounds of **Art. 24, Para 45, items 3-5**, but the victim may maintain the accusation jointly with the prosecutor as a private prosecutor.

(2) If the prosecutor withdraws his/her participation in the procedure, the victim may continue to maintain the accusation acting as a private prosecutor.

Instituting penal procedure for crimes, prosecuted on a complaint of the victim, by the prosecutor.

Art. 49. (1) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) In extraordinary cases, where the victim of a crime, prosecuted on a complaint of the victim, is not able to defend his/her rights and legitimate interest due to a helpless status or dependence on the perpetrator of the crime, if the period under **Art. 81, Para. 3** has not elapsed and some of the obstacles for instituting of penal procedure envisaged in **Art. 24, Para. 1, Item 1-8a and 10** do not occur.

(2) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The instituted penal procedure shall be preceded under the general order and may not be discontinued on the grounds provided by **Art. 24, Para. 5**.

(3) The victim may participate in the penal procedure acting as a private prosecutor or a civil claimant.

(4) If the prosecutor withdraws his/her participation in the procedure, the victim may continue to maintain the accusation acting as a private prosecutor.

Continuation of the procedure for crimes subject to prosecution on complaint of the victim

Art. 50. (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, suppl. - SG 44/18, amend. – SG 7/19) Where the pre-trial procedure finds that the crime shall be a subject to prosecution on complaint of the victim, the penal procedure shall be discontinued, where the prosecutor shall inform the victim about his right to submit a complaint under **Art. 81**, if the grounds under **Art. 49** are not present.

Filing of a civil claim by the prosecutor

Art. 51. Where the victim, due to minor age or physical or psychological defects, is not able to defend his/her rights and legitimate interests, the prosecutor may file a civil claim in his/her favour.

Chapter six. BODIES OF INVESTIGATION

Bodies of investigation

Art. 52. (amend. – SG 109/08) (1) (amend. - SG 69/08; amend. – SG 109/08) Bodies of investigation shall be

1. the investigators;
2. (suppl. – SG 93/11, in force from 01.01.2012; amend. – SG 52/13, in force from 14.06.2013; amend. - SG 14/15) officers of the Ministry of Interior, appointed at the position "investigating police officer" and the officers of Customs Agency, appointed at the position of "investigating customs inspector";
3. (new - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010; suppl. – SG 93/11, in force from 01.01.2012) the police authorities at the Ministry of Interior and the customs authorities at the Customs Agency – in the cases, specified in this Code.

(2) (new - SG 33/09) While conducting the investigation, the bodies of investigation under Para.1, Item 1 shall have the rights under **Art. 46, Para. 2, Item 2**.

(3) (amend. – SG 69/08, amend. – SG 109/08; prev. text of Para 02 - SG 33/09) The bodies of investigation shall act under the ruling and supervision of a prosecutor.

Grounds and order of challenging the bodies of investigation

Art. 53. (1) The provisions of **Art. 47, Para 1 -3** shall also apply respectively to the bodies of investigation.

(2) On the grounds of the challenge and the begging to be struck from the list the prosecutor shall rule.

(3) Till the decision on the challenge, the body against which it is submitted, shall carry out emergent actions only.

Chapter seven. ACCUSED

Section I. General Provisions

A person who has capacity of defendant

Art. 54. Defendant person shall be the person who is involved in this capacity under the conditions and order as provided by this Code.

Rights of the defendant

Art. 55. (1) (Suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The defendant shall have the following rights: to learn for which crime he/she is involved in this capacity and on the base of what evidence; to give or to refuse to give explanations about the accusation; to become acquaint with the case, including with the information obtained by usage of special intelligence devices and to make the necessary extracts; to submit evidence; to participate in the penal procedure; to make requests, notes and objections; to make statements last; to appeal the acts which harm his/her rights and legitimate interests; to have a defender. The defendant shall have the right of participation of his/her defender in the performance of all of the actions of investigation and other procedural actions with his/her participation, except if he/she abandons explicitly this right. Requests, notes, objections, as well as appeals against acts that infringe his rights and legitimate interests, may be made electronically, signed with a qualified electronic signature.

(2) (New – SG 7/19) The accused person shall be entitled to be provided with general information facilitating his choice of defense counsel. The accused person shall have the right to freely contact his defense counsel, meet him privately, receive advice and other legal assistance, including before and during the interrogation and any other procedural action involving the accused.

(3) (Previous Para. 2 - SG 7/19) The defendant shall also have the right to a last plea.

(4) (new - SG 32/10, in force from 28.04.2010; amend. – SG 21/14, previous Para. 3 - SG 7/19) A defendant who does not speak Bulgarian, shall have the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings in a language he/she understands. The defendant shall be provided with a written translation of the decree for bringing the accusations, of the court rulings for a constraint measure, of the act of indictment, of the judgment delivered, of the decision of the Court of appeal the and of the decision of the cassation instance. A defendant shall be entitled to refuse written translation pursuant to this Code where he/she has a defense counsel and his/her procedural rights are not being violated.

Section II. Restraining Measure and Other Measures of Procedural Compulsion

Restraining measure

Art. 56. (1) A restraining measure may be taken to the defendant in case of general nature, where from the evidence on the case a reasoned assumption that he/she has committed the crime and a ground under **Art. 57** appear.

(2) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) Where the accusation is brought under the

conditions of **Art. 269, Para. 3, Items 2 - 4**, a restraining measure shall be taken after the inquiry of the defendant.

(3) While determining the restraining measures, the degree of social danger of the crime, the evidence against the defendant, the health status, family status, the profession, the age and other data about the defendant shall be taken in consideration.

Purpose of the restraining measures

Art. 57. The restraining measures shall be taken with the purpose to stop the defendant to abscond, to commit a crime or to foil the execution of the entered in force verdict.

Types of restraining measures:

Art. 58. The restraining measures shall be:

1. subscription;
2. guarantee;
3. home arrest.
4. detention in custody.

Act of determination of the restraining measure

Art. 59. (1) The act, which determines the restraining measure, shall state: the time and the place of its issuance, the issuing body; the case on which it is issued; the full name of the defendant; the crime for which he/she is involved as an defendant, and the reasons for the determined measure.

(2) The act shall be submitted to the defendant, who shall be obliged not to change his/her residence without written notification to the respective body about his/her new address.

Subscription

Art. 60. (1) (prev. text of Art. 60 - SG 42/15) Subscription shall present accepting the obligation by the defendant that he/she shall not leave the residence without the permit of the respective body.

(2) (new - SG 42/15) The authority that has imposed the measure under Para 1 shall notify the structures of the Ministry of Interior.

(3) (new - SG 42/15) The compliance with the duty under Para 1 shall be controlled by the structures of the Ministry of Interior. The prosecutor and the court shall be notified of any breaches of the duty.

Guarantee

Art. 61. (1) The guarantee may be in money or in securities.

(2) While determining the guarantee, the property status of the defendant shall be taken in view.

(3) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The guarantee, taken by bodies of pre-trial procedure may be appealed by the defendant or by his/her defender before the respective first-instance Court within three-day term from submitting the act for its determination. The Court shall immediately hear the case at a closed session and shall pronounce a determination which shall be final.

(4) The guarantee may be submitted by the defendant or by another person. Upon the initial taking

of the restraining measure of guarantee or upon change of the restraining measure from subscription into a guarantee, the respective body shall determine a period for its submission, which may not be shorter than three days and not longer than fifteen days.

(5) Where the guarantee cannot be submitted within the determined period, the Court may take a graver restraining measure, and in the pre-trial procedure the prosecutor may make a request under **Art. 62, Para. 2** or **Art. 64, Para. 1**.

(6) In event of change of the restraining measure from graver into a guarantee, the defendant shall be released after its deposition.

(7) Withdrawal of the guarantee shall not be admitted.

(8) Guarantee shall be released, when the defendant is discharged from criminal liability or from serving the imposed punishment, absolved, sentenced to punishment without imprisonment or detained in custody for execution of the punishment.

Home arrest

Art. 62. (1) The home arrest shall be a prohibition for the defendant to leave his or her dwelling house without permission of the respective body.

(2) The restraining measure of home arrest in the pre-trial proceeding shall be imposed and controlled by the Court, following the provision of **Art. 64** and **65**.

(3) (new - SG 42/15) The court shall determine the address of serving the home arrest. Any subsequent change of the address of serving the measure shall be authorised by the prosecutor in the pre-trial proceedings or by the court, where the case is pending.

(4) (new - SG 42/15) The court, respectively the prosecutor, shall notify the structures controlling the application of the measure, of imposing it and of any subsequent change of the service address.

(5) (new - SG 42/15) The compliance with the prohibition under Para 1 shall be controlled by the structures of the Ministry of Interior. The competent court and prosecutor shall be notified of any violations.

(6) (new - SG 42/15) The compliance with the prohibition under Para 1 may be controlled also through electronic surveillance means as set out in a law.

(7) (new - SG 42/15) To the terms of the measure in the pre-trial proceedings shall apply **Art. 63, Para 4**.

Detention in custody

Art. 63. (1) The restraining measure detention in custody shall be taken when a grounded assumption that the defendant has committed a crime, which is punishable with imprisonment or other stricter punishment, and the evidence on the case indicate a real danger exists, that the defendant may abscond or commit a crime.

(2) Should the opposite not be found from the evidence under the case, the danger under Para. 1 shall be there upon the initial disposition of detention in custody in cases, where:

1. the charge is for an offence, committed repeatedly or under the conditions of dangerous recidivism;

2. the charge is for a grave malicious crime and the defendant has been convicted for another grave malicious crime of general nature to imprisonment of no less than one year, or to another more severe punishment, the execution of which has not been delayed on the grounds of **Art. 66 of the Penal Code**;

3. the person has been involved as accused for a crime for which a punishment of at least 10 years imprisonment or other more severe punishment is provided.

4. (new – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. - SG 44/18) the person has been involved as defendant under the conditions of **Art. 269, Para. 3**.

(3) Where the danger that the defendant may abscond or commit another crime is over, the detention in custody shall be replaced by a lighter restraining measure or shall be cancelled.

(4) (amend. – SG 71/13) The detention in custody in the pre-trial proceeding shall not last more than eight months, if the charge is for a major malicious crime, and more than a year and six months, if the charge is for a crime for which a punishment of not less than fifteen years of imprisonment or life imprisonment is provided. In all other cases, the detention in custody in the pre-trial proceeding shall not last more than two months.

(5) After the expiration of the terms, referred to in Para. 4, the detained shall be released without delay by order of the prosecutor.

(6) Where in the pre-trial procedure is found that the grounds of Para. 3 are present, the prosecutor, upon his/her initiative, shall change the restraining measure of detention in custody into a lighter or shall cancel it.

(7) Suppl. – SG 7/19) For any arrest, as well as any detention on the grounds of **Art. 64, Para. 2** shall immediately be informed:

1. (suppl. – SG 7/19) the family of the accused or other person designated by the accused person;
2. the employer of the defendant, except the defendant declares that he/she does not want this;
3. (repealed - SG 7/19)

(8) (New – SG 7/19) When the detainee is a foreign citizen, at his request, the consular authorities of the state of which the detainee is a citizen shall be immediately informed through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If the detainee is a national of two or more states, he may choose the consular authorities of which state to be informed of his detention and with whom he wishes to make contact.

(9) (New – SG 7/19) The notification under Para. 7 in respect of a specific person may be postponed for a period of up to 48 hours when there is an urgent need to prevent the occurrence of severe adverse effects on the life, freedom or physical integrity of a person, or when it is imperative that the investigative bodies take action whose impediment would seriously hamper the criminal proceedings. The postponement of this notification shall be implemented in the light of the particular circumstances of each particular case and shall not go beyond what is necessary and shall not be based solely on the type or the gravity of the criminal offense committed.

(10) (New – SG 7/19) The decision under Para. 9 shall be taken by the prosecutor of the pre-trial proceedings, who is to rule with a motivated decree. The decree shall be subject to appeal by the accused or his defense counsel before the respective court of first instance.

(11) (New – SG 7/19) The court shall immediately examine the appeal in a closed court session and is to issue a determination. The determination of the court shall be final.

(12) (Previous Para. 8 - SG 7/19) The detainee's children, if they have no relatives to nurse them, shall be accommodated through the respective community or municipality in a nursery, a kindergarten or a boarding school.

Detention in custody in the pre-trial procedure

Art. 64. (1) (1) Detention in custody in the pre-trial procedure shall be ordered by the respective Court of first instance on a motion of the prosecutor.

(2) (Suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021, declared unconstitutional in the part regarding sentence two with Decision of the Constitutional court № 13 of 2021 - SG 85/21) The appearance of the defendant before the Court shall be ensured without delay by the prosecutor, who - where necessary - may order that the defendant be detained up to 72 hours for bringing him/her before the Court. **In case of a declared state of emergency, martial law, disaster, epidemic, other force majeure circumstances, or with the written consent of the accused and his defense counsel, the accused may participate in the case by videoconference, in which case his identity shall be verified by the Director of the**

prison or the Head of the detention centre, or by an officer designated by them.

(3) The Court shall hear the case immediately in a sitting of a single judge with the participation of the prosecutor, the defendant and his/her counsel.

(4) The Court shall take the restraining measure of detention in custody, where the grounds of **Art. 63, Para. 1** appear, and if these grounds do not appear, the Court is allowed not to take restraining measure or to take a lighter one.

(5) The Court shall rule a determination, which shall be announced to the parties in the Court hearing and shall be executed immediately. By ruling the determination the Court shall set down the case for hearing before the Court of appeal within a period of not more than seven days, in case of an appeal or an objection.

(6) The determination shall be subject to appeal and objection before the appropriate Court of appeal within three-day time period

(7) (Suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The Court of appeal shall try the case in the staff of three judges in open session with the participation of the prosecutor, the defendant and his or her counsel. Non-appearance of the defendant without good reasons shall not prevent the hearing of the case. In case of a declared state of emergency, martial law, disaster, epidemic, other force majeure circumstances, or with the written consent of the accused and his defense counsel, the accused may participate in the case by videoconference, in which case his identity shall be verified by the Director of the prison or the Head of the detention centre, or by an officer designated by them.

(8) The Court of appeal shall rule a determination, which shall be announced to the parties in the Court hearing. The determination shall not be a subject to appeal by private complaint or private objection.

(9) Where guarantee has been imposed by virtue of the effective determination, the defendant shall be detained after depositing it.

Judicial control on detention in custody in the pre-trial procedure

Art. 65. (1) The defendant or his/her defender may at any time in the pre-trial procedure require change of the imposed measure of detention in custody.

(2) The motion of the defendant or his/her defender shall be brought through the prosecutor who shall be obliged to forward immediately the case to the Court.

(3) (Suppl. – SG 98/20) The case shall be set down for hearing within three-day period, following its receipt into the Court and shall be heard in open session with the participation of the prosecutor, the defendant and his/her defender. The case shall be tried in the absence of the defendant, if he/she states that he/she does not want to appear or his/her bringing before the Court is impossible for health reasons. Where this does not prevent the exercise of the right to defence, the detainee may, with his consent, participate in the case by video-conference, in which case his identity shall be verified by the Head of the prison, the Head of the detention centre or an official designated by them.

(4) The Court shall assess all circumstances relating to the legality of the detention and shall rule a determination, which shall be announced to the parties at the Court session. With the announcement of the order the Court shall set down the case for hearing before the Court of appeal in case of an appeal or an objection within a period of not more than seven days

(5) The determination shall be executed immediately following the expiry of the term for appeal except if an objection, which is not in the defendant's interest, has been filed.

(6) When the motion has been brought by the defendant or by his/ her defender and the determination under Para. 4 confirms the restraining measure, the Court may set a time period in which a new motion by the same persons shall be inadmissible. Such period shall not exceed two months following the entry into force of the determination and shall not be applied when the motion is grounded on a sudden decline of the defendant's state of health.

(7) The determination shall be subject to appeal by a private complaint and a private challenge

before the appropriate Court of appeal within three-day period.

(8) The Court of appeal shall try the case in a body of three judges in open session with the participation of the prosecutor, the defendant and his/her defender. The case shall be tried in the absence of the defendant, where he/she states that he/she does not want to appear or his/ her bringing to Court is impossible for health reasons

(9) The Court of appeal shall rule a determination, which shall announce to the parties in the Court session. The determination shall not be a subject to appeal by a private complaint or private challenge.

(10) Where by virtue of the effective determination a guarantee has been imposed, the defendant shall be detained until depositing it.

(11) Para. 1- 10 shall also apply in the cases, where the defendant has been detained because of non-payment of the guarantee determined by the Court

Consequences of failure to fulfil the obligations related to the restraining measures

Art. 66. (1) Where the defendant fails to appear before the appropriate body without good reason, or changes his/her residence without notifying the body of this, or breaches the imposed measure, a restraining measure shall be imposed, or the latter shall be replaced by a stricter one, following the order provided by this Code.

(2) If the restraining measure is a guarantee, the money or the securities shall be forfeited in favour of the state. In such cases a guarantee in a larger amount also can be fixed.

Protection Measures for Victims (Title amend. - SG 41/15, in force from 06.07.2015)

Art. 67. (1) (amend. - SG 41/15, in force from 06.07.2015) Upon proposal of the prosecutor with the consent of the victim or at the request of the victim, the competent first-instance court may impose on the defendant a prohibition:

1. on approaching the victim closer than a prescribed distance;
2. of contact, in any form, with the victim, including by phone, electronic or ordinary mail or fax;
3. from entering certain localities, places or defined areas where the victim resides or visits;

(2) (new - SG 41/15, in force from 06.07.2015) The Court shall notify the victim of the the possibility of requesting a European protection order.

(3) (prev. text of para 2 - SG 41/15, in force from 06.07.2015, suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The Court shall immediately hear the proposal or the request in an opened session by one judge, hearing the prosecutor, the defendant and the victim. The determination of the Court shall be final.

(4) (prev. text of para 3 - SG 41/15, in force from 06.07.2015) The prohibition shall be cancelled after closing the case with effective verdict or where the procedure is discontinued on another ground.

(5) (prev. text of para 4 - SG 41/15, in force from 06.07.2015, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The victim may at any time require from the Court cancellation of the prohibition. The Court shall rule following the provision of Para. 3.

(6) (New – 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) In the legal procedure the powers under Para. 3 and 5 shall be realized by the Court, which hears the case.

Informing the victim with specific protection needs in relation to detention measures

Art. 67a. (New - SG 16/19) The prosecutor in the pre-trial proceedings and the court in the court proceedings shall immediately notify the victim with specific protection needs in cases where:

1. the accused has violated the house arrest custody measure taken or the detention;
2. the detention order taken home custody or detention is revoked or replaced by a subscription or

warranty.

Prohibition of Leaving the Territory of the Republic of Bulgaria

Art. 68. (1) (amend. – SG 109/08; suppl. – SG 60/12, in force from 08.09.2012; amend. - SG 42/15) In pre-trial procedure upon a charge of malicious crime or another crime which caused death, the prosecutor may prohibit the defendant to leave the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria, unless there is his own permission. The competent structures of the Ministry of Interior shall immediately be informed about the prohibition.

(2) (new - SG 42/15 (*)) Where the prohibition under Para 1 was approved or imposed in the court proceedings following the delivery of a judgement, the defendant may be deprived of his identity documents under **Art. 13, Para 1, Items 1 and 2 of the Act on the Bulgarian Personal Documents** and may be issued replacement documents as set out in a law.

(3) (prev. text of Para 02 - SG 42/15) The prosecutor shall rule on the defendant's or his/her defender's request for permission under Para. 1 within three-day period.

(4) (prev. text of Para 03 - SG 42/15) The prosecutor's refusal shall be subject to appeal before the appropriate Court of first instance.

(5) (prev. text of Para 04 - SG 42/15) The Court shall hear the appeal immediately in closed session and shall rule immediately determination with which it confirms the prosecutor's refusal or grants the defendant permission to leave the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria. The determination shall be final.

(6) (prev. text of Para 05, amend. - SG 42/15) As set out in Para 5, at the request of the defendant or his defender the court may revoke the prohibition under Para 1, if the defendant is not likely to hide outside the country.

(7) (prev. text of Para 06, amend. - SG 42/15) In the Court proceedings, the powers under Para. 1 and 6 shall be exercised by the Court trying the case. The determination shall be subject to appeal by private complaint or private challenge.

Consequences of Violation of Protection Measures for Victims and of the Prohibition on Leaving the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria

Art. 68a. Art. 68a. (new - SG 41/15, in force from 06.07.2015) In the event that the defendant violates any measure under **Art. 67** or the prohibition under **Art. 68**, he/she shall imposed a restraining measure or the restraining measure already imposed shall be replaced by a more severe one under the terms provided for in this Code.

Removal of defendant from office

Art. 69. (1) Where the charge is for a malicious crime of general nature committed in connection with the office and there are sufficient grounds to deem that the official position of the defendant will put obstructions to objective, thorough and complete clarification of the circumstances under the case, the Court may remove the defendant from office.

(2) In the pre-trial procedure, the appropriate Court of first instance shall rule in open session of a single judge with the participation of the prosecutor, the defendant and his/ her defender.

(3) The order shall be subject to appeal and objection to the appropriate Court of appeal within three-day period.

(4) The Court of appeal shall rule in a body of three judges in open session with the participation of the prosecutor, of the defendant and of his/her defender. The defendant's non-appearance without good reasons shall not impede the trying of the case.

(5) When there is no more need of the taken measure, the removal from office in the pre-trial procedure shall be cancelled by the prosecutor or on a motion of defendant by the Court in accordance with the procedure under Para. 1 and 2.

(6) In the Court procedure the powers under Para. 1 shall be exercised by the Court, which shall hear the case.

Temporary Deprivation of a Driving Licence

Art. 69a. (new - SG 95/16) (1) Where the accused is charged for a crime under **Chapter Eleven, Section II of the Special Part of the Penal Code**, resulting in death or injury, or for a crime under **Art. 325, Para 3 of the Penal Code**, the prosecutor may impose temporary deprivation of the driving licence for a motor vehicle or another document attesting the right under **Art. 37, Para 1, Item 7 of the Penal Code**.

(2) The decree shall be sent for execution to the bodies granting this right and controlling its exercise.

(3) The accused person and his defender may appeal the decree of the prosecutor under Para 1 before the corresponding court of first instance.

(4) The court shall consider the appeal immediately in closed proceedings and shall issue a determination upholding or revoking the determination of the prosecutor under Para 1. The determination shall be final.

(5) Where the purpose of the temporary deprivation of the driving licence for a motor vehicle or the other document attesting the right under **Art. 37, Para 1, Item 7 of the Penal Code** has ceased, it shall be revoked in the pre-trial proceedings by the prosecutor or at the request of the accused or his defender - by the court as set out in Para 4.

(6) Of the revocation of the temporary deprivation of the driving licence for a motor vehicle or the other document attesting the right under Art. 37, Para 1, Item 7 of the Penal Code shall be immediately informed the bodies granting this right and controlling its exercise.

(7) In judicial proceedings the competences under Para 1, 5 and 6 shall be exercised by the court hearing the case. The determination shall be subject to appeal by a private appeal or a private contest.

Placement for examination in a mental establishment

Art. 70. (1) In the pre-trial procedure the respective Court of first instance in a body of one judge and two Court jurors, upon a motion of the prosecutor, and in the Court proceeding – the Court, which is trying the case, on a motion of the parties or on its own initiative, may place the defendant for examination in a mental disease establishment for a period not longer than thirty days.

(2) The Court shall rule a determination in an open session, in which it shall hear an expert-psychiatrist and the person, whose placement is sought. The participation of a prosecutor and a defender shall be mandatory.

(3) The determination ruled in the pre-trial procedure shall be subject to appeal by a private complaint or private challenge before the respective Court of appeal in three-day period.

(4) The Court of appeal shall act in a body of three judges in open session with the participation of the prosecutor, the defendant and his/her defender. The non-appearance of the defendant without good reason shall not be an obstacle to trying the case.

(5) If the time for examination fixed by the Court proves to be not sufficient, it may be extended only once with no more than thirty days under the procedure of Para. 1-4.

(6) The time for which the person has been placed in a mental disease establishment shall be recognised as detention in custody.

Compulsory bringing

Art. 71. (1) Where the defendant fails to appear for questioning without good reasons, he/she shall be brought compulsorily, if his/her appearance is mandatory or if the corresponding body deems it necessary.

(2) The defendant may be brought compulsorily without a preliminary summoning, when he/she has absconded or does not have constant residence

(3) The compulsory bringing of the defendant shall be executed during the day, except if it brooks no delay.

(4) (amend. - SG 69/08; amend. – SG 93/11, in force from 01.01.2012; amend. – SG 52/13, in force from 14.06.2013; amend. - SG 14/15) The compulsory bringing shall be effected by the bodies of the Ministry of Justice, and in the cases where it has been ruled by an investigating policeman or by an investigating customs inspector – by the bodies of the Ministry of Interior.

(5) (New - SG 21/14, in force from 09.04.2014, repealed - SG 80/21)

(6) (prev. text of para 5 - SG 21/14, in force from 09.04.2014) For compulsory bringing of prisoners, a request shall be filed with the administration of the corresponding prison or correction institution.

(7) (prev. text of para 6 - SG 21/14, in force from 09.04.2014) Military officers of the armed forces shall be brought by the respective military bodies.

(8) (prev. text of para 7 - SG 21/14, in force from 09.04.2014) The ruling for compulsory bringing before the Court shall be submitted to the person who must be brought.

Measures for securing fine and forfeiture and expropriation of devices in favour of the State

Art. 72. (1) Upon a request of the prosecutor, the respective Court of first instance, in closed session of a single judge shall take measures for securing the fine , the forfeiture and expropriation of devices in favour of the state following the provisions of the **Civil Procedure Code**.

(2) In the Court procedure, the Court shall take the measures under Para. 1 upon a motion of the prosecutor.

Management of secured property

Art. 72a. (New – SG 7/19, in force from 23.07.2019) The property, secured by the order of **Art. 72** for the purpose of confiscation or seizure of property for the benefit of the state, shall be managed and protected pursuant to the **Act on Counteracting Corruption And on Seizure of Illegally Acquired Property**.

Measures for securing the civil claim

Art. 73.(1) (1) The Court and the bodies of the pre-trial procedure shall be obliged to explain the victim that he/she is entitled to file a civil claim for the damages caused by the crime.

(2) In the pre-trial procedure, upon request by the victim, the respective Court of first instance shall in closed sitting of a single judge take measures for securing the claim in accordance with the provisions of the **Civil Procedure Code**.

(3) In the cases under **Art. 51**, the measures referred to in Para. 2 shall be taken on the prosecutor's request.

(4) In the Court procedure, on the requests under Para. 2 and 3 the Court which shall hear the case

shall rule.

Measures of securing the trial costs

Art. 73a. (new - SG 42/15) (1) At the request of the prosecutor, the victim or his heirs, or of the legal person that has suffered damages, in the pre-trial proceedings the competent court of first instance independently, in closed proceedings, shall take measures under the **Code of Civil Procedure** to secure the costs in the case that have been made and adjudicated.

(2) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The court may impose the security measure also in the money and securities provided as guarantee. The imposed guaranty measure shall not stop the seizure in favor of the state in accordance with **Art. 66, Para 2**.

(3) In the court proceedings the court shall take the measures under Para 1 and 2 at the request of the prosecutor, of the civil plaintiff or his heirs, or of the private prosecutor.

Chapter eight. VICTIM

Section I. General Provisions

Person who shall have the quality of victim

Art. 74. (1) Victim shall be the person, who has suffered property or personal damages from the crime.

(2) In case of death of the person this right shall transit to his/her heirs.

(3) The defendant may not exercise the rights of a victim in one and the same procedure.

Rights of the victim

Art. 75. (amend. – SG 109/08) (1) (suppl. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) In the pre-trial procedure the victim shall have the following rights: to be notified of his/her rights in the penal procedure; to acquire defence of his/her safety and his/her close persons; to be informed about the outcome of the penal procedure; to participate in the procedure as per this Code; to make requests, observations and objections; to appeal the acts which lead to disclosure or suspension of the penal procedure; to have a trustee; to receive a written translation of the decree for termination or stopping the penal procedure if he/she does not speak the Bulgarian language. Requests, notes, objections, as well as appeals against acts leading to suspension or termination of the penal proceedings, may be made electronically, signed with a qualified electronic signature.

(2) (New - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The authority initiating the pre-trial proceedings shall notify the victim immediately, provided that he has supplied an address for summoning in the country or an email address.

(3) (prev. text of Para. 02, suppl. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The victim's rights shall arise upon his/her explicit request to participate in the pre-trial proceedings, indicating an address for summoning and updating on the course of proceedings in the country. With the express consent of the victim, which can be withdrawn at any time, the summons and notification may also be made to an e-mail address specified by him.

Section II. Private Prosecutor

Person who may participate as a private prosecutor

Art. 76. The victim, who has suffered property or personal damages from a crime, which is subject to prosecution under the general order, shall have the right to participate in the penal procedure as a private prosecutor. After the death of the person this right shall transit to his/her heirs.

Application to participate as a private prosecutor

Art. 77. (1) The application to participate in the Court procedure as a private prosecutor may be filed in oral or in writing.

(2) The application shall contain data about the person who submits it and about the circumstances on which it is grounded.

(3) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The application shall be filed before the initiation of the administrative session before the First Instance Court at latest.

Function of the private prosecutor

Art. 78. (1) The private prosecutor shall maintain the indictment at the same time with the prosecutor.

(2) The private prosecutor may also maintain the indictment after the prosecutor declares that he/she does not maintain it.

Rights of the private prosecutor

Art. 79. (Suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The private prosecutor shall have the following rights: to become acquainted with the case and to make the necessary extracts; to submit evidence; to participate in the Court procedure; to make requests, notes and objections and to appeal the acts of the Court, where his/her rights and legitimate interests are harmed. Requests, notes, objections, as well as appeals against acts that infringe his rights and legitimate interests, may be made electronically, signed with a qualified electronic signature.

Section III. Private Complainant

Person who may participate as a private complainant

Art. 80. The victim of a crime, which is subject to prosecution on a complaint of the victim, may bring and maintain indictment before the Court as a private complainant. After the death of the person this right shall transit to his/her heirs.

Complaint

Art. 81. (1) The complaint shall be in writing and shall contain data about the complainant, about the person against who it is submitted and about the circumstances of the crime.

(2) The complaint shall be signed by the complainant.

(3) (Suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. – SG 7/19) The complaint shall be submitted within six-month period from the day, when the victim learned about the commitment of the crime, or from the day, on which the victim has received a notification of suspension of the criminal proceedings on the grounds of **Art. 25, Para. 1, item 6.**

Rights of the private complainant

Art. 82. (1) (Suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The private complainant shall have the following rights: to become acquainted with the case and to make the needed extracts; to submit evidence; to participate in the Court procedure; to make requests, notes and objections and to appeal the acts of the Court, where his/her rights and legitimate interests are harmed, to withdraw his/her complaint. Requests, notes, objections, appeals against acts that infringe his rights and legitimate interests, as well as withdrawal of his/her complaint, may be made electronically, signed with a qualified electronic signature.

(2) The private complainant may also establish himself in the Court procedure as a civil claimant in the cases and following the order as provided in this Code.

Co-operation with the bodies of the Ministry of Interior

Art. 83. The victim and the defendant shall have the right to require assistance from the bodies of the Ministry of Interior for collection of data which they cannot collect by themselves.

Section IV. Civil Claimant

A person who may participate as a civil claimant

Art. 84. (1) The victim and his/her heirs, as well as the legal persons who suffered damages from the crime, may file a civil claim for compensation of the damages and to establish themselves as civil claimants in the Court procedure.

(2) The civil claim cannot be filed in the Court procedure, if it is filed under the procedure of the **Civil Procedure Code**.

Application of submitting civil claim

Art. 85. (1) The application of filing civil claim shall contain: the full name of the applicant and of the person against who the claim is filed; the penal case on which it is filed; the crime by which the damages are caused and the nature and amount of the damages for which compensation is demanded.

(2) The application may be oral or in writing.

(3) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. – SG 7/19) The civil claim shall be filed before the initiation of the administrative session, and in cases of a private nature until the commencement of the judicial investigation before the court of First Instance.

Persons against whom the civil claim may be filed

Art. 86. The civil claim in the Court procedure may be filed as against the defendant, as well as against other persons, who shall bear civil liability for the damages caused by the crime.

Rights of the civil claimant

Art. 87. (1) (Suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The civil claimant shall have the following rights: to participate in the Court procedure; to require securitising of the civil claim; to become acquainted with the case and to make the needed extracts; to submit evidence; to participate in the Court procedure; to make requests, notes and objections and to appeal the acts of the Court, where his/her rights and legitimate interests are harmed. Requests, notes, objections, as well as appeals against acts that infringe his rights and legitimate interests, may be made electronically, signed with a qualified electronic signature.

(2) The civil claimant shall exercise the rights under Para 1 within the limits needed to prove the ground and amount of the civil claim.

Order of hearing the civil claim

Art. 88. (1) The civil claim in the Court procedure shall be heard under the rules of this Code, and as far as there are no rules established, the **Civil Procedure Code** shall be applied.

(2) Hearing of the civil claim may not become a reason for delay of the penal case.

(3) In the event that the Court procedure is discontinued, the civil claim shall be heard, but it may be filed before a civil Court.

Chapter nine. CIVIL DEFENDANT

Persons who participate as civil defendants

Art. 89. The persons against whom a civil claim is filed, except the defendant, shall participate in the Court procedure as civil defendants.

Rights of the civil defendant

Art. 90. (1) (Suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The civil defendant shall have the following rights: to participate in the Court procedure; to become acquainted with the case and to make the needed extracts; to submit evidence; to participate in the Court procedure; to make requests, notes and objections and to appeal the acts of the Court, where his/her rights and legitimate interests are harmed. Requests, notes, objections, as well as appeals against acts that infringe his rights and legitimate interests, may be made electronically, signed with a qualified electronic signature.

(2) The civil defendant shall exercise his/her rights under Para 1 within the limits needed to defend him/herself against the filed against him/her civil claim.

Chapter ten. LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Section I. Defender

Persons who may participate as defenders

Art. 91. (1) Defender of the defendant may be each person, who exercises the profession of attorney-at-law.

(2) Defender may also be the spouse, a direct descendant of the defendant.

(3) Defender may not be:

1. who has been or is a defender of another defendant and the defence of the one contradicts the defence of the other;
2. who has been representing or giving advice to another defendant, if the defence which is assigned to him/her contradicts the defence of the other defendant;
3. who has been representing or giving advice to the opposite party;
4. who has been participating in the procedure in another procedural capacity;
5. who is a spouse, direct descendent without limitation, collateral relative up to the fourth degree or relative – in law up to the third degree to a judge, juror, prosecutor or a body of investigation on the case.

Challenging the defender

Art. 92. The persons who may not be defenders shall be obliged to beg themselves to be struck off. If they fail to do that, the respective body shall remove them from participation in the penal procedure ex-officio or upon request of the interested person.

Authorisation of the defender

Art. 93. (1) The defender shall be selected and empowered by the defendant, except in the cases as provided by this Code.

(2) The power of attorney shall be made out in a written form and shall be signed by the defendant and by the defender.

(3) The defender may certify copies of the power of attorney and to re-empower with the consent of the defendant another person to be a defender.

(4) The authorisation before a Court may be also performed in oral in a Court session. In this case the authorisation shall be entered into the protocol of the Court session, which shall be signed by the defendant.

(5) The authorisation shall be valid for the whole penal procedure, unless otherwise provided.

Obligatory participation of a defender

Art. 94. (1) The participation of a defender in the penal procedure shall be obligatory, if:

1. the defendant is of minor age;
2. the defendant suffers physical or mental disabilities, which establish obstacle to defend him/herself;

3. the case is for a crime, for which a punishment of imprisonment not less than 10 years or another, more severe punishment is provided;

4. the defendant does not speak the Bulgarian language;

5. the interests of the defendants are contradictory and one of them has a defender;

6. (amend. – SG 109/08) where a request under **Art. 64** is made or the defendant has been arrested;

7. (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010)

8. the case shall be heard in the absence of the defendant;

9. the defendant is not able to pay attorney-fee, wants to have a defender and the interests of the jurisdiction demand so.

(2) In the cases of Para. 1, Item 4 and 5 the participation of defender shall not be obligatory, if the defendant declares that he/she does not want to have a defender.

(3) Where the participation of a defender is obligatory, the respective body shall appoint as a defender an attorney-at-law.

(4) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) Apart from the cases referred to in Para. 1, in lawsuits for severe crimes the prosecutor or the Court may appoint a back-up defender for the defendant person pursuant to the **Legal Aid Act**, whether or not a defender is appointment, if this is of exceptional importance for the conduct of the penal procedure within reasonable term.

(5) (new - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) In the cases of Para. 1 the appointed defender shall continue to participate in the penal proceedings as a backup defender, when the defendant person has appointed another defender or refuses a defender, if the conditions under Para. 4 are met.

(6) (new - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The backup defender shall get acquainted with the lawsuit, take the necessary extracts and attend the procedural acts involving the defendant person. The rest of the rights under **Art. 99, Para. 1** may be exercised at the request or with the consent of the defendant person, and if there is no such consent – when the defence is obligatory and the appointed defender, effectively summoned, fails to appear due to inexcusable reasons.

Refusal by the defender of the accepted defence

Art. 95. The defender may not refuse the accepted defence, except it becomes impossible to execute his/her obligations due to circumstances, not depending on him/her. In the latter case he/she shall be obliged to notify in writing the defendant and the respective body.

Refusal by the defendant of defender and replacement of the defender

Art. 96. (1) (Suppl. – SG 7/19) The accused may, at any time during the proceedings, refuse the defender's services, except in the cases of **Art. 94 Para. 1, items 1 - 3 and 6**. The accused shall be explained the consequences of his refusal to use the defense counsel. The explanation, as well as the reasons given by the accused for his refusal of a defense counsel, shall be reflected in the protocol of the relevant procedural action, or in a separate protocol. The accused shall have the right, at any time during the proceedings, to withdraw his refusal of a defense counsel, and the procedural actions up to now are to retain their procedural value. Upon withdrawal of the refusal, the accused shall be immediately given the opportunity to exercise his rights under **Art. 55**.

(2) The replacement of one defense counsel with another may only be performed upon request or with the consent of the accused.

Assuming the duties by the defender in the penal procedure

Art. 97 (1) The defender may participate in the penal procedure from the moment of the detention of the person or his/her involving in the capacity of defendant.

(2) The body of the pre-trial procedure shall be obligated to clarify to the defendant that he/she has right of a defender, and shall provide opportunity immediately to connect with him/her. The body may not execute any actions of investigation and other procedural actions with the participation of the defendant before it performs this obligation.

Obligations of the defender

Art. 98. (1) The defender shall be obliged to provide legal assistance to the defendant and by whole his/her activity to assist the clarification of the all factual and legal aspects which are in favour of the defendant, and shall be governed by his/her inner conviction, based on the evidence on the case and the law.

(2) The defender shall be obliged to coordinate with the defendant the basic lines of the defence. Where in the defender's opinion the basic lines of the defence as offered by the defendant are incompatible with his obligations, he/she shall notify in time the defendant, and shall continue the defence until he/she is removed from the penal procedure following the provided order.

(3) The defender may not refuse legal assistance to the defendant on single matters of the indictment for the reason that the defendant has another defender too.

Rights of the defender

Art. 99. (1) (Amend. and suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The defender shall have the following rights: to meet alone with the defendant; to become acquainted with the case and to make the needed extracts; to submit evidence; to participate in the penal procedure; to make requests, notes and objections and appeal the acts of the Court and of the pre-trial procedure which harm the rights and the legitimate interests of the defendant. Requests, notes, objections, as well as appeals against acts that infringe his rights and legitimate interests, may be made electronically, signed with a qualified electronic signature. The defender shall have the right to participate in all the actions of investigation with the participation of the defendant, but his/her absence shall not establish obstacle for their performance.

(2) The participation of the defender shall not be an obstacle for the defendant to exercise in person his/her rights under **Art. 55**.

Section II. Trustee and Special Representative

Trustee

Art. 100. (1) The private prosecutor, the private complainant, the civil claimant and the civil defendant may empower a trustee.

(2) Where the private prosecutor, the private complainant, the civil claimant or the civil defendant submits evidence, that he/she is not able to pay attorney's fee and wants to have a trustee and the interests of jurisdictions demand so, the Court which shall hear the case as a first instance shall appoint a trustee for him/her.

(3) The provisions of **Art. 91, 92** and **93** shall also be applied to the trustee accordingly.

Special Representative

Art. 101. (1) Where the interests of the juvenile or of the under-aged victim and of the his/her parent, guardian or trustee are in collision, the respective body shall appoint for him/her a special representative – attorney-at-law.

(2) A special representative – attorney-at-law shall be also appointed to the victim, if he/she is incapacitated or of limited capability and his/her interests are in contradiction with the interests of his/her guardian or trustee.

(3) The special representative shall participate in the penal procedure as a trustee.

(4) The provisions of **Art. 91, Para 3** and **Art. 92** shall also apply respectively to the special representative.

Part two. EVIDENCING

Chapter eleven. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Subject to evidencing

Art. 102. In the penal procedure subject to evidencing shall be:

1. the committed crime and the participation of the defendant in the crime;
2. the nature and the amount of the damages caused by the perpetration;
3. the other circumstances which are of importance for the liability of the defendant, including the circumstances of his/her family and property status.

Burden

Art. 103. (1) The burden to prove the indictment in cases of general nature shall fall onto the prosecutor and the bodies of investigation, and in cases instituted on a complaint of the victim – onto the private complainant.

(2) The defendant shall not be obligated to prove innocence.

(3) Conclusions against the defendant, due to the fact that he/she has not given or refuses to give explanations or did not prove his/her objections, shall not be made.

Evidence

Art. 104. Evidence in the penal procedure may be the factual data, which is connected with the circumstances of the case, contribute to their clarification and are instituted under the order as provided by this Code.

Evidence means

Art. 105. (1) The evidence means may serve for reproduction in the penal procedure of evidence or of other evidence means.

(2) Evidence means which are not collected or made under the conditions as provided by this Code shall not be admitted.

Methods of evidencing

Art. 106. The evidencing in the penal procedure shall be performed as provided by this Code.

Collection and check of evidence

Art. 107. (1) The bodies of the pre-trial procedure shall collect evidence ex- officio

(2) The Court shall collect evidence on requests, made by the parties, and in own initiative – where necessary for revealing the objective truth.

(3) The Court and the bodies of the pre-trial procedure shall collect and check as the evidence, exposing the defendant or aggravate his/her liability, as well as the evidence which acquit the defendant or mitigate his/her liability.

(4) Collection of evinces may not be refused only because the request is not made within the definite period.

(5) All collected evidence shall be subject to a precise check.

Actions of investigation and Court investigation actions under delegation or in another region.

Art. 108. (1) The actions of investigation and Court investigation actions under delegation shall be admitted, when they are performed outside the region of the body which will hear the case and the performed by this body has been done with significant difficulties.

(2) When pronounced by a Court, the delegation shall be executed by the respective regional judge, and when pronounced by a body of the pre-trial procedure – by the respective body of the pre-trial procedure.

(3) When necessary, the body which will hear the case, may also perform single actions under Art. 1 in the region of another Court.

Chapter twelve. MATERIAL EVIDENCE

Types of material evidence

Art. 109. As material evidence shall be collected and checked the objects, which have been meant or used for committing the offence or which have been an object of the offence, as well as any other objects, which may be used for making clear the circumstances under the case.

Listing, photographing and attaching material evidence to the case

Art. 110. (1) The material evidence must be carefully checked, listed in detail in an appropriate record and, where possible - photographed.

(2) The material evidence shall be attached to the case file, taking measures to ensure that they are not damaged or modified.

(3) When the case is passed from one body to another, the material evidence shall be delivered together with the case file.

(4) Material evidence, which because of their dimensions or for other reasons cannot be attached to the file, must, where possible, be sealed and stored in the places specified by the respective authority.

(5) Cash and other valuables shall be delivered for safe-keeping to a commercial bank serving the state budget or to the Bulgarian National Bank.

Safe-keeping of material evidence

Art. 111. (1) Material evidence shall be kept until the end of the penal procedure.

(2) The objects, seized as material evidence, with the prosecutor's permission, may be returned to their owners before closing the penal procedure only if this will not mislead the clarification of the circumstances under the case or does not appear an object of administrative offence.

(3) (Amend. And suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Upon request for returning, the prosecutor shall pronounce within 3-day term. The refusal of the prosecutor under Para. 2 may be subject to appeal by the owner before the respective Court of first instance. The Court shall rule on the appeal in a closed sitting with a single judge by a determination which shall be final.

(4) The objects seized as material evidence, which are perishable and cannot be returned to their owners with the prosecutor's permission, shall be delivered to the respective establishments and legal persons to be used in accordance with their designation or shall be sold and the received sum shall be deposited in a commercial bank, serving the state budget.

(5) (amend. and suppl. - SG 42/15) Drugs, precursors and plants containing drugs, as well as the excise goods, may be destroyed before closing the penal proceedings, in accordance with the procedure and under the conditions provided in the present Act. In such a case, only the seized representative samples shall be kept until the end of the procedure.

Disposal of Material Evidence

Art. 112. (1) Except in the cases provided in Art. 53 of the Penal Code, the objects seized as material evidence shall be taken away in favour of the state, where their owner has not been established and they have not been sought within one year period after the end of the penal procedure.

(2) Objects seized as material evidence, possession of which is prohibited, shall be delivered to the respective establishments or shall be destroyed.

(3) (new – SG 109/08) apart from the cases, provided for in **Art. 53 of the Penal Code**, the motor vehicles, seized as material evidences, shall be confiscated in the state's favour, where it is not identified to whom they belong and within five years after their seizure they have not been searched for. In the pre-trial proceedings the seizure shall be done by prosecutor's decree and in the Court proceedings – by Court determination.

(4) (prev. par. 3 – SG 109/08) Letters, papers or other writings seized as material evidence shall be left with the case file or shall be delivered to the relevant establishments, juridical and physical persons.

Dispute of title on objects, seized as material evidence

Art. 113. Where a dispute of title on objects seized as material evidence arises, which is subject to consideration according to the provisions of the **Civil Procedure Code**, they shall be kept until the decision of the civil Court enters into force.

Chapter thirteen.
PROOFS

Section I.
General Provisions

Types of proofs

Art. 114. The evidence shall be established by voice, material or written proofs.

Section II.
Voice Proofs

Explanations of the defendant

Art. 115. (1) The defendant shall render his/ her explanations orally and directly before the respective body.

Reasons shall be rendered in the presence of a counsel, where the defendant so requests. The request shall be entered in the record and the counsel shall be summoned for the interrogation.

(2) The defendant shall not be interrogated on commission or by video-conference, except in the cases, where he/she is abroad and where this will not impede the revealing of the objective truth.

(3) The defendant may give explanations at any time of the investigation and of the Court investigation.

(4) The defendant shall be entitled to refuse to give reasons.

Evidential force of the confession of the defendant

Art. 116. (1) The accusation and the verdict may not be grounded only on the confession of the defendant.

(2) The confession of the defendant shall not discharge the respective bodies from the obligation to collect also other evidence on the case.

Witness' testimonies

Art. 117. By testimonies of witnesses may be established all facts, which the witness has perceived and which contribute to the clarification of the objective truth.

Persons, who may not be witnesses

Art. 118. (1) Persons, who have participated in the same penal proceeding in another procedural capacity, shall not be witnesses, except:

1.the defendant against whom the procedure has been discontinued or has concluded with an effective verdict;

2. the victim, the private prosecutor, the civil claimant, the civil defendant;

3. (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010; amend. and suppl. – SG 93/11, in force from

01.01.2012; amend. – SG 52/13, in force from 14.06.2013; amend. - SG 14/15) the witnesses of procedural acts, as well as officers of the Ministry of Interior, of the military police or of the Customs Agency, who presented the performance of inspection, search, seizure, trial experiment and recognition of persons and objects.

(2) The persons who have performed actions of investigation and Court investigation actions shall not be witnesses, even if the records of the performed by them actions have not been made out under the conditions and following the order as provided by this Code.

(3) Witnesses shall not be also persons, who due to physical deficiencies are unable to properly perceive the facts significant to the case or to render trustworthy testimonies about them.

Persons, who may refuse to testify

Art. 119. The defendant's spouse, ascendants, descendants, brothers and sisters and the person with whom the defendant is in factual cohabitation may refuse to testify.

Witness' obligations

Art. 120. (1) The witness shall be obliged: to appear before the respective body, when subpoenaed; to expose everything he/she knows about the case and to answer the questions asked, as well as to remain at the disposal of the body, which has subpoenaed him/her, for as long as necessary.

(2) A witness, who is unable to appear owing to illness or disability, may be interrogated where he/she is situated.

(3) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) A witness who does not appear at the appointed place and in time to give testimony, shall be sanctioned with a fine up to three hundred BGN and shall be compulsory brought for interrogation following the provision of Art. 71. If the witness points due reasons for his/her absence, the fee and the compulsory bringing shall be cancelled.

(4) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) A witness who besides the cases under **Art. 119** and **Art. 121** refuses to give testimony shall be sanctioned with a fine of up to one thousand BGN.

(5) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the fine under Para. 3 and 4 has been imposed by a body of the pre-trial case, the decree shall be appealed before the relevant First Instance Court within 3-day term from the communication about its imposing. The Court shall pronounce immediately in a closed session with a ruling, which shall be final.

(6) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017). The ruling of the Court, by which it refuses to cancel the fine under Para. 3 and 4, shall be subject to appeal under Chapter Twenty-Four.

Circumstances, in which the witness shall not be obliged to testify

Art. 121. The witness shall not be obliged to testify on questions, the answers to which would accuse him/her or his/her ascendants, descendants, brothers or sisters or spouse, or the person with whom he/she is in a factual cohabitate in the commission of an offence.

(2) (suppl. - SG 21/14) The witness shall not be examined with regard to the circumstances, which have been entrusted to him as a defender or as a trustee or which have become known to them in their capacity as translator during meetings of the defendant and the defender.

Witness' rights

Art. 122. (1) A witness shall enjoy the following rights: to make use of notes about figures, dates,

etc., which are with him/her and refer to his or her testimonies; to be paid remuneration for the spent working day and to be reimbursed the costs incurred by him/her, as well as to demand reversal of the acts, which harm his or her rights and legitimate interests.

(2) The witness has the right to have consultation with attorney-at-law if he/ finds that answering a question shall harm his/her rights under **Art. 121**. In case of made request the body of investigation or the Court shall provide this opportunity.

Protection of witness

Art. 123. (1) (amend. - SG 44/18) The prosecutor or the Court, on the witness's request or with the latter's consent shall take measures to protect him/her, where there are sufficient reasons to presume that, as a result of testifying, there has arisen or may arise a real danger for the life, health or property of the witness, of his or her ascendants, descendants, brothers, sisters, spouse or of persons that he/she is in particularly close relations with.

(2) The protection of the witness shall be temporary and shall be achieved through:

1. (amend. - SG 21/14, in force from 09.04.2014) providing personal physical guarding by:

a) the bodies of the Ministry of Interior;

b) (amend. - SG 80/21) officials of the Protection Bureau at the Minister of Justice, where necessary and expressly assigned by a prosecutor under para 1;

2. keeping secret his/her identity;

(3) The measure for personal physical guarding of ascendants, descendants, brothers or sisters, spouse or persons, that the witness is in particularly close relations with, shall be taken with their consent or with the consent of their legal representatives.

(4) The act of the respective body for the protection of a witness shall state:

1. the issuing body;

2. the date, time and place of issuance;

3. the circumstances which necessitate providing measures of protection of the witness;

4. the kind of the taken measures

5. the person's identification data

6. the identification number which shall be given to the person whose identity shall be kept in secret

7. the signatures of the person and the issuing body.

(5) Direct access to the protected witness shall have the respective pre-trial bodies and the Court, and the defender and the trustee- if they have indicated the witness.

(6) The measures to protect the witness shall be lifted on a request of the person with regard to whom they have been taken or where there is no more need to apply them, by an act of the body under Para. 1.

(7) For the protection of life, health or property of the persons under Para. 1 who have given consent thereof, special intelligence means may be used.

(8) (amend. - SG 44/18) Within a thirty-day-period from the measure, taken under Para. 2, the prosecutor or the Court may propose to include the witness and his/her ascendants, descendants, brother or sisters, spouse or persons, that the witness is in particularly close relations with, into the programme of protection under the conditions and following the order of the **Protection of Persons at Risk in Relation to Criminal Proceedings Act**.

Protection of undercover officers in the penal procedure

Art. 123a. (new - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) (1) No undercover officer shall be questioned as witness, where there are sufficient grounds to assume that as a result thereof may arise real

threat for the life or health of the officer, of his ascendants, descendants, brothers, sisters, spouse or persons of significantly close relations with him, as well as if the exercise of his functions may be impeded.

(2) The head of the structure, providing and conducting the investigation through an undercover officer or a person authorised by him shall estimate if a threat under Para. 1 might possibly arise, and shall notify the observing prosecutor and the Court.

(3) The data of the identity of the undercover officer may be provided to the observing prosecutor or the Court upon request in writing filed with the authority under Art. 175, Para. 2, who shall issue an order in writing for disclosure of identity, if no threat under Para. 1 may arise.

(4) The authorities of the pre-trial proceedings and the Court shall take all possible measures to keep in secret the identity of the undercover officer.

Evidencing force of the testimony of a witness whose personality is kept secret and of an undercover officer

Art. 124. (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The accusation and the verdict may not be grounded only on the testimony given by witnesses, as provided by Art. 141 or 141a.

Section III. Material Proofs

Preparation and attachment to the case of material proofs

Art. 125. (1) Where the material proofs cannot be separated from the place where they have been found, as well as in other provided by this Code cases, photo pictures, slides, cinematographic records, video records, audio records, records on a computer information data carrier, plans, schemes, casts or fingerprints shall be made.

(2) The Court and the bodies of the pre-trial procedure shall gather and check the material proofs, made by using special intelligence means in the cases, provided by this Code.

(3) The materials under Para. 1 and 2 shall be attached to the case.

Persons, who prepare material proofs

Art. 126. (1) The material proofs shall be prepared if possible by the persons who perform the actions of investigation and the actions of Court investigation.

(2) If for this special knowledge and qualification are needed, an expert – technical assistant shall be appointed.

(3) Experts – technical assistants shall not be the persons enlisted in Art. 148, Para 1.

(4) The expert –technical assistant shall execute the assigned task under the direct supervision and guidance of the body which has appointed him/her.

(5) For failure to appear before the body or for as refusal to perform the assigned task without reason, the expert – technical assistant shall bear liability under Art. 149 as an expert.

Section IV. Written Proofs

Types of written proofs

Art. 127. (1) (suppl. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, former text of Art. 127, suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. - SG 44/18) Written proofs shall be the records of the actions of investigation, the Court actions of investigation and the other procedural actions, the records of preparation of material proofs and other documents, including reports and the documents attached to them regarding investigations of the European Anti-Fraud Office, the revision acts, which establish tax obligations and obligations for obligatory security contributions and the attached to them revision reports, as well as the reports under Art. 19 of the State Financial Inspection Act of performed financial inspections and the audit reports under Art. 58 of the Audit Office Act and the documents, attached to them.

(2) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. - SG 44/18) The charge and the verdict shall not be grounded only on data of the revision acts, reports under Art. 19 of the State Financial Inspection Act, the audit reports under Art. 58 of the Audit Office Act, the reports on the investigations of the European Anti-fraud Office and the documents, attached to them.

Preparation of a record

Art. 128. For each action of investigation and of court investigation, a record shall be prepared at the place where it has been performed.

Contents of the record

Art. 129. (1) The record shall contain: the place of the actions of investigation and the Court actions of investigation; the place where they started and finished; the persons who participated; the requests, notes and objections, the performed actions, their sequence and the collected evidence.

(2) The record shall be signed by the body which has performed the action, as well as by other participants in the penal procedure in the cases as provided by this Code.

Corrections, amendments and supplementations of the record

Art. 130. All the corrections, amendments and supplementations of the record shall be certified by the signature of the persons who have signed it.

The records as a proof

Art. 131. The records made under the conditions and following the order of this Code, shall be proofs of performance of the respective actions, of the order under which they are performed and about the collected evidence.

Record of preparation of material proofs

Art. 132. (1) The preparation of material proofs shall be reflected into the record concerning the record, which shall be signed by the body which has performed the actions and by the expert – technical assistant.

(2) (amend. – SG 109/08) Preparation of material proofs, obtained by usage of special intelligence service shall be reflected in a record, signed by the head of the structure which has made out the proof,

where the following shall be stated:

1. the time and place of application of the special intelligence service and for the preparation of the respective material proofs;
2. the personality of the controlled person;
3. the used operational manners and technical means;
4. textual reproduction of the content of the material proof.

(3) (amend. – SG 109/08; amend. – SG 70/13) Applied to the record under Para. 2, shall be the following: the request for usage of a special intelligence device, the written consent of the persons under Art. 123, Para. 7, the permit for its usage and the direction of the Chairperson of State Agency Technical Operations or of an empowered by him/her Deputy Chairperson or of the Chairman of the State Agency "National Security" or of an empowered by him/her deputy-chairman under the provisions of the Law of the Special Intelligence Devices

(4) An integrate part of the record under Para. 2 shall be the material proofs, which shall be attached to the case.

Providing with documents

Art. 133. (1) Upon request of the interested person the Court or of the body of the pre-trial procedure shall issue, by virtue of which the state and the municipal bodies, the legal persons and the sole entrepreneurs shall be obliged to provide the person with the needed documents within their competence.

(2) For failure to execute the obligation under Para 1 without reason, the respective official shall be sanctioned with a fine from one hundred to one thousand BGN.

(3) New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the fine has been imposed by a pretrial procedure body, the decree shall be appealed before the relevant First Instance Court within 3-day term from the communication about its imposing. The Court shall pronounce immediately in a closed sitting with determination, which shall be final.

(4) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The court determination, by which it refuses to cancel the fine under Para. 2, shall be subject to appeal under Chapter Twenty-Two.

Document in a foreign language

Art. 134. Where a document is in a foreign language, it shall be accompanied with a translation in the Bulgarian language, certified under the respective order, or an interpreter shall be appointed.

Paper media of computer information data

Art. 135. Computer information data shall be also recorded on a paper media under the provision of Art. 163, Para. 7.

Chapter fourteen. METHODS OF EVIDENCING

Section I. General Provisions

Types of methods of evidencing

Art. 136. (1) Methods of evidencing in the penal procedure shall be: interrogation, expert examination, inspection, search, inquisitorial experiment, recognition of persons and objects and special intelligence devices.

(2) In event of application of the methods under Para 1 to attorneys-at-law and notaries, the Attorney Law and the Law of the Notaries and the Notary Activity shall be applied.

Witnesses of procedural actions

Art. 137. (1) In the pre-trial procedure the inspection, search, inquisitorial experiment, recognition of persons and objects shall be performed in the presence of witnesses of the procedural actions.

(2) The witnesses of the procedural actions shall be selected by the body, which shall perform the respective action of investigation among the persons who have no other procedural capacity and are not interested of the outcome of the case.

(3) The witnesses of the procedural actions shall appear, after they have been invited to stay at disposal, till their presence is necessary. For failure to perform these obligations the witnesses of procedural actions shall bear liability as witnesses.

(4) The witnesses of procedural actions shall have the following rights: to make notes and objections on the admitted incompleteness and breaches of the law; to request corrections, amendments and supplementations of the records; to sign the record under special opinion, stating in writing their reasons for this; to require cancellation of the acts, which harm their rights and legal interests; to obtain respective remuneration and coverage of the made expenses.

(5) The body which shall perform the respective action of investigation shall make the witnesses of the procedural actions acquainted with their rights under Para 4.

Section II. Interrogation

Interrogation of the defendant

Art. 138. (1) The interrogation of the defendant shall be executed in a day-time, except it cannot be delayed.

(2) Before the interrogation the respective body shall find the identity of the defendant.

(3) The interrogation of the defendant shall start by a question if he/she does understand the accusation and shall be invited, if he/she wishes, to state in a free-text all what he/she knows under the case.

(4) The defendant may be questioned for supplementation of his/her explanations and for removal of incompleteness, ambiguity or contradiction.

(5) The questions shall be clear, concrete and related to the circumstances under the case. They shall not suggest answers or to lead astray to a definite answer.

(6) Where several defendant persons are involved, the body of investigation shall interrogate them separately.

(7) The defendant may not be questioned under a delegation or via video-conference, except in the cases he/she is outside the boundaries of the country and this shall not institute obstacle to revealing the objective truth.

Interrogation of a witness

Art. 139. (1) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) Before the interrogation, the identity of the witness and his or her relations with the defendant and with the other participants in the procedure shall be established. In the cases under Art. 141 and 141a the identification number of the witness shall be entered in the record instead of the identification data.

(2) The body conducting the interrogation shall invite the witness to testify in good faith and shall warn him/her of the responsibility before the law in case he/she refuses to give testimony, gives false evidence or withholds some circumstances, and shall clarify the right under Art. 121.

(3) The witness shall make a promise that he/she will state in good faith and precisely everything he/she knows in connection with the case.

(4) The persons referred to in Art. 119 shall be informed of their right to refuse to give testimony.

(5) The witness shall state in the form of a free account everything that he/she knows in connection with the case

(6) The provisions of Art. 115, Para 1 and of Art. 138. Para 4 and 5 shall apply to the interrogation of the witness accordingly.

(7) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) Interrogation of a witness out of the country can be implemented also by video-conference or telephone conference in compliance with the provisions of this Code.

(8) (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) Interrogation of a witness located in the country by video-conference or telephone conference may be conducted during the trial proceedings, and during the pre-trial proceedings – under the conditions and order specified in Art. 223.

(9) (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) In the cases of Para 8 the interrogation shall be conducted in compliance with the provisions of this Code and the identity of the witness shall be verified by the judge of the first-instance Court at the location of the witness.

(10) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Interrogation of a witness with specific needs of protection shall be conducted in taking measures for avoiding conflict with the defendant, including by video – conference or telephone conference in compliance with the provision of this Code.

(11) (New – SG 98/20) Interrogation of a protected witness may also be carried out by video–conference.

Interrogation of a juvenile witness

Art. 140. (1) A juvenile witness under the age of 14 years shall be interrogated in the presence of a pedagogue or a psychologist, and where necessary, in the presence of the parent or the guardian.

(2) A juvenile witness above the age of 14 years shall be interrogated in the presence of the persons under the Para. 1, if the respective body deems so necessary.

(3) With the permission of the body conducting the interrogation, the persons under Para. 1 may put questions to the witness.

(4) The body conducting the interrogation shall explain the juvenile witness under 14 years of age the necessity to give true testimony, without warning him/her liability.

(5) (new – SG 109/08, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Interrogation of a juvenile witness under and above the age of 14 in the country may take place while taking measures for avoiding conflict with the defendant, including in premises with special equipment, or by videoconference.

Interrogation of a witness whose identity is kept secret

Art. 141. (1) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The bodies of the pre-trial procedure and the Court shall interrogate the witness whose identity is kept in secret and shall all possible precautions for keeping secret his/her identity, including where interrogation of a witness is performed via video-conference or telephone conference.

(2) Copies of the records of interrogation of the witness without his/her signature shall be submitted immediately to the defendant and to his/her defender, and in the Court procedure – to the parties, which shall have right to question the witness in writing.

(3) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) Interrogation under **Art. 139, Para. 8** of a witness with a secret identity shall be conducted by altering the voice, and through videoconferencing – by altering also the image of the witness. Before starting the interrogation a judge from the Court of first instance at the location of the witness shall verify that the interrogated person is the same that has been given an identity number under **Art. 123, Para. 4, Item 6**.

(4) (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, amend. - SG 44/18) Para. 1 – 3 shall apply accordingly to interrogation of persons to whom a protection measure under Art. 6, Para. 1 and 2 under the **Protection of Persons at Risk in Relation to Criminal Proceedings Act** is imposed.

Interrogation of an undercover officer as witness

Art. 141a. (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) (1) Interrogation of an undercover officer as witness shall be conducted under the order of **Art. 139, Para 8** by altering the voice, and in case of videoconferencing – by altering also the image of the interrogated undercover officer.

(2) (amend. – SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11; amend. - SG 42/15) Before starting the interrogation the head of the structure that secures and performs the investigation through an undercover officer, or a person authorised by him, shall verify that the interrogated person is the same that has been given an identity number under **Art. 174, Para 7**.

(3) (amend. – SG 13/11, in force from 12.08.2011 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11; amend. - SG 42/15) The minutes of the interrogation shall be accompanied by the request of an undercover officer and the provisions under Art. 174, Para. 7 and **Art. 175, Para. 2**.

Interrogation with an Interpreter and Interpreter in Bulgarian sign language (Title amend. – SG 9/21, in force from 06.02.2021)

Art. 142. (amend. - SG 21/14) (1) Where the defendant does not speak Bulgarian, an interpreter shall be appointed.

(2) (amend. – SG 9/21, in force from 06.02.2021) Where the defendant is deaf or dumb, an interpreter in Bulgarian sign language shall be appointed.

(3) (amend. – SG 9/21, in force from 06.02.2021) The provisions of **Chapter Thirty “a”** shall apply accordingly to the interpreters and interpreters in Bulgarian sign language.

(4) (New – SG 98/20) The interrogation may also be carried out by video-conference.

Cross- examination

Art. 143. (1) Where there is significant contradiction between explanations of the defendant persons or between the explanations of the defendant and the testimony of the witnesses, a cross –examination may be made, except in the cases referred to in **Art. 123, Para. 2, Item 2**.

(2) The persons taking part in a confrontation shall be questioned before the interrogation whether they know each other and what their relationship is.

(3) With the permission of the respective body, the persons taking part in the confrontation may ask questions to each other.

(4) (New – SG 98/20) Cross-examination may also be done by video-conference when the accused is outside the country and this will not prevent the disclosure of the objective truth.

(5) (Previous Para. 4, amend. – SG 98/20) Para. 1-4 shall also be applied in event of significant contradiction between the statements of the witnesses, except in the cases of Art. 123, Para. 2, Item 2.

Section III. Expert Examination

Cases in which expert examination shall be instituted

Art. 144. (1) Where the clarification of certain circumstances concerning the case requires special knowledge in the field of science, arts or techniques, the Court or the body of the pre-trial procedures shall institute an expert examination.

(2) An expert examination shall be compulsory, where there is doubt about:

1. the cause of death;
2. the nature of the body injury;
3. the sanity of the defendant or the suspect;
4. the ability of the defendant or the suspect with regard to his or her physical or mental state to perceive properly the facts relevant to the case and to give reliable testimony thereof.
5. the ability of the defendant or the suspect with regard to his or her physical or mental state to perceive properly the facts relevant to the case and to give reliable testimony thereof.

(3) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Expertise may also be appointed for establishment of specific needs of protection of a witness in relation to his participation in the penal procedure.

Contents of the act instituting the expert examination

Art. 145. (1) (amend. – SG 101/10) The act instituting an expert examination shall specify: the grounds which necessitate the performance of the examination; the object and the task of the expert examination; the materials presented to the expert; the expert's full name, education, specialty, scientific degree and official position or the name of the establishment, where the expert works, the name of the medical establishment, where the stationary observations will be performed and the term of presentation of the opinion.

(2) Where the expertise is instituted in the pre-trial procedure, in the act under Para 1 the term for presenting the conclusion shall be specified.

Taking samples for comparative examination

Art. 146. (1) The body which institutes the expert examination shall be entitled to require from the defendant and the suspect samples of writing or other samples for comparative examination, if no possibility exists to obtain them.

(2) Para. 1 shall also apply to witnesses where necessary to check whether they have left traces on the place of the crime or on the material proof.

(3) The persons of Para. 1 and 2 shall be obliged to deliver the required samples for comparative examination and upon refusal they shall be seized compulsory with the permit of the respective first-instance Court.

(4) Where the samples for comparative examination are connected with taking blood sample or other similar interventions with penetration in human body, the samples shall be taken by a person with medical capacity under the supervision of a physician observing the rules of medical practice and without threatening the health of the person.

Persons to whom an expert examination is to be entrusted

Art. 147. An expert examination shall be entrusted to experts from the appropriate field of the science, art or techniques.

Persons, who shall not be experts

Art. 148. (1) Experts shall not be:

1. the persons, who meet the requirements of **Art. 29, Para. 1, Items 1 - 5 and 7 – 8 and Para. 2;**
2. the witnesses on the case;
3. the persons, who are by virtue of their office or otherwise dependent on the defendant or on his/her defender, on the victim, the private complainant, the civil claimant, the civil defendant or on their trustees;
4. the persons, who have performed the audit, the materials of which have been used as grounds for initiating the investigation;
5. the persons, who do not have the necessary professional capacity, if such capacity is required.

(2) In the cases referred to in the preceding Para., the expert shall be obliged to beg to be struck off the list.

(3) The persons concerned shall bring the challenge before the body, which has ruled the expert examination to be instituted.

Expert's obligations

Art. 149. (1) The expert shall be obliged to appear before the respective body when summoned and to give an opinion on the questions of the examination.

(2) The expert shall be entitled to refuse to give an opinion only in case the set questions go beyond the scope of his / her subject or the materials he/she has at disposal of are not sufficient for forming a well-grounded opinion.

(3) (Amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The expert shall submit his conclusion in the pre-trial procedure within a term as defined by the body of the pre-trial procedure, and in the Court procedure – not later than seven days before the date of the Court session. The conclusion may be submitted electronically, signed with a qualified electronic signature.

(4) The expert shall present his/her conclusion in the Court accompanied with copies for the parties.

(5) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) In case of non-appearance or refusal to give an opinion without good reason, the expert shall be sanctioned with a fine of up to five hundred BGN. If the expert states good reason, the fine shall be cancelled.

(6) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the fine under Para. 5 has been imposed by a pre-trial procedure body, the decree shall be appealed before the relevant First Instance Court within 3-day term from the communication about its imposing. The Court shall pronounce immediately in a closed sitting with a determination, which shall be final.

(7) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The Court determination, by which it refuses to cancel the fine under Para. 5 shall be subject to appeal under **Chapter Twenty - Two.**

(6) (Former Para. 6, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Interrogation of expert who is out of the country may also be performed by video-conference or telephone conference when this is imposed by the circumstances of the case.

Expert's rights

Art. 150. (1) The expert shall have the following rights: to get acquainted with the materials on the cases, which refer to the issues of the expert examination; to demand additional materials; to take part in the carrying out of separate acts of the investigation and of the Court investigation proceedings, when that is necessary for the performance of the set task; to receive remuneration for his/her work and to be paid for the incurred costs, as well as to demand the revocation of the acts, which harm his/her rights and legitimate interests.

(2) Where the experts are more than one they shall be entitled to consult one another before they give an opinion. In case of consensus, the experts may assign one of them to expose before the respective body the general opinion, and where there is a difference of opinions, each of them shall present a separate opinion.

Examination of the terms and conditions, which the expert must satisfy and delivery of the act for his/her appointment

Art. 151. (1) The body, which has appointed the expert examination shall summon the experts, check their identity, specialty and competence, their relations with the defendant the suspect and the victim, and the existence of reasons for challenge.

(2) The act of appointment of the expert examination shall be delivered to the expert after which he/she shall be explained about his/her rights and obligations, and the responsibility in case he/she refuses to give an opinion or gives a wrong statement.

Expert's opinion

Art. 152. (1) After carrying out the necessary examinations, the expert shall draw a statement in writing, in which he/she shall state: his/ her name and the grounds on which the expert examination was carried out; the task set; the materials which have been used; the examinations which have been made and by what kind of scientific and technical means; the obtained results and the conclusions of the expert examination

(2) The statement shall be signed by the expert.

(3) In case of discovery in the course of the examination of new materials, which are important for the case but for which no task has been set, the expert shall be obliged to state them in his/her statement.

Complimentary and repeated expert examination

Art. 153. The complimentary expert examination, where the expert opinion is not sufficiently complete and clear, while a repeated expert examination shall be appointed where the expert's statement is not well grounded and there arises a doubt about its correctness.

Evidential force of the expert's statement

Art. 154. (1) The expert's statement shall not be compulsory for the Court and for the bodies of the pre-trial procedure.

(2) Where it disagrees with the expert's opinion, the respective body shall be obliged to give its reasons

Section IV. Inspection

Purpose of the inspection

Art. 155. (1) The Court and the bodies of the pre-trial procedures shall inspect locations, premises, objects and persons with the purpose of detecting, examining directly and preserving, in accordance with the procedure laid down in this Code, traces of the crime and other data, necessary for the clarification of the circumstances under the case.

(2) By the time the inspection is performed, measures shall be taken that the traces of the crime are not removed.

Performance of the inspection

Art. 156. (1) The inspection shall be performed in the presence of witnesses of the procedural actions, except it is performed at a Court session.

(2) Where necessary, the inspection shall be performed in the presence of an expert or an expert technical assistant

(3) Upon performing the inspection everything shall be examined as it has been found and after that the necessary transpositions shall be made.

(4) The inspection shall be performed during the day, except if the case brooks no delay.

Inspection of a corps

Art. 157. (1) Inspection of a corps shall be performed, where possible at the spot where it has been found in the presence of a forensic-medicine expert, and where there is no such expert, in the presence of another physician.

(2) The burial of the corps - subject of the inspection shall be made with the permission of the prosecutor.

(3) Exhumation shall be allowed on an order of the Court or the prosecutor in the presence of a forensic-medicine expert.

(4) The interring of the corpse shall be allowed with the permission of the body, which has ordered the exhumation.

Survey

Art. 158. (1) Upon inspection of a person shall not be allowed actions, which humiliate his/her dignity or are dangerous to his/her health.

(2) Where it is necessary that the certified person be undressed, the witnesses of proceedings must be of the same sex. In case that the official, who must conduct the certification, is of the opposite sex, a physician shall conduct the certification.

A person shall be certified in the pre-trial procedures with his/her consent in writing, and where there is no such consent, with the permission of a judge of the respective Court of first instance, or of the Court of first instance in the district of which the action is to be performed, upon a request of the prosecutor.

(4) In urgent cases, where this is the only possibility for the gathering and preservation of the evidence, the bodies of the pre-trial procedures may take a view without a preliminary permission, in which case the record shall be delivered for approval to the judge without delay but not later than 24 hours.

Section V. Search and Seizure

Obligation for delivery of objects, papers, computer information data, data about the subscriber of a computer information service and other data (Title amend. - SG 24/15, in force from 31.03.2015)

Art. 159. (prev. text of Art. 159 - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010; amend.- SG 24/15, in force from 31.03.2015) On a request of the Court or of the bodies of the pre-trial procedures, all establishments, juridical persons, officials and citizens shall be obliged to preserve and deliver the objects, papers, computer information data and other data, which may be of importance for the case.

(2) (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The pre-trial authorities or the Court may request from the European Anti-Fraud Office to provide the reports and the documents attached thereto regarding investigations conducted by the Office.

Provision of Data by Undertakings Providing Electronic Communications Networks and / or Services

Art. 159a. (New - SG 24/15, in force from 31.03.2015) (1) At the request of the Court in judicial proceedings or upon reasoned order by a judge from the respective first-instance court issued at the request of the supervising prosecutor in pre-trial proceedings, the undertakings providing public electronic communications networks and / or services shall provide the data created in the course of their business operation which is required for:

1. tracking and identifying the source of the connection;
2. identifying the turn of the connection;
3. identifying the date, time and duration of the connection;
4. identifying the connection type;
5. (amend. - SG 20/21) identifying the end user device or the one presented as their end device;
6. establishing an identifier of the data cells used.

(2) The data under para 1 shall be collected where necessary for the investigation of serious intentional crimes.

(3) The request of the supervising prosecutor under para. 1 shall be reasoned and must contain the following:

1. information about the crime, the investigation of which requires use of traffic data;
2. description of the circumstances on which the request is based;
3. data about persons requiring traffic data;
4. (amend. - SG 20/21) reasonable period of time which is covered by the inquiry;
5. the investigative body, to which the data are to be provided.

(4) The court shall state the following in the order under para 1:

1. the data should be reflected in the inquiry;

2. (amend. - SG 20/21) reasonable time period which is covered by the inquiry;
3. the investigative body, to which the data are to be provided.

(5) The time period regarding which provision of data under para 1 is required and authorised may not exceed 6 months.

(6) Where the report contains data which are not related to the case and do not contribute to their clarification, the judge who issued the authorization shall order their destruction upon a reasoned written proposal by the supervising prosecutor. The destruction shall be carried out in a procedure established by the Chief Prosecutor. Within 7 days from receipt of the order the undertakings under para 1 and the supervising prosecutor shall provide the judge who issued it with the data destruction reports.

Grounds and purpose of the search

Art. 160. (1) Where there is sufficient grounds to presume that in a room or person there are objects, papers or computer information systems, containing computer information data, which may be of importance to the case, a search shall be made for finding and seizing them.

(2) A search may also be made with the purpose of tracing down a person or a dead body.

Bodies, which shall be entitled to order search and seizure

Art. 161. (1) Search and seizure in the pre-trial procedures shall be carried out with the permission of a judge of the respective Court of first instance or of a judge of the Court of first instance where the action shall be performed, upon request of the prosecutor.

(2) In urgent cases, where this is the only possibility for the gathering and preservation of the evidence, the bodies of the pre-trial procedures may carry out a search and seizure even without a permission of a judge of the respective Court of first instance or of a judge of the nearest Court of equal rank. The record of the carried out investigation proceeding shall be presented for approval to the judge without delay but not later than 24 hours.

(3) Search and seizure in the pre-trial procedures shall be carried out after decision of the Court, which is trying the case.

Persons in whose presence the search and seizure shall be carried out

Art. 162. (1) Search and seizure shall be conducted in the presence of witnesses of the act and of the person using the premises or of an adult member of his/her family

(2) Where the person using the premises or a member of his/her family is unable to attend, the search and seizure shall be conducted in the presence of the house manager or a representative of the municipality or the town hall.

(3) The search and seizure in premises, which are used by state or public services, shall be conducted in the presence of a representative of the service.

(4) Search and seizure in premises used by a legal person, shall be carried out in the presence of its representative. Where a representative of the legal person is not able to be present, the search and seizure shall be carried out at the presence of a representative of the municipality or of the town hall.

(5) Search and seizure in premises of foreign representations of international organisations and in houses of their employees, which enjoy immunity with regard to the criminal jurisdiction of the Republic of Bulgaria, shall be conducted with the consent of the head of the representation office and in the presence of a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

(6) Where the search and seizure are related to computer information systems and software products, the actions shall be carried out in the presence of an expert- technical assistant.

Performance of search and seizure

Art. 163. (1) Search and seizure shall be performed during the day, except if they brook no delay.

(2) Before commencement of search and seizure, the respective body shall submit the warrant thereof and shall propose to be shown the searched objects, papers and computer information systems, where computer information data is kept.

(3) The body conducting the search shall be entitled to prohibit the persons present to come into contact with other persons or between or among themselves and to leave the premises until the search is over.

(4) During search and seizure no actions shall be carried out, which are not necessary for the purpose thereof. Premises and depositories shall be opened by force only in case of refusal to be opened avoiding unnecessary damages.

(5) When circumstances regarding the private life of the citizens have been disclosed during the search, necessary measures shall be taken that they are not made public.

(6) The seized objects, papers and computer information systems which contain computer information data shall be submitted to the witnesses of the procedural actions and the other persons present. Where necessary, they shall be packed and sealed at the place of seizure.

(7) The seizure of computer information data shall be carried out by record on a paper carrier and another carrier. Where the carrier is a paper one, each of the pages shall be signed by the persons under **Art. 132, Para. 1**. In the rest of the cases the carrier shall be sealed by a note, which shall contain: the case, the body which has carried out the seizure, the place, the date and the names of all of the persons present as per Art. 132, Para. 1 and who will sign it.

(8) Unsealing the carrier, made out under the order of Para. 7, shall be admitted for the necessities of the investigation only and with the permission of the prosecutor and shall be performed in the presence of witnesses of procedural actions and of an expert-technical assistant.

Search

Art. 164. (1) Search of a person in the pre-trial procedure without a warrant by a judge of the respective Court of first instance shall be admitted:

1. upon detention;
2. where there are sufficient grounds to consider that persons attending the search have screened objects or papers of significance for the case.

(2) The search shall be conducted by a person of the same sex in the presence of witnesses of the same sex.

(3) The record of the conducted investigation action shall be produced to the judge for approval without delay but not later than 24 hours.

Interception and seizure of correspondence

Art. 165. (1) Interception and seizure of correspondence shall be allowed only when it is necessary for the detection and prevention of serious crimes.

(2) Interception and seizure of correspondence in the pre-trial procedure shall be performed upon request of the prosecutor and with the permission of a judge of the respective Court of first instance or of the first-instance Court in the district where the action will be performed.

(3) (new - SG 42/15) In urgent cases, where this is the only possibility to collect and preserve

evidence during investigation of crimes under **Art. 108a** and **Art. 354a of the Penal Code**, the pre-trial authorities may intercept non-delivered correspondence without the authorisation under Para 2. The monitoring prosecutor shall without delay, within 24 hours, submit to a judge of the corresponding court the protocol of the act accompanied by a reasoned written request for seizure of the intercepted correspondence. The seizure shall be carried out following a reasoned written permission of the judge, who shall issue it without delay, within 24 hours. In case of refusal the judge shall rule also on the intercepted correspondence.

(4) (prev. text of Para 03 - SG 42/15) Interception and seizure of correspondence in the Court proceeding shall be performed on a decision of the Court trying the case.

(5) (prev. text of Para 04 - SG 42/15) Interception and seizure of correspondence shall be performed under the order of **Art. 162. Para. 1- 4.**

(6) (prev. text of Para 05, amend. - SG 42/15) The provisions of Para. 1, 2, 4 and 5 shall be also applied to interception and seizure of electronic mail.

Section VI. Investigation Experiment

Purpose of the investigation experiment

Art. 166. The Court and the bodies of the pre-trial procedure may make an investigation experiment in order to check and specify data obtained from the examination of the defendant, the suspect and the witnesses or from another investigation or Court investigation action.

Terms for admitting an investigation experiment

Art. 167. An investigation experiment shall be allowed under the condition that it does not humiliate the human dignity of the persons participating in it and does not endanger their health.

Investigation experiment procedure

Art. 168. (1) An investigation experiment shall be conducted in the presence of witnesses of procedural actions, unless it is made in a Court hearing.

(2) Where needed, an expert or an expert - technical assistant shall attend the performance the investigation experiment.

Section VII. Recognition of Persons and Objects

Grounds and purpose of recognition

Art. 169. (1) Recognition shall be carried out, where for the clarification of the circumstances of the case is needed confirmation of the identity of persons and objects.

(2) The bodies of the pre-trial procedure, and in the Court procedure – the Court which shall hear the case, shall propose to the defendant, the suspect or the witness to recognise persons or objects.

Interrogation before recognition

Art. 170. Directly before performing a recognition, the defendant, the suspect and the witnesses shall be questioned whether they know the person or the object, which lies in store to be recognised by them, and of the peculiarities by which they can recognise them, of the circumstances under which they have observed the persons or the objects, as well as of the state in which they were at the time of perceiving the person or the object subject to recognition.

Recognition performance procedure

Art. 171. (1) The recognition shall be conducted in the presence of witnesses of procedural actions, save when performed in Court session

(2) The person shall be introduced for recognition in the company of three or more persons, similar in appearance and measures shall be taken to prevent direct contact between him/her and the recognizing person.

(3) Upon assessment of the body which shall carry out the recognition, it may be performed in a manner, that the recognizing person does not meet directly the person – subject to recognition. A witness of a secret identity may participate in recognition only as a recognizing person.

(4) Where it is not possible to show the very person, a photograph of him/her, together with the photographs of three or more persons shall be shown.

(5) Objects shall be shown for recognition together with similar objects.

(6) Where several defendant persons or witnesses perform recognition of persons and objects, they shall be introduced separately to each of the recognizing persons, and measures shall be taken that the recognizing persons do not enter direct contact between each other. Simultaneous recognition of several persons shall not be admissible.

(7) The defendant, the suspect or the witness shall be invited to show the person or the object whom or which the reasons or the testimonies given by him/her refer to, and to explain what he/she recognised them by.

(8) (New – SG 98/20) In the cases of Para. 4 and 5, recognition may also be performed by video-conference.

Section VIII. Special Intelligence Means

Material proofs, prepared by usage of special intelligence means

Art. 172. (1) The bodies of the pre-trial procedure may use special intelligence means: technical means – electronic and mechanical devices and substances, which serve to document the activity of the controlled persons and objects, and operative methods - surveillance, tapping, following, penetration, marking and inspection of the correspondence and the computerized information, controlled delivery, trust-transaction and investigation through officer under coverage .

(2) (suppl. - SG 60/11; suppl. – SG 17/13; amend. - SG 42/15, amend. and suppl. - SG 39/16, in force from 26.05.2016) The special intelligence means shall be used, where this is needed for the investigation of a serious malicious crimes under Chapter One, Chapter Two, Sections I, II, IV, VIII, and IX, Chapter III, Section III, Chapter Five, Sections I – VII, Chapter Six, Sections II – IV, Chapter Eight, Chapter Eight "a", Chapter Nine "a", Chapter Eleven, Sections I – IV, Chapter Twelve, Chapter Thirteen, Chapter Fourteen as well as for the crimes under Art. 219, Para. 4, sent. Two, Art. 220, Para. 2, Art. 253,

Art. 308, Para. 2, 3 and 5 , sent. Two, Art. 321, Art. 321a, Art. 356k and Art. 393 of the Special Part of the Penal Code, if the respective circumstances cannot be found in another way or their finding is related with exclusive difficulties.

(3) The suppliers of computer-information services shall be obliged to assist the Court and the bodies of the pre-trial procedures in gathering and recording computer information data through the application of special technical means only where this is necessary for detection of crimes under Para 2.

(4) The special intelligence means – controlled delivery and trust-transaction may serve collection of proofs and the officer under coverage shall be interrogated as a witness.

(5) The materials under Para 1- 4 shall be attached to the case.

Request for using special intelligence means

Art. 173. (1) (amend. – SG 109/08; suppl. – SG 70/13, suppl. - SG 62/22) For usage of special intelligence means in a pre-trial procedure a reasoned written request by the monitoring prosecutor shall be submitted to the Court. Prior to submission of the request the monitoring prosecutor shall notify thereof the administrative head of the respective prosecution office. In cases under the competence of the European Public Prosecutor's Office, the written, motivated request to the court is submitted by the European Prosecutor or by a European Delegated Prosecutor.

(2) The request shall contain:

1. information about the crime, for the investigation of which the usage of special intelligence service is needed;
2. description of the performed to the moment actions and the results of them;
3. data about the persons and the objects to which the special intelligence means shall be applied;
4. the operative methods which shall be applied;
5. (amend. – SG 70/13, in force from 09.08.2013) the time period for which usage is requested as well as the reasons to justify the duration thereof.

6. (new – SG 70/13, in force from 09.08.2013) reasons for the impossibility the necessary data to be collected by other means or a description of the exceptional difficulties related to collection thereof;

(3) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010; amend. – SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11, amend. - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) Where the request is for investigation by undercover officer, the head of the structure securing and conducting it, or a person authorised by him shall present to the authority under **Art. 174, Para. 1 and 2** an affidavit in writing by the officer that he/she is aware of his/hers obligations and tasks in the concrete investigation. The affidavit shall be kept by the authority under Art. 174, Para. 1 and 2 and it shall contain, instead of information of the identity of the officer, his identity number, determined by the structure securing and implementing the investigation through an undercover officer.

(4) (amend. – SG 109/08, suppl. - SG 62/22) In urgent cases, where this is the only possibility to carry out the investigation, an officer under coverage may also be applied under the permission of the monitoring prosecutor of the European Prosecutor or of the European Delegated Prosecutor. The activity of the officer under coverage shall be discontinued, if within 24 hours a permit of the respective Court is not granted, which shall also rule about the saving or destruction of the gathered information.

(5) (new - SG 42/15) Special intelligence means may be used also towards a witness in penal proceedings, who has consented thereto, in order to establish criminal activities of other persons under **Art. 108a, Art. 143 - 143a, Art. 159a - 159d, Art. 301 - 305** and **Art. 321 of the Penal Code**.

(6) (prev. text of Para 05, amend. - SG 42/15) In the cases of Para 5, as well as in the cases of **Art. 123, Para. 7**, to the request shall also be attached the written consent of the person to which the special intelligence means shall be applied.

Permission of usage of special intelligence means.

Art. 174. (1) (amend. – SG 70/13, in force from 09.08.2013) The permission of usage of special intelligence means shall be granted in advance by the Chairperson of the respective District Court or by an explicitly empowered by hem/her deputy-chairperson.

(2) (amend. - SG 42/15) The permission for the use of special intelligence means in cases, which are heard by a military court, shall be given in advance by the Chairperson of the respective military Court or by an expressly authorised by the latter deputy-chairperson.

(3) (new – SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11, repealed - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022)

(4) (prev. text of para 3, amend. – SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11; amend. – SG 70/13, in force from 09.08.2013, amend. - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) The body under Para. 1 and 2 shall rule by reasoned disposition, provided that beforehand it may require to be provided with all materials of the investigation that are relevant to the information contained in the request.

(5) (amend. – SG 109/08; prev. text of para 4 – SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11; amend. - SG 42/15, suppl. - SG 81/16, in force from 14.10.2016, amend. And suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) The permission to use special intelligence means for crimes, perpetrated by judges, prosecutors and investigators shall be given in advance in relation to all participants, including by persons and witnesses under **Art. 12, Para. 2 and 3 of the Special Investigation Means Act** by the chairman of the Sofia Appellate Court or a deputy chairman explicitly authorized by him, where the case is heard by the Sofia City Court, at the request of the administrative head of the Sofia Appellate Prosecution Office or a deputy authorized by him. In the remaining cases, the permission shall be given by the chairman of the Military-Appellate Court or by a duly authorized deputy thereof, at the request of the administrative head of the Military-Appellate Prosecution Office, or a duly authorized deputy thereof.

(6) (new - SG 42/15, amend. And suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) The permission to use of special intelligence means for crimes, perpetrated by a chairman of the Sofia Appellate Court, the Military-Appellate Court and a deputy thereof shall be given preliminary in relation to all the participants, including persons and witnesses under Art. 12, Para. 2 and 3 of the Special Investigation Means Act by the deputy-chairman of the Supreme Court of Cassation, leading the Criminal Collegium, at the request of the deputy chief prosecutor at the Supreme Prosecution Office of Cassation.

(7) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010; prev. text of para 5 – SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11; prev. text of Para 06 - SG 42/15, amend. - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) The disposition about investigation by officer under coverage shall contain the crime for which the investigation is allowed and the identity number of the officer, determined by the authority under Para. 1 and 2.

(8) (prev. text of para 6, amend. – SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11; prev. text of Para 07 - SG 42/15, amend. - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) A special register shall be kept by the respective Court, containing information about the requests which have been made and issued permissions under Para. 1 and 2. The said register shall not be public.

Procedure and period of application of special intelligence means for the purposes of the penal procedure

Art. 175. (1) (amend. – SG 109/08; amend. – SG 70/13, in force from 09.08.2013; amend. and suppl. - SG 14/15) Special intelligence means shall be applied by the respective structures of the State Agency Technical Operations of the State Agency "National Security" or of the Ministry of Interior

following the procedure of the **Special intelligence means Act**.

(2) (amend. and suppl. – SG 109/08; amend. – SG 70/13, in force from 09.08.2013; amend. and suppl. - SG 14/15) The Chairperson of the State Agency Technical Operations or a Deputy Chairperson empowered by him/her in writing, respectively the Chairman of the State Agency "National Security" or a deputy chairman empowered by him/her or respectively the Secretary General of the Ministry of Interior in writing shall issue a written disposition of the use of special intelligence means by the structures in accordance with Para. 1, on the grounds of the permission under **Art. 174**.

(3) (amend. - SG 74/15) The period of use of permission for the use of special intelligence means shall be:

1. up to twenty days in the cases referred to in **Art. 12, para 1, item 4 of the Special Intelligence Devices Act**;

2. up to two months in the remaining cases.

(4) (suppl. – SG 70/13, in force from 09.08.2013; amend. - SG 74/15) Where necessary, the period under Para. 1 may be extended pursuant to **Art. 174**:

1. by up to twenty days, however, for not more than sixty days altogether in the cases of para 3, item 1;

2. for not more than six months altogether in the cases of para 3, item 2.

(5) (new - SG 74/15) In the cases referred to in para 4, the request for extension of the time limit shall contain full and complete statement of the results obtained from the implementation of special intelligence means.

(6) (Prev. text of para 5 - SG 74/15) The use of special intelligence means shall be terminated, where:

1. the planned goal has been achieved;

2. their use yields no results;

3. the term of the permission has expired;

4. (new – SG 109/08) there is danger of disclosing of the operative techniques;

5. (new – SG 109/08) their application becomes impossible;

6. (new – SG 109/08) danger arises threatening the life and health of the officer under cover or of his/her ancestors or descendants, brothers, sisters, spouse or persons, with whom he/she is in especially close relations, where the danger arises out of the assigned tasks.

(7) (amend. – SG 109/08; prev. text of para 5 - SG 74/15) In case of termination of the use of special intelligence means, the body, which has granted the permission, shall be informed without delay in writing and stating the reasons thereof. In the cases where the collected information is not used to produce proofs, the said body shall order its destruction.

Preparation of material proofs obtained upon usage of special intelligence means

Art. 176. (1) (amend. – SG 109/08; prev. text of Art. 176, amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010)) Where special intelligence means are used, the material proofs shall be prepared in two copies and within 24-hours term shall be sent sealed to the prosecutor, who has requested the permission and to the Court which has given the permit.

(2) (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) If justified by penal procedure purposes, in the cases of **Art. 177, Para. 3** of using special intelligence means the prosecutor that has requested the authorisation may order that the material proofs are produced in two copies. Within 24 hours of producing the material proofs a sealed copy thereof shall be sent to the Court that has granted the permission, and the rest of the copies shall be sent to the prosecutor to be used in the corresponding penal proceedings.

Evidential force of the data obtained upon usage of the special intelligence means

Art. 177. (1) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The accusation and the verdict may not be grounded only on the data of the special intelligence means.

(2) In the penal procedure shall not be used results, obtained beyond the made request under **Art. 173**, except they contain data about another significant malicious crime under **Art. 172, Para 2**.

(3) (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) In order to prove severe crimes under Art. 172, Para 2 the information obtained through the use of special intelligence means in other penal proceedings or at the request of the authority under **Art. 13, Para 1 of the Special Intelligence Means Act** may also be used.

Chapter fifteen.

SERVICE OF SUMMONS, NOTICES AND PAPERS. PERIODS AND EXPENSES

Section I.

Service of Summons, Notices and Papers

Bodies and Persons, through whom the subpoenas, notices and papers shall be served

Art. 178. (1) The service of summons, notices and papers shall be done by an official of the corresponding Court, a body of the pre-trial procedure, municipality or community.

(2) Where the service cannot be effected in accordance with the preceding Para, it shall be effected through the bodies of the Ministry of the Interior or the services of the Ministry of Justice.

(3) Service to members of the armed forces shall be effected through the corresponding detachment or establishment

(4) Service to employees and workers may be effected through the employer or an employee to which receive of papers is assigned.

(5) Service to juveniles shall be effected through their legal representatives.

(6) Service to imprisoned and detained in custody shall be effected through the corresponding establishments.

(7) Service to physical persons and to establishments, which are abroad shall be effected in accordance with the agreement on legal assistance with the corresponding state, and where there is no such agreement – through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

(8) (New - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The service of summons, notices and papers on the accused and the defence counsel during the court phase may be carried out electronically with their consent and in case they have specified email addresses. Consent may be withdrawn at any time.

(9) (New - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The service of summons, notices and papers during the court phase on the victim, aggrieved legal entity, private plaintiff, private prosecutor, civil plaintiff, civil defendant and on their clients, as well as on a witness, expert, translator, interpreter or technical assistant, may be done electronically with their consent, if they have provided an email address. Consent may be withdrawn at any time.

(10) (New - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) When the service in the court proceedings cannot be effected by the order of Para. 1 - 7, at the discretion of the body, summons, notices and papers may also be served at a specified e-mail address.

(11) (Amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, prev. Para. 8 - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) In cases of emergency, service may be effected by telephone, telex and fax or by telegram. Service by telephone and by fax shall be certified in writing by the official, who has done it, service by telex

– with the confirmation in writing for received notice.

(12) (Suppl. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, prev. Para. 9 - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The attendance of witnesses under **Art. 141** shall be secured by the prosecutor, and in cases under **Art. 141a** – by the head of the structure organising and implementing the investigation through undercover officer, or a person authorised by him.

Contents of subpoenas and notices

Art. 179. (1) (1) The subpoena shall state: the name of the establishment, which is sending it, the number of the case and the year of initiating it; the name and the address of the summoned person; the capacity in which he, she or it is summoned; the venue, the date and the hour of process and the consequences of non-appearance.

(2) The notice shall state the procedural action, which has been performed or which the person should perform

(3) In the subpoena which is be sent to the private complainant and to the persons, who may institute themselves as a private complainant, civil claimant and civil defendant, their right of trustee shall be stated.

(4) In the notice the procedural action which has been performed and the person who shall perform it.

(5) Subpoenas and notices shall be signed by the respective official.

Service of subpoenas, notices and papers

Art. 180. (1) (1) Subpoenas, notices and papers shall be served against a receipt signed by the person for whom they are designated.

(2) Where the person is absent, they shall be served on an adult member of the family, and if there is no adult member of the family, to the house-manager or the door-keeper, as well as to a cotenant or a neighbour, in case he/she assumes the obligation to deliver it.

(3) Where the subpoenas, notices and the papers are addressed to a defendant, private prosecutor or a private complainant, civil claimant and a civil defendant who is absent, and the service to the persons under Para. 2 is impossible, they may be served to the defender or the trustee, if they agree to accept.

(4) If the addressee or the person under Para. 2 and 3 cannot or refuses to sign, the serving person shall make a note thereof in the presence of at least one person, who signs.

(5) Service on an establishment or a legal person shall be effected after a signature of an official authorised to receive the papers.

(6) The person through whom the service is effected shall sign a receipt with the obligation to deliver the subpoena, the notice or the papers to the person for whom they are designated.

(7) The serving person shall note on the receipt also the address of the person, through whom the service is effected and his/her relation with the person on whom the subpoena, the notice or the papers must be served.

(8) (New - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) A message containing information for downloading the summons, notice or papers from the information system for secure service or from the single portal for electronic justice shall be sent to the e-mail address specified by the person. Service by email address given for service in the single portal for electronic justice shall be certified by a copy of the electronic record of the information system of the portal, stamped with a qualified electronic time stamp of the court and by a certified exact time of each action in the system by electronic qualified time stamp under Regulation (EU) № 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market and

repealing Directive 1999/93/EC (OJ, L 257/73, of 28) August 2014). In case of service through a qualified service for electronic registered mail - with the electronic records for service, created by the qualified provider of certification services. They shall be considered as being served after their download. Confirmation of receipt shall not be required. The electronic identification of the person shall be performed in accordance with the procedure specified in the **Judiciary System Act**.

(9) (New - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) When the party has not downloaded the notice within 7 days of its dispatch, service shall be effected in accordance with the general procedure.

(10) (New - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The service on an e-mail address shall be certified by a copy of the electronic record thereof. Within 7 days of sending the e-mail with attached summons, notice or papers, the person shall be obliged to return a confirmation to the e-mail address of the sending authority. When the person fails to return the confirmation, the service shall be carried out in the general order.

(11) (New - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The service on an e-mail address shall be considered as service in person.

Receipt of service

Art. 181. (1) (1) The official having effected the service shall return in due time the receipt, which shall be attached to the case file.

(2) The receipt shall state the date of service and the name and the position of the person having effected the service.

Liability for failure of performing the obligations for service

Art. 182. (1) An official, who breaches his/her obligations for service shall be punished with a fine of up to five hundred BGN.

(2) The same punishment shall be imposed on the person under **Art. 180, Para 2, 3 and 5**, who fails to fulfil his/her obligations regarding service.

(3) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the fine has been imposed by a body of the pre-trial procedure, the decree shall be appealed before the relevant First Instance Court within 3-day term from the communication for its imposing. The Court shall rule immediately in a close session with a determination, which shall be final.

(4) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The Court determination, which refuses to cancel the fine under Para. 1 and 2 shall be subject to appeal under **Chapter Twenty-Two**.

Section II. Periods

Calculation of periods

Art. 183. (1) Periods shall be calculated in days, weeks, months and years.

(2) The period calculated in days shall begin to accumulate on the following day and shall expire at the end of the final day.

(3) The period calculated in weeks and months shall expire on the respective day of the final week or on the corresponding day of the final month. Where the final month does not have the corresponding day, the period shall expire on the last day of the month.

(4) Where the last day of the period is non-working, the period shall expire on the following first working day.

Observing the period

Art. 184. The period shall be deemed observed, if by its expiry the application, the complaint or the other papers have come in the respective body, in the post office, in another Court, prosecutor's office or investigating body, in the establishment, where the person is sustaining conviction or is detained in custody, in the detachment where the member of the armed forces is serving or in the diplomatic or consular representation, when the person is abroad.

Prolongation of the period

Art. 185. (1) The time-limit fixed by the Court or by the bodies of the pre-trial procedure may be extended, where there are good reasons for that and the request has been filed before its expiry.

(2) If the period under the preceding Para has expired for good reasons, the respective body may set a new period.

Re-establishing the period

Art. 186. (1) The period set by law may be re-established if it has been let to expire for good reasons.

(2) The request for recovery of the term shall be submitted to the Court or to the body of the pre-trial procedure within seven days following the day on which the reasons for failing to observe the time-term no longer exist.

(3) Simultaneously with the filing of the request for re-establishing of the period the action, the period for which has been expired, shall be executed.

(4) On a request of the person concerned, the execution of the action for which the period has expired may be suspended.

(5) The request for re-establishing the period shall be considered within seven-day period following its entry.

(6) The Court shall rule on the re-establishment of the period in a Court session with summoning the parties.

Section III. Expenses and Fees

Covering of expenses

Art. 187. (1) The expenses for the penal procedure shall be covered by the sums provided in the budget of the respective establishment, except in the cases referred to in the law.

(2) With regard to cases for offences prosecuted on a complaint of the victim, the expenses shall be paid in advance by the party concerned, and in case they have not been paid the party shall be given seven-day period to pay them

(3) With regard to cases for offences prosecuted on a complaint of the victim, the expenses on the made by the defendant evidencing requests shall be covered by the budget of the Court.

Assessment of expenses

Art. 188. (1) The amount of expenses shall be assessed by the Court or by the body of pre-trial procedure.

(2) (Suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Witness's fees of workers or employees shall be assessed by the Court, or by the pre-trial procedure body.

Decision on expenses

Art. 189. (1) The Court shall decide on the issue of expenses with a decision or determination.

(2) The expenses for an interpreter in the pre-trial procedure shall be on the account of the respective body, and the expenses for an interpreter in the Court procedure shall be on the account of the respective Court.

(3) Where the defendant has been found guilty, the Court shall verdict him/her to pay the expenses on the case, including the counsel's fee and the other expenses for the ex-officio appointed counsel, as well as the expenses incurred by the private prosecutor and the indicter. Where the convicted persons are several, the Court shall assess the part that each of them must pay.

(4) Where the defendant has been acquitted on certain charges, the Court shall verdict him/her to pay only the expenses incurred in connection with the charge on which he/she has been found guilty.

Imposition of expenses

Art. 190. (1) Where the defendant has been found guilty or the penal proceeding has been discontinued, the expenses on cases of common nature shall remain at the expense of the state, while the expenses on cases initiated on a complaint of the victim, shall be imposed on the private complainant.

(2) A writ of execution for the awarded expenses shall be issued by the Court of first instance.

Part three.

PRE-TRIAL PROCEDURE

Chapter sixteen.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Cases subject to pre-trial procedure

Art. 191. Pre-trial procedure shall be held on cases of general nature.

Stages of the pre-trial procedure

Art. 192. The pre-trial procedure shall include investigation and actions of the prosecutor after the finalization of the investigation.

Bodies of the pre-trial procedure

Art. 193. Bodies of the pre-trial procedure shall be the prosecutor and the bodies of investigation.

Distribution of the cases in the pre-trial procedure among the bodies of investigation

Art. 194. (1) The investigation shall be conducted by investigators in cases of:

1. (amend. - SG 33/11, in force from 27.05.2011; suppl. - SG 42/15) crimes of general nature under Art. 95 – 110, Art. 123, Art. 212, Para 5, Art. 286 - 289, Art. 295, Art. 299, Art. 334, Para 2, Art. 335, Para 2, Art. 341a, Art. 341b, Art. 342, Para 3, in relation to Para 1, option first, second and fourth option, Art. 343, Para 3, in relation to Art. 342, Para 1, first, second and fourth option, Art. 349a, Art. 353c, Art. 356d - 356j, Art. 357 – 360 and Art. 407 – 419a of the Penal Code;

1a. (new - SG 42/15) severe intentional crimes under Chapter Two, Sections I, IV, V and VIII of the Special Part of the Penal Code, committed by juveniles;

2. (suppl. – SG 109/07, in force from 01.01.2008; suppl. – SG 93/11, in force from 01.01.2012; amend. - SG 42/15, suppl. - SG 7/18) crimes perpetrated by judges, prosecutors and investigators and other persons enjoying immunity, members of the Council of Ministers or by state officials under [Art. 142, Para 1, Item 1 of the Ministry of Interior Act](#) or under [Art. 43, Para 1, Item 1 of the Act on the State Agency "National Security"](#) as well as the officers from the Customs Agency in their capacity as investigating authorities and by the bodies under [Art. 16, Para. 2 of the Act On Counteracting Corruption And On Seizure Of Illegally Acquired Property](#);

2a. (new – SG 7/18) for crimes under Art. 201 - 205, 212, 212a, 219, 220, 224, 225b, 226, 250, 251, 253-253b, 254a, 254b, 256, 282-283a, 285, 287-289, 294, 295, 299. 301 - 307, 310, 311 and 313 of the Penal Code, committed by persons holding senior public positions, in accordance with the Act On Counteracting Corruption And On Seizure Of Illegally Acquired Property;

3. crimes committed abroad;

4. (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) of factual and legal complexity that have been assigned to them by the administrative head of the corresponding regional prosecution authority.

(2) (new - SG 42/15) The investigation of crimes under Art. 334, Para 2, Art. 335, Para 2, Art. 341a, Art. 341b, Art. 342, Para 3, in relation to Para 1, first, second and fourth option, Art. 343, Para 3, in relation to Art. 342, Para 1, first, second and fourth option, Art. 349a, Art. 353c, Art. 356d - 356j of the Penal Code shall be carried out by an investigator of the National Service of Investigation. The Chief Prosecutor or a deputy authorised by him may assign the investigation of other crimes under Para 1 to investigators of the National Service of Investigation.

(3) (amend. - SG 69/08; suppl. – SG 93/11, in force from 01.01.2012; prev. text of Para 02 - SG 42/15; suppl. - SG 60/15) Beyond the cases under Para 1 the investigation shall be conducted by investigating police officers; in the event of crimes under Art. 234, 242, 242a and Art. 251 from the Penal Code, as well as under Art. 255 from the Penal Code as regards to VAT liabilities from import and excise duties – also by investigating customs inspectors, except in those cases where an official of the Customs Agency was involved in the crime.

(4) (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010; prev. text of Para 03 - SG 42/15) The police authorities at the Ministry of Interior may act as referred to in [Art. 212, Para. 2](#), as well as in investigations assigned to them by a prosecutor, investigator or investigating policeman.

(5) (new – SG 93/11, in force from 01.01.2012; prev. text of Para 04 - SG 42/15; suppl. - SG 60/15) Customs authorities may perform actions under Art. 212, para 2 in cases of crimes under Art. 234, 242, 242a, and 251 of the Penal Code, under Art. 255 from the Penal Code as regards to VAT liabilities from import and excise duties, as well as actions related to the investigation assigned to them by a prosecutor, an investigator or investigating customs inspector.

(6) (New - SG 16/21, declared unconstitutional with Decision of the Constitutional Court № 7 of 2021 - SG 41/21) [The investigation of cases about crimes committed by the Prosecutor General or his](#)

deputy shall be conducted by the prosecutor in the investigation against the Prosecutor General or his deputy.

(7) (New - SG 16/21, repealed - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022)

Bodies of pre-trial proceedings in cases within the competence of the European Public Prosecutor's Office

Art. 194a. (New - SG 109/07, in force from 01.01.2008, repealed - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, new - SG 52/13, in force from 14.06.2013, repealed - SG 14/15, new - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) (1) The European Prosecutor, the European Delegated Prosecutor and the investigative bodies shall be Bodies of the pre-trial proceedings in cases within the competence of the European Public Prosecutor's Office, under the jurisdiction of the Sofia City Court.

(2) Investigative bodies in cases within the competence of the European Public Prosecutor's Office shall be the investigators from the National Investigation Service, the investigating police officers appointed by an order of the Minister of the Interior and the investigating Customs inspectors appointed by an order of the Minister of Finance at the proposal of the Director General of the Customs Agency.

District where the pre-trial procedure is conducted

Art. 195. (1) The pre-trial procedure shall be conducted in the district which is relevant to the district of the competent to hear the case Court.

(2) The pre-trial procedure may be carried out in the district where the offence was detected or where the domicile of the person charged with the commission of the offence is, or where the domicile of most of the persons charged with the commission of the offence or most of the witnesses are, if:

1. the charge is for several offences committed in the district of different Courts;
2. where that is necessary to ensure promptness, impartiality, thoroughness and completeness of the investigation.

3) The issues under Para. 2 shall be decided by the prosecutor in the district, where the pre-trial procedure has been initiated. Until the ruling of the prosecutor, only those investigation actions, which brook no delay, shall be carried out

(4) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) In the cases under **Art. 43, p. 2**, or where all the prosecutors of the relevant prosecution office are taken away, the General prosecutor, or a deputy, authorized by him shall determine the pretrial procedure to be carried out in the district of another, equal in level prosecution office.

(5) (Former Para. 4 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Apart from the cases under Para. 2, with the permission of the General prosecutor the pre-trial procedure may also be carried out in another investigation district with the purpose of more complete investigation of the offence.

Direction and supervision by the prosecutor of the investigation

Art. 196. (1) While exercising direction and supervision the prosecutor may:

1. control permanently the development of the investigation by examination and inspection of all of the materials on the case;
2. give instructions for the investigation;
3. participate in the execution or execute actions of investigation;
4. remove the body of investigation, which has admitted offence of the law or cannot provide the correct conduction of the investigation;

5. take the case from one investigating body and assign it to another one;
6. (suppl. – SG 109/08; suppl. – SG 93/11, in force from 01.01.2012, suppl. - SG 7/18) assign the appropriate bodies of the Ministry of the Interior, the Commission for counteracting corruption and on seizure of illegally acquired property, the "National Security" State Agency or the Customs Agency, the performance of separate actions related to the detection of the crime;
7. repeal on his/her own initiative or on an appeal of the persons concerned the orders of the investigating body.

(2) Apart from the powers under Para. 1, the supervising prosecutor shall directly monitor the lawful conduction of the investigation and its finalization with the determined term.

Obligatory instructions by the prosecutor

Art. 197. The instructions in writing by the prosecutor to the body of investigation shall be obligatory and shall not be a subject to objection.

Disclosure of the Materials of the Investigation

Art. 198. (1) The materials of the investigation shall not be disclosed without the prosecutor's permission.

(2) Where need be, the body of the pre-trial procedure shall warn against signature the persons attending the investigation actions that they may not disclose without permission the materials under the case and in case of a breach they shall be liable under [Art. 360 of the Penal Code](#).

Acts of the bodies of the pre-trial procedure

Art. 199. (1) In the pre-trial procedure the prosecutor and the investigating magistrate shall rule decrees.

(2) Each decree shall contain: data about the time and the place of issuing it, of the body issuing it, of the case under which it is issued; reasons; operative provisions and signature of the body issuing it.

Appeal of the decrees

Art. 200. (Suppl. - SG 103/20, suppl. - SG 16/21) The decrees of the body of investigation shall be subject to appeal before the prosecutor. The decrees of the prosecutor which are not subject to Court control, with the exception of the decrees of the European Public Prosecutor and the European Delegated Prosecutors, as well as the decrees of the prosecutor in the investigation against the Prosecutor General or his deputy, shall be appealed before a prosecutor of the higher prosecution, the decree of which prosecutor shall not be a subject of appeal.

Complaint against the decrees

Art. 201. (1) The complaint against the decrees of the bodies of the pre-trial procedure may be in oral or in written. The written complaint shall be signed by the complainant, and about the complaint in oral a record shall be made, which shall be signed by the complainant and the person who receives it.

(2) The complaint shall be submitted through the body which has issued the decree or directly to the prosecutor, who is competent to hear it. In the first case it shall be forwarded immediately to the

respective prosecutor with a written opinion.

Effect of the complaint and term of ruling on it

Art. 202. (1) The complaint shall not suspend the execution of the appealed decree, unless the respective prosecutor rules otherwise.

(2) The prosecutor shall rule on the complaint within three-day term from its receiving.

Obligation to provide lawful and timely investigation

Art. 203. (1) The body of investigation shall take all measures to provide timely, lawful and successful conduction of the investigation.

(2) The investigation body shall be obliged in a shortest term to gather the needed evidence for detection of the objective truth, being guided by the law, the inner conviction and the instructions of the prosecutor.

(3) (new – SG 109/08; amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) In case of change of the competence or other cases of substituting an investigating authority under **Art. 52, Para. 1** with another authority, the acts of investigation and the other procedural acts that have been carried out shall preserve their procedural validity.

(4) (prev. par. 3 – SG 109/08) The body of investigation shall report periodically to the prosecutor on the progress of investigation, discussing with him/her the feasible versions and all other questions of significance for the lawful and successful finalization of the investigation.

(5) (prev. par. 4 – SG 109/08) The body of investigation shall also perform actions of investigation and other procedural actions during the time, when the case is sent to the Court in connection with a measure of procedural compulsion.

Co-operation with the public

Art. 204. The bodies of the pre-trial procedure shall use the wide co-operation with the public for the detection of the crime and clarification of the circumstances on the case.

Obligations of the citizens and of the officials for notification

Art. 205. (1) Where the citizens become acquainted with a crime of general nature, they shall be obligated to notify immediately a body of pre-trial procedure or another state body.

(2) When they learn about committed crime of general nature, the officials shall notify immediately the body of the pre-trial procedure and take the needed measures for keeping the scene and the data of the crime.

(3) In the cases of Para. 1 and 2, the body of the pre-trial procedure shall immediately execute its powers to institute a penal procedure.

Investigation in the absence of a defendant

Art. 206. (suppl. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) When the investigation will not create obstacles for establishing the objective truth, it may be conducted in the absence of the defendant, following the conditions of **Art. 269, Para. 3, Items 1, 2 and 4**.

Chapter seventeen. INVESTIGAION

Section I. Institution of Pre-trial Procedure and Conduction of Investigation

Terms for institution of pre-trial procedure

Art. 207. (1) Pre-trial procedure shall be instituted where there is a legal reason and sufficient data for a committed offence.

(2) In the cases stipulated by the Special Part of **the Penal Code** preliminary procedure shall be instituted upon complaint of the victim to the prosecutor and may not be terminated pursuant to **Art. 24, Para. 1, Item 9.**

- (3) The complaint shall contain information about the complainant and shall be signed by him/her.
(4) No fee shall be due when submitting the complaint.

Legal reasons

Art. 208. Legal reasons to initiate investigation shall be:

1. information to the bodies of pre-trial procedure about a committed crime;
2. information about a committed offence published in the mass media;
3. the appearance of the perpetrator in person before the bodies of the pre-trial procedure with a confession of a committed offence;
4. direct detection by the bodies of the pre-trial procedure of indices of a committed crime.

Information about a committed crime

Art. 209. (1) The information about a committed crime shall contain data about the person from which it comes. Anonymous information shall not be a legal reason for initiation of a preliminary proceeding.

(2) (Amend. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) Information may be oral or in writing. Information in writing may be a legal reason for initiation of preliminary investigation only if it is signed. They can also be sent electronically if they are signed with a qualified electronic signature in compliance with the requirements of the law. For oral information a record shall be drawn up, which shall be signed by the informant and the body receiving it.

(3) (New - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) With the information, the person may express his/her consent to be summoned and to receive messages at the e-mail address indicated by him/her.

Appearance of the perpetrator in person

Art. 210. In case of appearance of the perpetrator in person, the body of pre-trial procedure shall establish his/her identity and shall draw up a record, in which the made confession shall be exposed in detail. The appeared person and the body before which the confession was made shall sign the record.

Sufficient data for initiation of pre-trial procedure

Art. 211. (1) The data for initiation of pre-trial procedure shall be sufficient, when a well-founded assumption may be made that a crime has been committed.

(2) Data from which conclusions may be drawn about the persons, who have committed the crime or about its legal qualification shall not be required for initiation of a preliminary investigation.

Initiation of pre-trial procedure

Art. 212. (1) Pre-trial procedure shall be initiated by a decree of the prosecutor.

(2) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The pre-trial procedure shall be considered initiated with the drawing up of the protocol of the first action of investigation, where inspection, including examination of persons, search, seizure and interrogation of witnesses has been carried out, if their immediate execution is the only opportunity to collect and preserve evidence, as well as in cases of body search under the conditions and provisions of **Art. 164**.

(3) The body of investigation which has performed the action under Para 2 shall notify the prosecutor immediately, not later than 24 hours.

Refusal of the prosecutor to initiate pre-trial procedure

Art. 213. (1) (suppl. – SG 62/16, in force from 09.08.2016, suppl. - SG 103/20) The prosecutor may refuse to initiate pre-trial procedure, about which he/she shall inform the victim or his/her heirs, the damaged legal person and the person who gave the information. The decree shall be subject to appeal before the higher prosecution office, with the exception of the decree of the European Public Prosecutor and the European Delegated Prosecutor.

(2) (revoked – SG 62/16, in force from 09.08.2016)

Refusal of the prosecutor in the investigation against the Prosecutor General or his deputy to initiate pre-trial procedure

Art. 213a. (New - SG 16/21, repealed - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022)

Content of the act of institution of a pre-trial procedure

Art. 214. (1) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) Where a pre-trial procedure is instituted by a decree of the prosecutor, the decree shall contain: the date and the place of its drawing up, the body which is drawing it up, the legal reason and the data on the base of which the pre-trial procedure is instituted, and the body to perform the investigation.

(2) Where the pre-trial procedure is instituted under the provision of **Art. 212, Para. 2**, besides the circumstances under Art. **129**, in the record of the first action of investigation the legal reason and the data of the committed crime shall be stated.

(3) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The act for formation of pretrial procedure under Para. 1 and 2 shall not indicate the names of the person, about who there is data, that he/she has committed the crime.

Actions against unknown perpetrator

Art. 215. (1) (suppl. – SG 93/11, in force from 01.01.2012, suppl. - SG 7/18) Where the perpetrator of the crime is unknown, together with the investigation actions, the prosecutor shall assign to the respective bodies of the Ministry of Interior, of the State Agency "National Security", of the Commission for counteracting corruption and on seizure of illegally acquired property, or the Customs Agency the identification and detection of the perpetrator of the crime.

(2) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010; suppl. – SG 93/11, in force from 01.01.2012, suppl. - SG 7/18) In the cases under Para 1, when the respective bodies of the Ministry of Interior State Agency "National Security", of the Commission for counteracting corruption and on seizure of illegally acquired property, or the Customs Agency assess that data incriminating a certain person have been gathered, they shall deliver the gathered materials to respective body of investigation and shall notify the prosecutor immediately.

Splitting the case

Art. 216.(1) Where evidence of participation of more than one person is gathered , the prosecutor may split the materials regarding the unidentified or untraced persons into a separate case.

(2) Where evidence of several crimes is gathered in the case, perpetrated by one person, the prosecutor may split the materials regarding some of the crimes into a separate case.

Merging of cases

Art. 217. (1) Where two or more cases of different crimes or against different persons are related to each other, the prosecutor may merge them, if this is needed for the detection of the objective truth.

(2) The prosecutor may merge two or more cases of different crimes against one and the same defendant.

Keeping the value of the procedural actions

Art. 217a (New – 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017). The carried-out actions of investigation and other procedural actions before the division or combining of cases shall keep their procedural value of the divided or combined cases.

Procedural actions taken by the European Public Prosecutor's Office

Art. 217b. (New - SG 103/20) All procedural actions performed by a competent body of the European Public Prosecutor's Office in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/1939 shall have in the Republic of Bulgaria the procedural value of actions performed by a Bulgarian body.

Assistance from other bodies

Art. 218. (1) Where needed, the body of investigation may request form another body of investigation to perform separate actions of investigations.

(2) Where the body of investigation requires so, the bodies of the Ministry of Interior shall be obliged to provide assistance at the performance of concrete actions of investigation.

Involving of defendant and submission of the decree

Art. 219. (1) Where enough evidence of the guiltiness of a concrete person in commitment of a crime of general nature is gathered, and any of the grounds for discontinuation of the penal procedure do not appear, the body of investigation shall report before the prosecutor and shall involve the person as defendant by drawing up the relevant decree.

(2) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The body of investigation may also involve the person as defendant together with the execution of the protocol of the first action of investigation against him/her, which shall be reported to the prosecutor.

(3) The decree involving the defendant and the record of the actions under Para. 2 shall contain:

1. the date and the place of its issuance;
2. the issuing body;
3. the three names of the person, who is involved as defendant, the deed for which he/she is involved, and the legal qualification;
4. the evidence on which the involving is grounded, if this will not confuse the investigation;
5. measure of compulsion, if such is taken;
6. his/her rights under **Art. 55**, including his/her right to refuse and give explanations, as well as his/her right of defender under authorization or under appointment.

(4) The body of investigation shall submit the decree of involving to the defendant and to his/her defender, and shall give them opportunity to become acquainted with the complete contents of it, and in case of necessity shall give additional clarifications.

(5) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) In addition to the circumstances under **Art. 179, Para. 1** the writ of summons shall contain also the concrete acts, for which the person is summoned, his right to appear accompanied by defender and the possibility a defender to be assigned in the cases of **Art. 94, Para. 1**, as well as the possibility for forced appearance in cases of unreasoned failure to appear.

(6) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010; amend. - SG 21/14, in force from 09.04.2014) Where the defendant has been validly summoned and fails to appear without good reasons, he shall be brought forcefully under the provision of Art. 71, Para. 3 – 8.

(7) (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) Where the defendant appears without authorised defender or is brought forcefully, the investigating authority shall carry out the acts, for which the defendant is summoned appointing a defender for him in the cases under Art. 94, Para. 1.

(8) (prev. text of Para. 07, amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The body of investigation may not perform actions of investigation with the participation of the defendant, before he fulfils its obligations under Para. 1 – 7.

Actions with regard to a person enjoying immunity

Art. 220. (1) A person enjoying immunity shall not be involved. The penal tracing of this person for the same crime shall be initiated after the immunity is fallen, unless other obstacles appear for this.

(2) Where the defendant acquires immunity, the penal procedure shall be suspended, and the taken measures of procedural compulsion with regard of the person shall be cancelled. In this case the procedure may continue with regard to the rest of the defendant persons, if this will not establish an obstacle to reveal the objective truth.

Interrogation of the defendant

Art. 221. After the submission of the decree of involving, the body of the pre-trial procedure shall

immediately begin interrogation of the defendant following the provisions of Art. 138.

Interrogation of the defendant before a judge

Art. 222. (1) Under assessment of the body of the pre-trial procedure, the interrogation shall be performed before a judge of the respective Court of first instance or of the Court of first instance in the district of which the action is performed, with the participation of a defender if there is such.

(2) For the interrogation under Para. 1, the respective body shall provide the appearance of the defendant and his/her defender.

(3) As far as special rules are not established, the interrogation under Para. 1 shall be performed following the rules of the Court investigation.

Interrogation of a witness before a judge

Art. 223. (1) Where there is a danger that a witness may be unable to appear before the Court because of serious illness, continuous absence from the country or for other reasons, which make impossible his/ her appearance in a Court hearing, and where it is necessary to attach testimonies of a witness, which are of exclusive importance for the detection of the objective truth, the interrogation shall be carried out before a judge of the respective Court of first instance or of the Court of first instance where the action is performed. In this case, the file shall not be submitted to the judge.

(2) The body of investigation shall secure the appearance of the witness and the possibility for the witness and his/her attorney, if there is such, to take part in conducting the interrogation.

(3) Unless there are special rules, the interrogation under Para. 1 shall be conducted according to the rules of the Court investigation.

(4) The defendant or his/her defender may require from the body of investigation an interrogation of a witness in accordance with the procedure under Para. 1. The refusal shall be reflected in a record, signed by the respective body, the defendant and the defender.

Attendance at the performance of actions of investigation

Art. 224. Where the provisions of this Code do not provide for the presence of the defendant, of his/her defender or of the victim and his/her trustee in the carrying out of the respective interrogation proceedings, the body of investigation may allow them to attend, if that will not embarrass the investigation.

Secondary involving of the defendant

Art. 225. Where within the investigation new grounds for application of a law for crime of more severe punishment are found or the factual circumstances have changed, or it is necessary to include new crimes or to be involved new persons, the body of investigation shall report to the prosecutor and shall execute a secondary involving of the defendant.

Actions before the submission of the investigation.

Art. 226. (1) Where the body of investigation assesses that all the needed for the detection of the objective truth actions are executed, it shall report the case before the prosecutor.

(2) The prosecutor shall examine if the investigation has been conducted lawfully, objectively, fully

and completely.

(3) Where the prosecutor finds that a significant breach of the procedural rules had been admitted during the investigation and the evidence needed for the detection of the objective truth has not been gathered, or that a secondary involvement is needed, he/she him/her self shall execute the needed actions or direct the body of investigation to execute them.

Presenting the investigation to Court

Art. 227. (1) After the performance of the actions under **Art. 226**, the body of investigation shall present the investigation to Court.

(2) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The defendant and his defender, the victim and his trustee shall be summoned for the presentation of the investigation, if requested by them.

(3) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The summoning shall be made at the addresses for summoning in the country that are specified for the lawsuit and the writ of summons shall be delivered at least three days before the date of presenting the investigation.

(4) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The investigation shall not be presented, if the person has not been found at the addresses for summoning in the country specified for the lawsuit or has been validly summoned but has failed to provide excusable reasons for his failure to appear.

(5) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) If the defendant does not appear with an authorized defender, the body of investigation shall present the investigation and in the cases under **Art. 94, Para. 1** shall appoint a reserve defender, notwithstanding of the authorization of a defender.

(6) (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010)

(7) Before the presenting, the investigating body shall clarify to the attending persons their rights.

(8) The investigation shall be presented by way of providing to the persons appearing there all the materials on the case for examination.

(9) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The prosecutor may present the investigation, if he/she has performed him/herself the actions under **Art. 226, Para. 3**.

(10) (new – SG 109/08; revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010)

Acquaintance with the materials

Art. 228. (1) The body of investigation shall determine a time limit for examination of the materials depending on the nature of the accusation, the volume of the file and on other circumstances, which may be of importance for the duration of the examination

(2) Where some of the appeared persons is unable to examine the materials, the investigating magistrate shall be obliged to explain them, and if need be, to read them to him/her.

(3) Where a person refuses to read the materials, the refusal and the reason thereof shall be noted down in the record of the investigation.

Requests, notes and objections

Art. 229. (1) (1) After they examine the materials, the respective persons may make requests, notes and objections

(2) The written requests, notes and objections shall be attached to the file, while the oral ones shall be entered in the record of the investigation.

(3) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) On the requests, notes and objections under Para

2 the supervising prosecutor shall deliver a decree, which shall not be subject to appeal, within seven days.

Additional actions of investigation

Art. 230. (1) Where additional actions of investigation are carried out, the persons on whose request they have been undertaken shall also be present.

(2) Following the completion of the additional actions, the body of investigation shall perform a secondary submission of the investigation.

Conclusion of the body of investigation

Art. 231. (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010)

Charge- conclusion

Art. 232. (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010)

Conclusion about discontinuation or suspension of the penal procedure.

Art. 233. (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010)

Period to perform the investigation. Period of the measures of procedural compulsion.

Art. 234. (1) The investigation shall be performed and the case forwarded to the prosecutor within two months from the date of its institution.

(2) The prosecutor may determine a longer period. If this period appears to be insufficient, it may be prolonged by the prosecutor before the elapse of the period under Para. 1;

(3) (suppl. – SG 109/08; amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Upon factual and legal intricacy of the case, the prosecutor may extend the term under Para. 1 up to 4 months. If this term appears to be insufficient, the administrative head of the relevant prosecution office or a prosecutor, authorized by him may extend it upon request of the observation prosecutor. The term of every extension may not be longer than 2 months.

(4) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The reasoned request for prolongation of the period shall be sent before expiration of the terms under Para. 1 and 3.

(5) (Repealed – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

(6) The prosecutor who prolongs the period of performance of the investigation shall rule on the measures of procedural compulsion.

(7) Actions of investigation performed beyond the periods of Para. 1 – 3 shall not generate legal consequences, and the gathered evidence may not be used before the Court at the pronouncement of the verdict.

(8) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010; amend. – SG 71/13) The measures of procedural compulsion, taken with regard to the defendant, as well as the measure for securing the civil claim, if there are no longer grounds for its imposition, shall be cancelled by the prosecutor after the elapse of more than a year and six months from the involvement in the cases of a serious crime and more than eight months – in the rest of the cases. These time limits shall not include the time of suspending the penal procedure by the

prosecutor pursuant to **Art. 25**.

(9) If the prosecutor does not fulfil his/her obligation under Para. 8, the measures of procedural compulsion shall be cancelled upon request of the defendant or of his/her defender by the first-instance Court.

(10) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The Court shall rule by a single judge at a closed session, which shall be final.

(11) (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010)

Forwarding the case to the prosecutor

Art. 235. (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. - SG 44/18, amend. – SG 7/19) After finalization of the investigation the investigating authority shall send immediately the file accompanied by an opinion in writing to the prosecutor and shall enclose: a list of the persons to be summoned for the judicial session; a reference of the imposed compulsory measure indicating the date of detention of the defendant, if the measure is detention or home arrest; a reference on the documents and the material evidence; a reference of the expenses that have been incurred and a reference of the imposed security measures, as well as a reference for the accommodation of the children in the cases of **Art. 63, Para. 12**.

Section II.

Records of Actions of Investigation. Audio-records and Video-records

Presenting and handing up records of actions of investigation

Art. 236. (1) The body of the pre-trial procedure shall present the record of actions of investigation before the persons, who have taken participation in their performance, in order to become acquainted with it, or shall read it upon their request.

(2) The body of pre-trial procedure shall explain to each person his/her right to demand corrections, amendments and supplementations of the record. The stated requests shall be entered in the record.

(3) Where some of the persons, who have participated in the acts of investigation refuses or is unable to sign the record, the investigating magistrate shall note down this fact and shall also state the reasons for this.

(4) A copy of the record of search, seizure and certification shall be served to the person, subject of such acts of investigation.

Protocols about investigative actions performed by video-conference

Art. 236a. (New - SG 98/20) (1) A protocol shall be prepared for the conducted investigative actions by video-conference, in which the data under **Art. 129, Para. 1** and the data of all participants in the action and of the person, who has established their identity, shall be entered. The protocol shall be signed by the investigating authority and by the participants present therewith.

(2) A video recording shall be prepared for the conducted investigative actions by videoconference by the order of Art. **239** and **240**, for which all participants are explicitly notified.

Record of Interrogation

Art. 237. (1) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The record of interrogation shall specify the following data about the interrogated person: full name, date and place of birth, citizenship, nationality, education, family status, occupation, place of work and official position, place of residence, conviction-status, etc., which are of importance for the case. In the cases of Art. **141** and **141a**, the identification data shall not be entered in the record.

(2) The reasons and the evidence shall be recorded in the first person singular, possibly word for word.

(3) Where necessary, the questions and the answers shall be recorded separately.

(4) The interrogated person shall certify with his/her signature that his/her evidence have been recorded correctly. In case the record is written down of several pages, the interrogated person shall sign every page.

(5) The interrogated person may, if he/she wishes, state in his/her own hand the explanations or testimony, which he/she has given orally. In such case, the body of investigation may ask additional questions.

Audio-record

Art. 238. (1) On the request of the interrogated person or on the initiative of the body of investigation audio-record may be made, which the interrogated person shall be informed of before the commencement of the interrogation.

(2) The audio-record must contain the data specified in **Art. 129, Para. 1**, and Art. **237**.

(3) Audio-record of a part of the interrogation or repeating especially for the audio-record of a part of the interrogation shall not be allowed.

(4) After the completion of the interrogation, the audio-record shall be reproduced in full to the interrogated. The additional explanations and statements shall also be reflected in the audio-record.

(5) The audio-record shall finish with a declaration of the interrogated person that it reflects correctly the given explanations and statements.

Record of interrogation while making audio-record

Art. 239. (1) The body of investigation shall also draw up a record of interrogation where an audio-record is made.

(2) (New - SG 98/20) The audio-recording shall be made on an electronic medium for a single recording, on which the signatures of the body of the pre-trial proceedings and the participants who are with it, and the date of the conducted investigative action shall be placed.

(3) (Previous Para. 2 - SG 98/20) The record shall contain: the basic circumstances of the interrogation, the ruling to make an audio-record; the notifying of the interrogated about the audio-record; notes of the interrogated in connection with the audio-record; the reproduction of the audio-record before the interrogated and the statements of the body of the pre-trial procedure and of the interrogated about the regularity of the audio-record.

(4) (Previous Para. 3 - SG 98/20) The audio-record shall be attached to the record after it is sealed with a note specifying: the body, which has conducted the interrogation, the case, the name of the interrogated and the date of the interrogation. The note shall be signed by the body of investigation and the interrogated person.

(5) (Previous Para. 4 - SG 98/20) The unsealing of the audio-record for the needs of the investigation shall be allowed solely with the permission of the prosecutor and in the presence of the interrogated. During the hearing of the audio-record the interrogated shall also be present.

(6) (Previous Para. 5 - SG 98/20) After the hearing of the audio-record, it shall be again sealed

following the procedure of Para 3.

Video-record

Art. 240. The provisions of Articles **237-239** shall apply to videotaping accordingly.

Audio-record and video-record at other actions of the investigation

Art. 241. Audio-record and video-record may also be made during other investigation actions subject to the provisions of Articles **237-239**.

Chapter eighteen.

ACTIONS OF THE PROSECUTOR AFTER FINALIZATION OF THE INVESTIGATION

Powers of the prosecutor

Art. 242. (1) After the prosecutor receives the case, he/she shall discontinue, suspend the penal procedure, table proposal for relief from criminal liability or a proposal for agreement on the outcome of the case or shall bring accusation by an act of indictment, if grounds for such do appear.

(2) Where at the submission of the investigation the body of investigation has admitted significant procedural breaches, the prosecutor shall direct to remove them or shall remove them by him/herself.

(3) (new - SG 42/15, suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where necessary, the prosecutor may carry out additional investigation actions, as well as other procedural actions, after which he/she shall present the investigation.

(4) (prev. text of Para 3, amend. - SG 42/15) The prosecutor shall execute his/her powers under Para 1 - 3 in a shortest period, but not later than one month from the receipt of the case.

(5) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the case represents factual and legal intricacy, the term under Para. 4 may be extended with 1 month by the administrative head of the relevant prosecution office or by an authorized by him prosecutor upon a grounded request of the supervising prosecutor.

Discontinuation of the penal procedure by the prosecutor

Art. 243. (1) The prosecutor shall discontinue the penal procedure:

1. (suppl. – SG 7/19) in the cases of **Art. 24, Para. 1 and 6**;

2. (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) if he/she finds, that the charges are not proven.

(2) With the decree, the prosecutor shall also rule on the issue of the tangible proves and shall cancel the imposed to the defendant measures of procedural compulsion, as well as on the measure of security of the civil claim, if the ground for its imposition has fallen.

(3) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the prosecutor terminates the penal procedure under Art. 24, Para. 1, p. 1, because of the fact that the deed is administrative offence, he/she shall send the materials with the material evidence upon competence of the relevant administrative body.

(4) (Former Para. 3, - SG, 63.17, in force from 05.11.2017) A copy of the decree for discontinuation or suspending of the penal procedure shall be sent to the defendant, the victim or his/her heirs or to the damaged legal person, who shall be entitled to appeal the decree before the respective first-instance Court within seven-day period from the receipt of the copy.

(5) (Former Para. 4, amend. - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The Court shall hear the case in a sole-person session not later than one month from the receipt of the case, and shall rule on the grounding and lawfulness of the decree of discontinuation of the penal procedure.

(6) (Former, Para. 5, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) With the determination, the Court may:

1. confirm the decree;
2. amend the decree concerning the grounds of discontinuation of the penal procedure and the disposal of the proofs;
3. cancel the decree and return the case to the prosecutor together with obligatory instructions regarding the application of the law.

(7) (Former, Para. 6, amend. - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The determination under Para. 6 may be challenged by the prosecutor and appealed by the defendant, his/her defender, the victim or his/her heirs, or by the damaged legal person before the respective Court of appeal within seven-day period from its announcement.

(8) (Former, Para. 7 - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The Court of appeal shall pronounce with a body of three judges in a closed session by a determination, which shall be final.

(9) (Former, Para. 8 - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Decree of partial discontinuation of the penal procedure shall not be drawn up in the cases of a secondary involving of the same person for the same deed.

(10) (suppl. – SG 71/13, former, Para. 9 - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the grounds of Para. 1 have not appeared, the decree of discontinuation of the penal procedure, which has not been appealed by the defendant or the victim or his/her heirs, or by the damaged legal person, may be revoked ex-officio by a prosecutor of a higher prosecution. Revocations may be carried out within two years, where proceedings have been initiated for serious crime, and within one year – in the rest of the cases – from the issue of the decree for discontinuation of penal proceedings. In exceptional cases, the Prosecutor General may revoke the decree of discontinuation of penal proceedings after the expiry of the said term.

(11) (new – SG 109/08, former Para. 10 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) In case of cancellation of the decree for termination of the penal proceedings a new term for implementation of investigation under **Art. 234** shall start elapsing.

(12) (New - SG 103/20) Paragraph 10 shall not apply to the decrees of the European Prosecutor and the European Delegated Prosecutors.

(13) (New - SG 16/21) Paragraph 10 shall not apply to the decrees of the prosecutor in the investigation against the Prosecutor General or his deputy.

Suspension of the penal procedure by the prosecutor

Art. 244. (1) The prosecutor shall suspend the penal procedure:

1. in the cases of **Art. 25** and **26**;
2. where the perpetrator of the crime has not been detected;
3. (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) if it is impossible to interrogate the only eyewitness, including through assignment, via video or telephone conference.

(2) If in the cases under Para. 1, Item 2 there is an involved defendant, the penal procedure with regard to him/her shall be discontinued.

(3) (Suppl. – SG 7/19) Upon suspension of the penal procedure, the prosecutor shall send a copy of the decree to the defendant, as well as to the victim or his/her heirs, and in the cases of **Art. 25, Para. 1, item 6** and notify them of the rights under **Art. 80**.

(4) (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010)

(5) The decree under Para. 1 may be appealed by the defendant, the victim or his/her heirs before the respective first-instance Court within a seven day period from the receipt of the copy. The Court shall pronounce in a body of a single judge, in a closed session, not later than seven days from receipt of the case

in the Court, by a determination which shall be final.

(6) (revoked – SG 109/08)

(7) (new – SG 109/08) In case of cancellation of the decree for suspension of the penal procedure under the provision of Para. 5 a new term under **Art. 234** for implementation of investigation shall start elapsing.

(8) (prev. Para. 7 – SG 109/08) In the cases of Para. 1, Item 3, the penal procedure shall be suspended for not more than one year.

Actions on a suspended procedure

Art. 245. (1) (amend. – SG 109/08; amend. and suppl. – SG 93/11, in force from 01.01.2012, suppl. - SG 7/18) Where the prosecutor suspends the penal procedure due to a non-detection of the perpetrator, the prosecutor shall forward the case to the respective bodies of the Ministry of Interior, the State Agency "National Security", of the Commission for counteracting corruption and on seizure of illegally acquired property, or of the Customs Agency for continuation of the tracing. These bodies shall inform the prosecutor about the result of the tracing and shall provide the gathered materials.

(2) The prosecutor shall revive the suspended penal procedure after the ground for suspension falls or a necessity of additional actions of investigation arises.

(3) In case of re-establishing the suspended procedure the investigation shall be preformed within the periods under **Art. 234**. They shall not include the time, for which the penal procedure has been suspended.

(4) (New – SG 7/19) The prosecutor shall terminate the criminal proceedings if, within six months from receipt of the notice of suspension on the grounds of **Art. 25, Para. 1, item 6**, the victim of the criminal offense has filed a complaint under **Art. 81**.

Act of indictment

Art. 246. (1) The prosecutor shall draw up an act of indictment, where he/she is convinced that the needed for the detection of the objective truth and for bringing indictment in the Court, no ground for discontinuation or suspension of the penal procedure appears and a significant breach of the procedural rules has not been admitted, which is removable.

(2) The circumstantial part of the act of indictment shall contain: the crime committed by the defendant; the time, the place and the method of committing it; the victim and the amount of the damage; complete information about the personality of the defendant, if there are terms and conditions of applying **Art. 53 of the Penal Code**; the circumstances, which aggravate or attenuate the liability of the defendant; the reasons and the conditions which have contributed to the commitment of the crime; the evidentiary materials establishing the stated circumstances

(3) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The concluding part of the act of indictment shall contain: data regarding the identity of the defendant; legal qualification; the penal law, which shall be applied; if there are grounds for the application of Art. 53, PC; whether there are grounds for transfer of the penal procedure; the date and the place of drafting the act of indictment and the name and official position of the drafter.

(4) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. - SG 44/18, amend. – SG 7/19) To the indictment shall be attached: a list of the persons, who must be summoned for the Court hearing; information about the taken restraining measure, which shall state the date of the defendant's detention in custody, if the measure is detention in custody; information about the documents and the tangible materials; information about the incurred costs; information about the taken security measures; as well as information about the accommodation of the children in the cases of **Art. 63, Para. 12**.

Part four.
COURT PROCEDURES

Chapter nineteen.

BRINGING TO COURT AND PREPARATIONAL ACTIONS FOR HEARING THE CASE IN COURT SESSION (TITLE, AMEND. – SG, 63/17, IN FORCE FROM 05.11.2017)

(The title “Section I Bringing to Court” shall be deleted – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

Instituting the procedure before the first instance

Art. 247. (1) The procedure before the first instance shall be instituted:

1. upon an act of indictment;

2. (amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) upon a complaint of the victim by the crime.

(2) (Repealed – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, new - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021)

The indictment and the complaint can be filed through the single portal for e-justice, signed with a qualified electronic signature. In the other cases, they shall be entered in the unified information system of the courts by the order of [Art. 360g of the Judiciary System Act](#).

(3) The act of indictment and the complaint shall be submitted to the Court in as many copies as the number of the defendants.

Setting the beginning of the proceedings in the information system of the court of first instance

Art. 247a. (New - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) (1) When performing a procedural action which sets the beginning of court proceedings, an electronic case shall be opened in the information system of the court.

(2) Statements and acts, submitted to the court on paper, as well as all documents and information on paper, shall be entered in the information system of the court by taking an electronic image by the order of [Art. 360g of the Judiciary System Act](#) in a form and manner allowing their reproduction.

(3) Evidence, which due to its nature cannot be transformed into electronic form, shall be attached to the case and shall be stored in the form in which they are presented before the court.

(4) The whole or part of the electronic case file may be reproduced in the required number of documents on paper with the meaning of official transcripts after certification by an employee authorized by the administrative Head of the respective body of the judiciary. A reproduction fee is to be charged as the one for a certified transcript.

(5) At the request of the parties to the case, the court shall provide them with an uncertified copy of the whole or of a part of the electronic case, reproduced on paper. A fee shall be charged for the reproduction of a copy. No fee shall be due in cases of exemption from state fee, as well as in other cases provided by law.

(6) The documents and the information presented on electronic carrier, received electronically or entered in the information system of the court, shall be processed and stored in a way that guarantees the protection against errors, forgery and loss.

Determination of a judge – reporter and check of the jurisdiction of the case

Art. 247b. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, prev. text of Art. 247a - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) (1) After institution of the case, a judge – reporter shall be determined.

(2) Where the judge – reporter finds, that the case is under jurisdiction of the court:

1. he/she shall appoint the instituted under the indictment in a dispensary session within 2-month term from its receiving, and where it represents factual or legal indictment, as well as in other exceptional cases, the chairperson of the Court may in writing permit the dispensary session to be appointed by him longer term, but not longer than 3 months;

2. he/she shall perform the powers under **Art. 250 – 252**, where the case has been instituted upon a claim of the victim.

(3) The reporting judge shall terminate the court procedure, if he/she finds that the case is not under jurisdiction of the court.

Notice for appointment of dispensable session

Art. 247c. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, prev. text of Art. 247b - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) (1) Upon and order of the reporting judge, a copy of the indictment shall be delivered to the defendant. With the delivery of the indictment to the defendant, he/she shall be notified about the appointment of the dispensable session and about the issues under **Art. 248, Para. 1**, about his right to appear with a defender and about the possibility a defender to be appointed in the cases under **Art. 94, Para. 1**, as well as that the case may be heard and decided in his absence under the conditions of **Art. 269**.

(2) About the dispensable session and the issues under Art. 248, Para. 1, the prosecutor and the defender shall be notified as well as the victim or his heirs and the damaged legal person, who shall be notified about the right to authorize commissioner.

(3) Within 7-day term from the delivery of the notice, the prosecutor and the persons under Para. 1 and 2 may give answers to the issues, which are discussed in the dispensable session and make their requests.

(4) Within 7-day term from the delivery of the notice, the victim or his heirs may make requests for constitution as a private prosecutor and civil claimant and the damaged legal person – as a civil claimant.

(5) The reporting judge shall provide possibility for the persons, who may participate in the dispensable session to get acquainted with the case materials and make the needed extracts.

Participants in the dispensable session

Art. 247d. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, prev. text of Art. 247c - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) (1) The Dispensable session shall be postponed, where the following fail to appear:

1. the prosecutor;

2. the defendant, if his appearance is obligatory, apart from the cases under **Art. 269, Para. 3**;

3. (declared unconstitutional in the part "in the cases of Art. 94, Para. 1" with Decision of the Constitutional Court № 14 of 2018 - SG 87 of 2018) the defender – **in the cases under Art. 94, Para. 1**.

(2) (Suppl. - SG 96/18) If the victim fails to appear, or his heirs and the damaged legal person, or the counsel for the defence, outside the cases of Art. 94 Para. 1, without a good reason, shall not be an obstacle for conducting the administrative dispositive session.

(3) The dispensable session shall not be postponed, if the victim or his heirs, as well as the damaged legal person have not been found at the address, indicated by them for summoning in the country.

Issues, which shall be discussed in the dispensable session

Art. 248. (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) (1) In the dispensable session the following issues shall be discussed:

1. if the case is under the jurisdiction of the Court;
 2. if a ground for discontinuation or suspension of the penal procedure appears;
 3. if a removable significant breach of procedural rules has been admitted in the pre-trial procedure, leading to limitation of the procedural rights of the defendant, of the victim and his/her heirs;
 4. if grounds for hearing the case under the special rules;
 5. (amend. – SG 9/21, in force from 06.02.2021) hearing the case in closed doors, attraction of reserve judge or judicial assessor, appointment of a defender, expert, translator or interpreter in Bulgarian sign language and performing court actions under delegation;
 6. the measures, taken for a procedural coercion;
 7. requests for collections of new evidence;
 8. appointment of the court session and the persons, who are to be summoned for it.
- (2) The court shall pronounce on the requests, made for constitution of parties in the proceedings.
- (3) In a court session of the first instance, the appellate and cassation courts no objections may be made for the breaches of the procedural rules under Para. 1, p. 3 may be made, which have not been put for discussion in the dispensable session, including by initiative of the reporting judge, or which have been accepted as insignificant.
- (4) In the dispensable session, no breaches shall be discussed, related to admittance, collection, check and assessment of the evidence and the evidence means.
- (5) (Amend. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) After hearing the prosecutor and the persons under **Art. 247c, Para. 1 and 2**, the court shall pronounce with a determination, by which the court shall:
1. terminate the court proceedings;
 2. terminate the penal proceedings;
 3. stop the penal proceedings;
 4. appoint the case and notify the appeared persons, where there are not grounds for its hearing under Chapter Twenty-Seven, Chapter Twenty-Eight and Chapter Twenty-Nine or where it has found evident factual errors in the indictment.
- (6) The determination shall be announced in the hearing session.

Removal of evident factual errors in the indictment

Art. 248a. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) (1) Where the court finds evident factual errors in the indictment, it shall determine a 7-day term, in which the prosecutor should remove them.

(2) The reporting judge in a single judge closed session shall repeal the determination for appointment of the case and shall terminate the judicial proceedings, if the prosecutor fails to introduce an indictment within the term of Para. 1 or has not removed evident factual errors. The order shall not be subject to appeal and objections.

(3) A copy of the reporting judge order shall be sent to the parties and the summoned persons shall be notified.

Discontinuation of the Court procedure by the Court

Art. 249. (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) (1) The court shall discontinue the Court procedure in the cases of **Art. 248, Para. 1, Items 1 and 3**.

(2) Where the court discontinues the Court procedure on the grounds of Art. 248, Para. 1, Item 3, it shall return the case to the prosecutor while stating the breaches. In these cases, the prosecutor shall correct the existing procedural irregularities according to the provision of **Art. 242**, where a new term shall start to run from receiving the case.

(3) (amend. - SG 44/18) The determination under Art. 248, Para. 1, p. 3 and 6, as well as under Art. 248, para. 5, item 4, when obvious factual errors in the indictment are found and the refusal of the court

under Art. 248, Para. 2 to admit private prosecutor of an appeal and challenge under the order of **Chapter Twenty-Two**. The court shall send the case to the higher instance after the expiry of the term under **Art. 248a, para. 1**.

(4) A breach of the procedural rules, made during the pre-trial phase is substantial and removable, where the rights of the following have been violated:

1. (amend. – SG 7/19) the defendant – to learn about what crime he/she has been attracted in this capacity; to give or refuse to give explanations on the indictment; to participate in the proceedings; to have defender and receive a written or oral translation in an understandable by him/her language under **Art. 55, Para. 4**, in case he/she does not speak the Bulgarian language;

2. the victim or his/her heirs – to be informed about the formation of the pre-trial phase; to be notified about his/her rights and to participate in the proceedings; to receive a written translation of the decree for termination or stopping the penal procedure, in case he/she does not speak the Bulgarian language.

(5) (revoked - SG 44/18)

Discontinuation of the penal procedure by the Court

Art. 250. (Amend. - SG 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017). (1) The court shall discontinue the penal procedure:

1. in the cases referred to in **Art. 24, Para. 1, Items 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10**, and where the case was opened due to private charges filed by the victim – also in the cases of **Art. 24, Para. 4**;

2. where the deed, as described in the act of indictment, or in the claim is an administrative breach.

(2) (amend. - SG 44/18) Where the court discontinues the penal procedure, it shall rule on the issue of the proofs and shall cancel the imposed to the defendant measures of procedural compulsion, as well as on the measure of securitizing the civil claim, if the ground for its imposing has fallen. In the cases under Para. 1, p. 2 the court shall send the case with the proofs on competence to the relevant administrative penal body.

(3) A copy of the disposition for termination of the penal proceedings for crimes persecuted upon private charges by the victim shall be delivered to the private complainant and the defendant.

(4) (amend. - SG 44/18) The determination and the disposition for termination of the penal proceedings shall be subject to appeal and challenge under the provision of **Chapter Twenty-One**.

Suspension of the penal procedure by the Court

Art. 251. (1) The court shall suspend the penal procedure in the cases of **Art. 25, Para. 1, p. 1 – 3 and Para. 2** and **Art. 26**.

(2) The court shall rule on the measures for procedural coercion.

(3) The court shall cancel the measure of securitizing the civil claim, if the ground of its imposing is fallen out.

(4) (amend. - SG 44/18) A copy of the disposition of the reporting judge for termination of the penal proceedings for a crime, which is pursued under the victim's complaint, shall be delivered to the private complainant and the defendant.

(5) (amend. - SG 44/18, amend. – SG 7/19) The determination and disposition for termination of the penal proceedings shall be subject to appeal and challenge under the provision of **Chapter Twenty-Two**.

Preparation of the Court procedure

Art. 252. (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) (1) Where the grounds to hear the case under **Chapter Twenty-Nine**, and upon request of the parties – under **Chapter Twenty-Seven** and **Chapter Twenty-Eight**, the court shall try the case immediately after conducting the hearing session.

(2) Where there are no grounds for hearing the case, formed under the indictment, pursuant to Chapter Twenty-Seven, Chapter Twenty-Eight and Chapter Twenty-Nine, or where evident factual errors are found in the indictment, the court session shall be appointed within 1-month term from the hearing session.

(3) For appointment of the court session, the persons, who failed to appear in the hearing session shall be notified.

(4) (amend. - SG 44/18) The reporting judge shall appoint within 1-month term the formed proceedings upon a complaint of the victim, where there are grounds for its hearing in a court session. A copy of the disposition of the reporting judge and of the complaint shall be delivered to the defendant, notifying him/her about the date of the court session, as well as that the case may be heard and rules in his/her absence under the conditions of **Art. 269**. Within 7-day term from delivering the papers, the defendant may give an answer, in which he/she may expose his/her objections and make new requests.

Parties of the Court procedure

Art. 253. Parties of the Court procedure shall be:

1. the prosecutor;
2. the defendant and his/her defender;
3. the private complainant and the private prosecutor;
4. the civil claimant and the civil defendant.

Preparatory Actions to Hear the Case in Court Session, repealed – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

Handing a copy of the act of indictment or of the complaint to the defendant

Art. 254. (Repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

Notifications of setting the court session

Art. 255. (Repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017).

Preparation of the Court session

Art. 256. (Repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017).

Obligations of the reporting judge

Art. 257. (Repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017).

Chapter twenty . COURT SESSION

Section I. General Provisions

Constancy of the body

Art. 258. (1) The case shall be tried by one and the same body of the Court from the beginning to the finalization of the Court session.

(2) In the event that some of the members of the body cannot continue to participate in the hearing of the case and it is needed to be replaced, the Court session shall start from the beginning.

Non-termination of the Court session

Art. 259. After hearing of the Court statements of the parties and the defendant's last plea, the members of the Court body shall not hear another case before rendering the verdict.

Reserve judges and Court jurors (Title, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

Art. 260. (1) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the trying of the case requires continuous time, a reserve judge or Court juror may be enrolled.

(2) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The reserve judge or Court juror shall attend the Court hearing from the beginning of the Court proceedings with the rights of a member of the panel, save for the right to take part in the meetings and in the decision on the issues of the case.

(3) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where a member of the Court body is unable to continue his or her participation in the hearing of the case, the reserve judge shall replace him/her all the rights of a member of the body and the hearing of the case shall proceed.

Measures to provide instructive effect of the Court session

Art. 261. The Court shall take the needed measures to provide instructive effect of the Court session.

Setting Down of Court Session Outside the Court Premises

Art. 262. Where necessary, the Court session or separate Court actions shall be conducted outside the Court premises.

Hearing the case behind closed doors

Art. 263. (1) The hearing of the case or performance of concrete Court procedural actions shall be performed behind closed doors, if is needed for the keeping the state secret and morality, as well as in the cases of **Art. 123, Para. 2, Item 2**.

(2) The provision of the preceding Para. may also be applied where necessary in order to prevent

the disclosure of facts of the intimate relations of citizens.

(3) (new – SG 109/08) A witness of minor age or a juvenile witness having suffered from a crime, may be questioned in camera.

(4) (new – SG 109/08) In all the cases, the verdict shall be announced in public.

Persons who may attend the Court session behind closed doors

Art. 264. (1) A Court session, held behind closed doors may be attended by the persons to whom the chairperson permits this, and by one person selected by each of the defendants.

(2) The provision of Para. 1 shall not be applied, where a danger to announce state or another protected by a law secret exists, as well as in the cases of **Art. 123, Para. 2, Item 2.**

Persons, who may not attend a Court session

Art. 265. Court session may not be attended by:

1. persons who are under the age of eighteen, unless they are summoned to the case or are witnesses;
2. armed persons, except the security persons.

Function of the chairperson of the body

Art. 266. (1) The Chairperson of the body shall govern the Court session in such a manner, that to provide the objective, fully and complete clarification of the circumstances on the case, as well as a precise observation of the law.

(2) The Chairperson of the body shall maintain the order in the Court hall, and for gross offences may impose fine up to five hundred BGN to each of the persons attending.

(3) The rulings of the Chairperson shall be obligatory for everybody who is in the Court hall.

(4) (Suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The dispositions of the Chairperson may be cancelled by the Court body. The ruling of the case, by which it refuses to cancel a fine under Para. 2, may be appealed and objected under **Chapter Twenty-Two.**

Removal from the Court hall

Art. 267. (1) Where the defendant, the private prosecutor, the private complainant, the civil claimant or the civil defendant do not observe the rules of the Court hearing, the Chairperson shall warn him/her that he/she shall be removed from the Court room in case of committing a second violation. Should he/she continue to violate the rules, the Court may remove him/her from the Court hall for a definite period.

(2) After the removed returns to the Court hall, the chairperson shall inform him/ her about the acts, which have been performed in his/her absence, by reading the Court record.

(3) Where the prosecutor, the defender or the trustee, even after the warning of the Chairperson, continue to violate the order in the Court hall, the Court may defer the hearing of the case, if he/she cannot be replaced by another person in accordance with the relevant procedure, without prejudice to the case. The Chairperson shall inform the appropriate body about the breach.

(4) Where other persons violate the order, the Chairperson may remove them from the Court hall.

Obligatory participation of the prosecutor

Art. 268. The participation of the prosecutor in the Court session in cases of general nature shall be obligatory.

Defendant's attendance in the Court session

Art. 269. (1) In cases of indictment in a grave crime, the defendant's attendance in the Court session shall be obligatory.

(2) The Court may also order the defendant to appear in cases in which his/her attendance is not obligatory, where this needed be for the detection of the objective truth.

(3) Where this does not establish obstacle for the detection of the objective truth, the case may be tried in the absence of the defendant, if:

1. he/she has not been found at the pointed by him/her address or has changed the latter, without notifying the respective body of this;
2. his/her residence in the country is not known and after a precise searching has not been found;
3. (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) he/she is validly summoned, fails to provide excusable reasons for his failure to appear and the procedure under **Art. 247c, Para. 1** was observed;
4. (prev. text of Item 03 - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) is outside the borders of the Republic of Bulgaria, and:
 - a) his/her residence is not known;
 - b) summoning for other reasons is impossible;
 - c) is regularly summoned and has not stated good reasons for his/her absence.

Ruling on the restraining measure and the other measures of procedural compulsion in the Court procedure.

Art. 270. (1) The issue of amendment of the restraining measure may be tabled in any time during the Court procedure. A new request on the restraining measure before the respective instance may be done in event of change of the circumstances.

(2) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The Court shall rule by a determination in open session. In case of a declared state of emergency, martial law, disaster, epidemic, other force majeure circumstances or at the written request of the defendant and his defense counsel, and at the discretion of the court, the defendant may participate in the case by videoconference, in which case his identity is to be verified by the prison's Director or his representative.

(3) Following the order of Para. 1 and 2, the Court shall also rule on the request concerning the prohibition to leave the borders of the Republic of Bulgaria and removal of the defendant from position.

(4) The determination under Para. 2 and 3 shall be subject to appeal and challenge under the provisions of **Chapter Twenty Two**.

Section II.

Actions of Starting the Proceedings over the Case in Court Session

Deciding to start proceedings over the case

Art. 271. (1) After opening of the Court session over the case, the Chairperson shall check if all the summoned persons do appear and if some of them are not present – what the reasons are.

(2) The Court session shall be delayed, if are not present:

1. the prosecutor;

2. the defendant if his presence is obligatory, except in the cases under **Art. 269, Para. 3**;

3. the defender, if his/her replacement by another one is impossible, without breaching the right of defence of the defendant.

(3) If the defenders are more than one, the absence of one of them shall not be a ground to cancel the case.

(4) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) If without good reasons the private complainant does not appear, the Court shall apply **Art. 24, Para. 5, Item 5**.

(5) The Court session shall not be cancelled, if the victim or his/her heirs have not been found at the pointed by them address of summoning in the country.

(6) (Repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017).

(7) Where the private prosecutor or his/her trustee, the civil claimant or his/her trustee, the civil defendant or his/her trustee does not appear for good reasons, the Court shall hear the case in his/her absence, and if he/she does not appear due to good reasons, the Court session shall be cancelled, except its continuation has been explicitly requested.

(8) The absence of a witness or of an expert shall not be a ground for cancellation of the Court session and if the Court finds that without them the circumstances of the case may be clarified.

(9) In all the cases of absence of summoned persons the Court shall hear the parties on the matter if the proceedings over the case shall start.

(10) In all the cases of cancellation of the case it shall be set again within a reasonable period, but not later than three months.

(11) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the case is to be cancelled due absence without good reason of a party, witness or expert, the Court shall impose to them a fine of up to BGN 1000. The determination of the court, by which it refuses to cancel the fine, may be appealed and objected under **Chapter Twenty-Two**.

Check of the identity of the attending persons

Art. 272.(1) The Chairperson shall check the identity of the defendant asking him his/her about their full names, the date and place of birth, his/her nationality, citizenship, residence, education, marital status and unification civil number, as well as if he/she has been sentenced.

(2) In event of doubt about the identity of the defendant, the identification may be performed by photo-pictures or by testimony of citizens of detected identification, who know the person.

(3) Afterwards the Chairperson shall check the identity of the other persons present, as well as in the cases of **Art. 123, Para. 2, Item 2** this shall be performed in a manner not admitting revealing the identity of the witness.

(4) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The Chairperson shall check if the copies of the notes under **Art. 247c** have been handed.

Removal of witnesses form the Court hall

Art. 273. (1) The witnesses shall be removed from the Court hall before their interrogation, except these who participate in the procedure as private prosecutors, civil claimants or civil defendants.

(2) In the cases of **Art. 123, Para. 2, Item 2** the witnesses shall not be in the Court hall.

Challenging

Art. 274. (1) (Amend. – SG 9/21, in force from 06.02.2021) The Chairperson shall clarify to the parties their right to challenge the members of the body, the prosecutor, the defenders and the Court secretary, the experts, the interpreter and the interpreter in Bulgarian sign language, as well as the right to object against interrogation of some of the witnesses.

(2) After the Court rules on the challenges and objections, the Chairperson shall clarify before the parties their rights as provided in this Code.

New requests

Art. 275. (1) The parties may make new requests regarding the evidence and the order of the Court investigation.

(2) The Court shall rule on the made requests, after it has heard the parties.

Section III. Court Investigation

Guidance of Court investigation

Art. 276. (1) (Suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. – SG 7/19) The Court investigation shall be governed by the Chairperson of the panel and shall start with a report indicating the grounds for initiating legal proceedings and civil claims.

(2) (Amend. – SG 7/19) The Chairperson shall provide the prosecutor, the private complainant and the civil claimant with the opportunity to state the circumstances included in the indictment and the submitted claims.

(3) The Chairperson shall ask the defendant if he/she understands what he/she is accused of.

Interrogation of the defendant

Art. 277. (1) The Chairperson shall invite the defendant to give explanations regarding the indictment.

(2) The defendant must give explanations at the each moment of the Court investigation.

(3) The defendant shall be questioned firstly by the prosecutor or by the private complainant, the private prosecutor and his/her trustee, the other defendants and their defenders and by the defender of the defendant.

(4) The Chairperson and the other members of the Court body may raise questions to the defendant after the questions of the parties are finished.

Interrogation of the defendant in the presence of other defendants

Art. 278. (1) Interrogation of the defendant may be conducted in the presence of other defendants where this is needed for the detection of the objective truth.

(2) After defender's return in the Court hall, the Chairperson shall make him/her acquainted with the explanations given in his/her absence, by way of reading the Court record.

Reading the explanations of the defendant or of the defendant

Art. 279. (1) The explanations of a defendant or of a defendant, given in the same case in the pre-trial procedure before a judge or before another Court body, shall be read if:

1. the person has died and the proceedings have started regarding the other defendants;
 2. the case is tried in the absence of the defendant;
 3. between the explanations given in the pre-trial procedure and in the Court investigation a significant contradiction exists;
 4. the defendant refuses to give explanations or states that he/she does not remember something.
- (2) Usage of audio-record or video-record shall not be admitted before the explanations of the defendant have been read.

Interrogation of witnesses

Art. 280. (1) Firstly the witnesses demanded by the indictment shall be interrogated and afterwards – other witnesses. Where needed, the Court may change this order.

(2) Witnesses shall be questioned following the order of **Art. 277, Para. 3 and 4**. The party, who has demanded the witness, shall put questions before the other parties.

(3) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The interrogated witnesses may not leave the Court hall before the closure of the Court investigation, except with the permission of the Court, taken after hearing the parties. In the cases of Art. **141** and **141a** the witness shall stay at disposal of the Court in an appropriate room outside the Court hall.

(4) After the witnesses of minor age give their testimony, they shall be dismissed from the Court room, unless the Court rules otherwise.

(5) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) In the cases of Art. 141 and 141a the interrogation of the witnesses shall be conducted in a manner not allowing detection of their identity.

(6) (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Minor witnesses, or a witness with specific needs of protection, who have been questioned during a penal proceeding shall be questioned again only if their testimonies cannot be read out under the conditions and order of Art. **281** or the second questioning is of significant importance for revealing the truth. The questioning shall be conducted while taking measures for avoiding contact with the defendant, including in especially equipped premises.

Reading the testimony of a witness

Art. 281. (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) (1) The testimony of a witness, given under the same case before a judge on the pre-trial procedure or before another Court body shall be read, where:

1. between them and the testimony given in the Court investigation exists a significant contradiction;
2. the witness refuses to give testimony or states that he/she does not remember something;
3. the regularly summoned witness cannot appear before the Court for a continuous or unlimited period and is needed or is impossible to interrogate him/her under assignment.
4. the witness cannot be found to be summoned or has died;
5. the witness does not appear and the parties agree on this;
6. (suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) the witness is minor, or with special needs of protection and the defendant and his defender were present at his questioning.

(2) Under the provision of Para. 1 the explanations of a defendant are given under the same case, who is interrogated on the grounds of **Art. 118, Para. 1, Item 1.**

(3) Under the conditions of Para. 1, Items 1 – 6 the testimonies of a witness given before a pre-trial authority shall be read out, if the defendant and his defender, if authorised or assigned, have participated at the questioning. Where there are more than one defendants, the testimonies shall be read out with the consent of those that were not summoned for the questioning or that have provided excusable reasons for their failure to appear, provided that the testimonies that have been read out are relevant for the charges preferred to them.

(4) If the testimonies of a witness given before a pre-trial authority cannot be read out according to Para. 3, they shall be read out, if the conditions referred to in Para. 1, Items 1 or 2 are available.

(5) Under the conditions of Para. 1, Items 1-6 the testimony of a witness, given before a body of the pre-trial procedure may be read with the consent of the defendant and his/her defender, the civil claimant, the private prosecutor and their trustees.

(6) Upon the terms of Para. 1, Items 1-6 the testimony of a witness given before a body of the pre-trial procedure may be read upon request of the defendant or his/her defender, if their request under **Art. 223, Para. 4** has been rejected.

(7) In the cases under Para. 3 and 5, before obtaining the consent of the defendant for reading out the testimonies, the Court shall clarify to him that the read out explanations may be taken into consideration in the delivery of the judgment. If requested by the defendant, a defender shall be assigned to him by the Court, if there is no other available.

(8) A conviction shall not be based solely on explanations, read out according to Para. 4.

(9) Usage of audio-record and video-record shall not be admitted, before the testimony of the witness has not been read.

(10) Where the witness has been interrogated under assignment, the record of interrogation shall be read.

Interrogation of an expert

Art. 282. (1) The expert shall be questioned after his/her conclusion has been read.

(2) The questions shall be asked following the order as established in **Art. 277, Para 3 and 4.**

(3) Interrogation of an expert may be not conducted if he/she is not present and the parties agree on this.

Reading the records and other documents

Art. 283. The Court shall read the records of the records of view and certification, of search and seizure, of investigation experiment, of identification and recognition of people and things, and the rest of the instruments attached to the case file, if they contain facts, which are important for the clarification of the circumstances under the case.

Submission of the proofs

Art. 284. The proofs shall be produced to the parties and, where necessary, to the expert or to the witnesses either.

Inspection

Art. 285. The inspection shall be taken by the entire Court body and, where necessary, in the presence of the expert and witnesses.

Concluding the Court investigation

Art. 286. (1) When all investigation proceedings have been done, the Chairperson shall ask the parties whether they have any requests for carrying out further investigation proceedings necessary for objective, comprehensive and thorough clarification of the circumstances under the case.

(2) Should the parties file no claims or should the requests they have laid be unfounded, the presiding judge shall adjudge the Court investigating concluded.

Amendment of the indictment

Art. 287. (1) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The prosecutor shall lay a new indictment, where during the Court investigation he/she has found grounds for material amendment of the circumstantial part of the indictment or for applying a law for an offence of more severe punishment.

(2) (amend. – SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11, amend. - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) The Court shall discontinue the Court proceedings and shall forward the case to the respective prosecutor, if the new indictment is for an offence, falling within the jurisdiction of a higher court or a military court.

(3) Apart from the cases under Para. 2, the Court shall cancel the Court session if the parties require preparing a new indictment.

(4) Where the circumstantial part of the indictment has been significantly amended, the provisions of **Art. 279** shall not apply to explanations given before the bringing of the new indictment.

(5) Where during the Court investigation the prosecutor or the private prosecutor finds that it pertains to an offence, which is prosecuted on a complaint of the victim, and the penal proceedings have been instituted before the elapse of the period under **Art. 81, Para. 3**, the prosecutor or the private prosecutor may require pursuant to **Art. 48** that the Court rules together with the verdict also on the offence, which is prosecuted on a complaint of the victim.

(6) Where the penal proceedings have been instituted on a complaint of the victim and during the Court investigation is established significant amendment of the circumstantial part of the indictment, the private complainant may bring a new indictment, if the period under **Art. 81, Para. 3** has not expired. In such a case, the Court shall defer the Court hearing, if the defendant or his or her counsel demands to prepare for the new charge.

(7) Where the penal procedure has been instituted on a complaint of the victim and during the Court investigation it is established that the crime is of general nature, the Court shall discontinue the penal proceedings and shall forward the case to the respective prosecutor.

Discontinuation of the Court procedure and forwarding the case to the respective prosecutor

Art. 288. (1) (prev. text of Art. 288 - SG 42/15, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) The Court shall discontinue the Court procedure and forward the case to the respective prosecutor, if the judicial investigation finds, that the crime is subject to consideration by a higher court or a military court.

(2) (new - SG 42/15, repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

Discontinuation of the penal procedure in a Court session

Art. 289. (1) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The Court shall discontinue the penal procedure in the cases of **Art. 24, Para. 1, Items 2-10 and Para. 5.**

(2) Where the grounds of **Art. 24, Para. 1, Item 2 and 3** are detected in a Court session and the defendant makes a request to continue the procedure, the Court shall pronounce a verdict.

(3) Where discontinuing the penal procedure, the Court shall rule on the proofs, shall cancel the imposed to the defendant measures of procedural compulsion, and on the measure of securitizing the civil claim if the ground for its imposing has fallen out.

(4) The determination shall be subject to appeal and challenge under the order of **Chapter Twenty One.**

Suspension of the penal procedure in a Court session

Art. 290. (1) The Court shall suspend the penal procedure in the cases of **Art. 25 and 26.**

(2) The determination shall be subject to appeal and challenge under the provisions of **Chapter Twenty-Two.**

Section IV. Court Debates

Order of Court debates

Art. 291. (1) After the finalization of the Court investigation the Court shall start hearing the Court debates.

(2) The Court debates shall start with a statement of the prosecutor, respectively of the private complainant. Afterwards the word shall be given consequently to the private prosecutor and his/her trustee, to the civil claimant and his/her trustee, to the civil defendant and his/her trustee, to the defender and to the defendant.

Data which may be referred to at the Court debates

Art. 292. The parties who participate in the Court debates may refer only to the evidence which has been collected and checked in the Court investigation, under the provisions, established by this Code.

Statement of the prosecutor that he/she does not maintain the indictment

Art. 293. The statement of the prosecutor that the penal procedure is to be discontinued or an acquittal verdict is to be pronounced, does not discharge the Court from the obligation to pronounce under inner conviction.

Re-establishment of the Court investigation

Art. 294. (1) The parties may require the performance of new Court investigation actions.

(2) Where the Court finds that the request is grounded, shall discontinue the Court debates, renew

the Court investigation and after the performance of the new Court investigation actions again start hearing the Court debates.

Right of counterstatement

Art. 295. (1) Each of the parties shall have the right to make a counterstatement in connection with the statements and arguments of the other parties.

(2) The defender and the defendant shall have the right of final counterstatement.

Prohibition of time limitation of the Court debates

Art. 296. (1) The Court may not limit the time of the Court debates.

(2) The Chairperson of the body may interrupt the parties only if they obviously depart to issues which are irrelevant to the case.

Section V.

Last Plea of the Defendant

Providing the defendant with last plea

Art. 297. (1) After the closure of the Court debates the Chairperson shall give last plea to the defendant.

(2) The Court shall provide the defendant with the complete opportunity to express in his/her last plea his/her final attitude to the indictment.

(3) During the last plea the defendant may not be a subject to interrogation.

Prohibition of time limitation of the last plea

Art. 298. (1) The Court may not limit the time of the last plea of the defendant.

(2) The Chairperson may interrupt the defendant only if he/she obviously departs to issues which are irrelevant to the case.

Renewal of the Court investigation

Art. 299. If in his/her last plea the defendant states new data of importance for the case, the Court shall renew the Court investigation and again hear the debates of the parties and the last plea of the defendant.

Section VI.

Pronouncing the Verdict

Adjourning of the Court for deliberation

Art. 300. After the Court hears the last plea of the defendant, the Court shall adjourn for a confidential deliberation in order to pronounce the verdict.

Issues which the Court shall decide when pronouncing the verdict

Art. 301. (1) When pronouncing the verdict, the Court shall consider and decide the following issues:

1. if a perpetrated deed exists, if it is perpetrated by the defendant and if it is committed guiltily;
 2. if the deed constitutes a crime and its legal qualification;
 3. if the defendant is a subject to punishment, what punishment shall be determined, and in the cases of **Art. 23 – 25** and **27 of the Penal Code** what total punishment shall be imposed;
 4. if the grounds of discharging from penal liability under **Art. 61, Para. 1** and **Art. 78a, Para. 1 of the Penal Code** appear;
 5. if the defendant shall be discharged from serving the punishment, what shall be the probation period in event of suspended sentencing, and in the cases of **Art. 64, Para. 1 of the Penal Code** – what instructive measure shall be imposed;
 6. (suppl. - SG 27/09, in force from 01.06.2009, amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017) what initial regime for serving the punishment imprisonment shall be determined;
 7. whom the instructive work with the defendant shall be assigned to, in the cases of suspended verdict;
 8. (amend. – SG 109/08) if the conditions under **Art. 68 – 69a** and **Art. 70, Para. 7 of the Penal Code** appear and what punishment the defendant shall serve;
 9. if the terms of **Art. 53 of the Penal Code** appear;
 10. if the civil claim shall be recognized and in what amount;
 12. what shall happen with the proofs;
 12. whom the expenditures for the case shall be assigned.
- (2) Where the defendant is accused in several crimes and several persons have participated in the commitment of one or several crimes, the Court shall also consider the issues under Para. 1 for each person and for each crime separately.
- (3) If the Court omits to pronounce on the civil claim, the Court shall pronounce on it by an additional verdict within the period of appeal.
- (4) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) While solving the issue under Para. 1, p. 2, the court shall also pronounce if the perpetrated deed is administrative breach.

Renewal of the Court investigation

Art. 302. Where at the deliberation Court finds that the circumstances under the case are not enough clear, the Court shall renew the Court investigation.

Acknowledging the defendant guilty

Art. 303. (1) The verdict may not stay on assumptions.

(2) The Court shall acknowledge the defendant guilty if the indictment is proved in a doubtless manner.

Acknowledging the defendant not guilty

Art. 304. The Court shall acknowledge the defendant not guilty if is not found that the deed is perpetrated, that is perpetrated by the defendant or is perpetrated by him/her guilty, as well as if the deed

does not construct a crime.

Contents of the verdict

Art. 305. (1) The verdict shall be pronounced in the name of the people.

(2) In the introducing part of the verdict shall be stated: the date of its issuance, the Court and the names of the members of the body; of the Court secretary and of the prosecutor; the case under which the verdict is pronounced; the name of the defendant and the crime for which the indictment is brought.

(3) In the reasons shall be stated the detected circumstances, on the base of which evidence materials and which are the juridical reasons of the taken decision. In event of contradiction in the evidence materials reasons, it shall be stated why one of them is recognized and others are rejected;

(4) In the operative part data about the identity of the defendant and the decision of the Court on the issues as enlisted in **Art. 301** shall be stated. In it shall also be stated the Court, before which the verdict may be appealed and within what period.

(5) In the cases of **Art. 24, Para. 1, Item 2 and 3** in connection with **Art. 289, Para. 2**, the Court shall acknowledge the defendant guilty and apply the respective law of amnesty or the limitation period rules, and in the cases of **Art. 61, Para. 2, proposal one of the Penal Code** – shall acknowledge the defendant guilty, discharge him/her from penal liability and shall impose and instructive measure, and in the cases of **Art. 78a of the Penal Code** – shall acknowledge the defendant guilty, discharge him/her from penal liability and impose an administrative punishment.

(6) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) In the cases under **Art. 301, Para. 4**, the court recognizes the defendant as innocent and shall impose him/her administrative punishment, where the perpetrated deed is punished under administrative procedure in the cases, provided by the **Special part of the Penal Code**, or where it is administrative breach, provided by an act or decree.

(7) (Former Para. 6 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The acquittal verdict may not contain expressions, which put under doubt the innocence of the acquitted.

Issues on which the Court may also rule by determination

Art. 306. (1) The Court may rule by determination also on the issues regarding:

1. determination of a total punishment on the grounds of **Art. 25, 27** and the application of **Art. 53 of the Penal Code**.

2. (suppl. - SG 27/09, in force from 01.06.2009, amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017) the initial regime for serving the punishment imprisonment, if omitted this in the verdict;

3. (suppl. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) of the terms under **Art. 68, 69, 69a** and **Art. 70, Para. 7 of the Penal Code** present and what punishment the defendant shall serve; The Court of first instance that has delivered conditional deprivation of liberty shall consider the application of **Art. 68, Para. 3 of the Penal Code**, and the regional Court that has delivered conditional release from deprivation of liberty – the application of **Art. 70, Para. 7, first sentence, second proposal of the Penal Code**;

4. the proofs and the expenditures for the case.

(2) In the cases under Para. 1, Items 1-3 the Court shall pronounce in a Court session with summoning of the sentenced.

(3) The determination under Para. 1, Item 1-3 may be appealed and challenged under the provisions of **Chapter Twenty One** , and under Para. 1 Item 4 – under the order of **Chapter Twenty-Two**.

Pronouncing on the civil claim

Art. 307. The Court shall pronounce on the civil claim also if acknowledges that the defendant not guilty, the penal liability is lapsed or the defendant shall be discharged from penal liability.

Period of stating the reasons of the verdict

Art. 308. (1) The reasons may also be made out after the announcement of the verdict, but not later than fifteen days.

(2) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Under cases constituting factual or juridical intricacy, the reasons may also be made out after the announcement of the verdict, but not later than 60 days.

Pronouncing on the restraining measure and on the measure of securitizing the civil claim, the fine and the confiscation

Art. 309. (1) After the verdicts is pronounced, the Court shall also pronounce on the restraining measure.

(2) (new - SG 42/15) Where the defendant was found guilty, sentenced to imprisonment, which execution has not been postponed under **Art. 66 of the Penal Code**, and there is a real risk of escaping, the court may substitute the restraining measure with a more severe or impose such.

(3) (new - SG 42/15) Where the defendant if found guilty and has be sentenced to no less than 10 years of imprisonment or another severer penalty, the real risk of escaping shall be deemed to be present unless there is evidence to the contrary.

(4) (prev. text of Para 02 - SG 42/15) If the defendant is discharged from penal liability, is sentenced by a suspended verdict, is sentenced to a punishment lighter than imprisonment, or is acquitted, the restraining measure shall be cancelled or replaced by the lightest stipulated by the law. In this case the detained defendant shall be set free until in the Court hall.

(5) (prev. text of Para 03, suppl. - SG 42/15) Where the defendant is acquitted, the Court shall pronounce also on the measure of securitizing the civil claim regarding the costs in the lawsuit, the fine and the confiscation.

(6) (prev. text of Para 04, amend. - SG 42/15) The determination under Para. 2 - 5 shall be subject to appeal and challenge under the provisions of **Chapter Twenty Two**.

Signing and announcement of the verdict

Art. 310. (1) (Amend. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The verdict shall be written in the single information system of the courts and shall be announced by the Chairman immediately, after being signed with a qualified electronic signature by all of the members of the Court body.

(2) (Suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the making out the reasons has been delayed, the chairperson shall announce only the operational part, signed by all of the members of the Court body and the term for preparation of the grounds under **Art. 308**. The signing of the reasons by the Court jurors shall be obligatory where the verdict is signed under dissenting opinion.

(3) (Amend. - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The dissenting opinion shall be marked at the signing of the verdict, respectively the operational part, and shall be stated in written form within the terms under Art. 308.

(4) Where a punishment imprisonment is imposed to a citizen of another state, with which the Republic of Bulgaria has an agreement of transfer of sentenced persons, the Court shall notify the sentenced about the opportunity to require service of the imposed punishment in the state which he/she is a citizen of.

(5) (new - SG 41/15, in force from 06.07.2015) In those cases where a probation measure under

Art. 42b para. 3 item 1 of the Penal Code is imposed, the court shall inform the victim of the possibility to request a European protection order.

Section VII. Record of the Court Session

Content of the record

Art. 311. (1) The record of Court session, apart from the data under **Art. 129, Para. 1**, shall state:

1. persons who did not appear before the Court and reasons of absence;
2. data of the personality of the defendant, the date on which a copy of the act of indictment has been delivered or of the complaint with the disposition;
3. explanations of the defendant, the testimony of the witnesses and the answers of the experts;
4. all rulings of the chairperson and determinations of the Court;
5. the read documents and records, as well as the used cinema-records, audio-records and video-records;
6. brief content of the Court debates and the last plea of the defendant;
7. the announcement of the verdict under the respective order and the clarifications by the Chairperson concerning the order and period to appeal it.

(2) (Amend. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The record of the Court session shall be written in the single information system of the courts and shall be signed with a qualified electronic signature by the Chairperson and by the Court secretary.

(3) The Court may rule also to prepare audio-record and video-record of the Court session upon observation of the provisions of **Art. 237- 239**.

Corrections and supplementations to the record

Art. 312. (1) The parties shall have the right to make written requests for corrections and supplementations.

(2) The requests shall be considered by the Chairperson, and in case of refusal to accept them from the Chairperson – by the Court body in a closed session.

Chapter twenty one. APPELLATE PROCEDURE

Section I. General Provisions

Subject to appellate check

Art. 313. The appellate instance shall check the correctness of the verdict not entered into effect.

Limits of the appellate check

Art. 314, (1) The appellate instance shall check completely the correctness of the verdict, not

depending on the grounds as stated by the parties.

(2) The appellate instance shall also revoke or amend the verdict in its non-appealed part, as well as regarding the persons who did not submit appeal, if grounds for this appear.

Admissible evidence before the instance of appeal

Art. 315. Before the instance of appeal all and every evidence, which may be collected following the stipulated by the procedure of this Code, shall be admissible.

Finding of new factual circumstances

Art. 316. The Court of appeal may find new factual circumstances.

Application of the rules of the first instance

Art. 317. As far as in this chapter no special rules are established, the rules of the procedure before the first instance shall be applied.

Section II.

Instituting the Procedure before the Instance of Appeal

Right of appeal and of challenge

Art. 318. (1) The procedure before the appellate instance shall be instituted upon a challenge of the prosecutor or upon an appeal of the parties.

(2) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The prosecutor shall submit a challenge, if he finds that the pronounced verdict is not correct.

(3) The defendant may appeal the verdict against all its parts. He/she may also appeal only against the reasons and grounds for his/her acquittal.

(4) The private complainant and the private prosecutor may appeal the verdict if their rights and legitimate interests have been injured. They cannot appeal the verdict if it has been pronounced in accordance with the requests made by them.

(5) The civil claimant and the civil defendant may appeal the verdict only against the civil claim, if their rights and legitimate interests have been harmed.

(6) Appeals may be also submitted by the defenders and the trustees.

Terms and procedure of submitting the appeal and the challenge

Art. 319. (1) The appeal and the challenge may be submitted within fifteen-day period from the announcement of the verdict.

(2) The appeal and the challenge shall be submitted through the Court which pronounced the verdict.

Form and contents of the appeal and the challenge

Art. 320. (1) (Amend. and suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The appeal and the challenge shall be in writing. They can be submitted electronically. In them shall be stated: the Court to which they are submitted and the request made. The appeal and the challenge shall state the unexplained circumstances and evidence, which shall be collected and checked by the Court of appeal.

(2) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) With the appeal and the challenge shall not be made objections for admitted existing breaches of the procedural rules in the pre-trial procedure, with the exception of those, related to admittance, collection, checks and assessment of evidences and the evidence means.

(3) (Former Para. 2 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The appeal and the challenge shall be signed by the sender and if sent electronically - shall be signed with a qualified electronic signature.

(4) (Former Para. 3 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Before the initiation of the proceeding on the case in a Court session, the parties may make additional written statements for supplementation of the arguments, as stated in the appeal or the challenge.

(5) (Former Para. 4 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) To the appeal and the challenge shall be attached transcripts in accordance with the number of the interested parties, except for those submitted electronically.

(6) (Former Para. 5 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, amend. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) Where several defendants as accessories to the crime are involved to bear the liability, each of them may join the already submitted appeal and make an oral, written or electronically submitted request, signed with a qualified electronic signature, for this before the initiation of the proceedings on the case.

Notification of submitted appeal or challenge

Art. 321. The Court through which the appeal or the challenge have been submitted, shall immediately notify of this the interested parties by way of sending copies of them.

Written objections of the parties

Art. 322. (Amend. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The parties may submit written objections against the submitted appeal or challenge electronically as well, signed with a qualified electronic signature, until initiation of the proceedings on the case before the appellate instance.

Remand of the appeal or the challenge

Art. 323. A judge of the first instance Court shall remand the appeal or the challenge, where:

1. (amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) They do not meet the requirements under **Art. 320, Para. 1 and 3**, if within seven-day period from the invitation, the omission or the discrepancy has not been removed;

2. They were not lodged within the term under **Art. 319, Para. 1**;

3. They were not lodged by a person entitled to appeal or challenge;

(2) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The referring back of the appeal and challenge is subject to appeal according to the procedure of **Chapter Twenty-Two**.

Withdrawal of the appeal and the challenge

Art. 324. (1) The appeal and the challenge may be withdrawn by the appellant and by the

prosecutor, who takes part in the appellate instance hearing until the commencement of the Court investigation, and where there is no Court investigation, until the commencement of the Court debates. The challenge may also be withdrawn by the prosecutor, who has lodged it by instituting the proceedings before the appellate instance.

(2) The defender may not withdraw his/her appeal without the defendant's consent, and the trustees – without the their principals' consent.

Forwarding the case to the appellate instance

Art. 325. The case, together with the submitted appeals, challenges and objections shall be forwarded to the appellate instance after the elapse of the period under **Art. 319, Para. 1**.

Ruling of the Court of appeal on the withdrawal of the appeal and the challenge

Art. 326. In the cases of **Art. 324** the Court of appeal shall rule in a closed session.

Admission of evidence

Art. 327. (1) (amend. – SG 93/11) Admission of the requested evidence shall be decided in a closed session or, when the court finds it appropriate, at a hearing for which the parties have been given notice to attend.

(2) The Court shall rule on the need of interrogation of the defendant.

(3) The witnesses and the experts questioned in the Court of first instance shall be admitted to the appellate instance, if the Court assumes that their second questioning is necessary or where their evidence or opinions will be related to newly discovered circumstances.

(4) New witnesses and experts shall be admitted, where the Court deems that their evidence or opinions will be of importance for the correct settlement of the case.

(5) (revoked – SG 93/11)

Section III. Rendering a Decision

Summoning

Art. 328. The parties and the rest of the persons, which shall take part in the appellate proceedings, shall be subpoenaed in accordance with the procedure according to Articles **178 – 182**, unless the date of the Court hearing has been announced to them by the first instance.

Participation of parties in Court session

Art. 329. (1) Participation of the prosecutor in the cases of general nature shall be obligatory.

(2) (new - SG 42/15, suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) In cases involving accusations of commitment of a grave crime the presence of the defendant at hearings shall be compulsory, apart from the cases of **Art. 269, Para. 3**.

(3) (prev. text of Para 02 - SG 42/15) The non-appearance of the rest of the parties without valid reasons shall not be an obstacle to the hearing of the case.

Actions on starting proceeding over the case

Art. 330. Following the opening of the Court session, the Court shall hear the parties concerning the beginning of the proceedings of the case and shall rule on the made requests, remarks and objections.

Report of the reporting judge

Art. 331. (1) The appeal and the challenge shall be heard in a Court session.

(2) The hearing of the case shall start with a report of the reporting judge.

(3) In the report the summary of the verdict and the content of the appeals, challenges and objections, as well as of the admitted evidence shall be stated.

Court investigation

Art. 332. During the Court investigation the Court may use all methods of gathering and examining of the evidence.

Court debates and last plea of the defendant

Art. 333. (1) (Amend. And suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The Court debates shall state reasons in relation to the pronounced verdict about the essence of the indictment and in accordance with the measure of detention under **Art. 291, Para. 2**.

(2) After the conclusion of the Court pleadings, the judge - chairperson shall call upon the defendant to say his/her last plea.

Powers of the Court of appeal

Art. 334. The Court of appeal may:

1. (amend. - SG 44/18) cancel the verdict and remand the case for a new hearing to the first instance Court.
2. cancel the first-instance verdict and render a new verdict;
3. amend the first-instance verdict;
4. (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010; suppl. – SG 71/13, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) cancel the verdict and discontinue the penal procedure in the cases of **Art. 24, Para. 1, Item 2-8a and 10 and Para. 5**;
5. suspend the penal procedure in the cases of **Art. 25**;
6. confirm the first-instance verdict.

Cancellation of the verdict and remand of the case for a new hearing

Art. 335. (1) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The Court of appeal shall cancel the verdict and send the case to the prosecutor, where it is found that the crime for which has been instituted a procedure upon complaint of the private complainant is of general nature.

(2) The Court of appeal shall cancel the verdict and remand the case to the first-instance in the cases of **Art. 348, Para. 3**, unless the Court on his own may remove the admitted breaches or they are

irremovable at the new hearing of the case.

(3) (new – SG 93/11) In those cases where the conditions under paragraph 2 occur again, the appellate court shall not refer the case back for retrial, but shall rule on its merits.

(4) (prev. text of para 3 – SG 93/11, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The Court of appeal may not cancel the verdict under Para. 1, Item 2 or cancel the acquittal verdict under Para. 2, if there is no relevant challenge by the prosecutor, respective appeal by the private complainant or the private prosecutor.

Cancellation of the verdict and rendering of a new verdict

Art. 336. (1) The Court of appeal shall cancel the verdict and render a new verdict, where it is necessary to:

1. apply a law of more severe punishable crime, if an indictment in such crime existed before the first instance;
2. to convict an acquitted defendant, if the relevant indictment existed before the first instance;
3. acquit a defendant, convicted by the first-instance Court.
4. (new – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) acquit the defendant and impose him/her administrative punishment, where the perpetrated deed is punished in administrative order in the provided in the **Special Part of the Penal Code** cases, or where it is administrative breach, provided by an act or decree.

(2) The powers under Para. 1, Item 1 and 2 shall be exercised, if a relevant challenge by the prosecutor, respective complaint by the private complainant or the private prosecutor exist.

(3) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) After ruling the verdict, the court shall pronounce in the measure of detention, by applying **Art. 309, Para. 2 – 4**.

Amendment of the first-instance verdict

Art. 337. (1) The Court of appeal may:

1. mitigate the punishment;
2. apply a law for same, equal or for a crime of lighter punishment;
3. dismiss the defendant from serving of the punishment in accordance to **Art. 64, Para. 1** or **Art. 66 of the Penal Code**;
4. discharge the defendant from criminal liability in accordance to **Art. 78** and **78a of the Penal Code**.
5. (new - SG 44/18) reduce or cancel the administrative penalty;

(2) Where there is a relevant challenge by the prosecutor, respective complaint by the private complainant or the private prosecutor, the Court of appeal may:

1. increase the punishment;
2. cancel the dismissal from serving the punishment under Art. 64, Para. 1 or Art. 66 of the Penal Code;
3. (new - SG 44/18) increase the administrative penalty;
4. (new - SG 44/18) impose an administrative penalty when the committed act is punishable by administrative procedure in the cases provided for in the **Special Part of the Penal Code** or where it constitutes an administrative offense provided for by an Act or edict.

(3) The appellate instance may also render only concerning the reasons and the grounds of the acquittal of the defendant or on the civil claim.

Confirmation of the verdict

Art. 338. The Court of appeal shall confirm the verdict, where it finds, that there are no grounds for its cancellation or amendment.

Contents of the decision of the appellate instance

Art. 339. (1) In its decision, the appellate instance shall state: upon whose appeal or challenge the instance is pronouncing, the main content of the verdict, appeal and the challenge, a brief content of the arguments as stated by the parties at the Court session and the decision on the appeal or the challenge.

(2) Where it confirms the verdict, the appellate instance shall point out the grounds, on which it does not accept the arguments stated to support the appeal or the challenge.

(3) Where the appellate instance renders a new verdict, the requirements of Art. 305 shall be applied.

Period to prepare and announce the decision

Art. 340. (1) (Suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The decision of the appellate instance together with the reasons shall be made not later than thirty days from the Court session, at which the case has been announced for settlement, and in the cases under **Art. 308, Para. 2** – not later than 60 days.

(2) (Amend. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The decision together with the reasons shall be announced in a Court session with summoning of the parties or they shall be notified by the order of **Art. 178** that it has been prepared.

(3) (new - SG 42/15) In case of issue of a decision subject to cassation appeal, which on the grounds of **Art. 337, Para 3** amends a conviction and imposes imprisonment, which is not postponed under **Art. 66 of the Penal Code**, or a more severe penalty, the court shall address the restraining measures by applying respectively **Art. 309, Para 2 or 3**. The determination shall be subject to appeal or challenging before the Supreme Court of Cassation.

(4) (new - SG 42/15) In case of issue of a final decision, which on the grounds of **Art. 337, Para 3** amends a conviction and imposes imprisonment, which is not postponed under Art. 66 of the Penal Code, or a more severe penalty, the court of appeal shall immediately send a copy of the decision to the prosecutor.

(5) (new - SG 42/15) The prosecutor of the prosecution office corresponding to the appellate court who has received a copy of the final decision may order delivery of the person to the respective prison or the one closest to the seat of the court. In such cases the prosecutor who has issued the order shall notify the prosecutor of first instance, who shall take measures of executing the judgement following its receipt from the court.

Chapter twenty two.

CHECK OF THE DETERMINATIONS AND DISPOSITIONS PROCEDURE BEFORE THE INSTANCE OF APPEAL

Acts which shall be subject to check

Art. 341. (1) (suppl. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The determinations and the dispositions by which the penal prosecution is discontinued, as well as the determinations under **Art. 306, Para. 1, items 1 - 3**, Art. **431, 436, 452, Para. 1** and **457, Para. 2** shall be checked under the order of the **Chapter Twenty**

One.

(2) Under the order of this chapter the decisions and dispositions shall be checked, which it is explicitly provided for in this Code.

(3) All other determinations and dispositions shall not be subject to a separate from the verdict check by the appellate instance.

Term of submission of private challenge and private protest and objections against them

Art. 342. (1) The private appeal and the private challenge against an act under **Art. 341, Para. 2** shall be submitted within a seven –day period from its rendering, and if it has been rendered in a closed session – within seven day period from delivering the copy.

(2) The defendant shall be notified of the submitted private challenge, and he/she may within seven day period from the notification make an objection.

Effect of the private complaint and of the private challenge

Art. 343. The private appeal and the private challenge shall not suspend the procedure on the case and the execution of the determination, except the first or the appellate instance rules otherwise.

Cancellation of the determination by the Court which has rendered it

Art. 344. The Court which has rendered the determination may by itself cancel it or amend it in a closed session. Otherwise the Court shall forward the case together with the submitted private appeal or private challenge to the appellate instance.

Procedure of consideration of the private appeal or the private challenge

Art. 345. (1) The appellate instance shall consider the private appeal and the private challenge in a closed session within a seven day period, and where it finds it necessary – in a session with summoning the parties, which session shall be scheduled within a judicious period, but not more than one month.

(2) Where the appellate instance cancels the determination, it shall rule on the issues of the private appeal and of the private challenge.

(3) As far as no special rules are established in this Chapter, the rules of the procedure of **Chapter Twenty One** shall be applied.

Chapter twenty three. CASSATION PROCEDURE

Subject of the cassation appeal

Art. 346. Under the cassation procedure may be appealed:

1. the decisions and the new verdicts of the appellate instance, except these by which the perpetrator has been discharged from criminal liability by imposing administrative punishment on the grounds of **Art. 78 of the Penal Code** and these under **Art. 341, Item 1**;

2. (suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) the new verdicts, rendered by the district Court as an appellate instance on cases of general nature, except these by which the perpetrator has been discharged

form penal liability by imposing administrative punishment on the grounds of Art. 78a of the Penal Code;

3. the determinations of the District Court and of the Court of appeal under **Art. 306, Para. 1**, rendered in the cases of a new verdict;

4. the decisions of the District Court or the Court of appeal, rendered for the first time at the appellate procedure, by which the penal procedure is discontinued, suspended or its running is blocked.

Limitations of the cassation check

Art. 347, (1) The cassation instance shall check the verdict or the decision only at the appealed part and also with regard to the appellants, and shall pronounce within two month period.

(2) The cassation instance shall cancel the verdict with regard to the defendants, who have not lodged an appeal either, should the grounds therefore are in their favour.

Cassation grounds

Art. 348. (1) The verdict and the determination shall be subject to cancellation or amendment under cassation procedure:

1. where the law is offended;

2. where a significant procedural breach has been admitted;

3. where the imposed penalty is obviously unjust.

(2) Offence of the law appears where it has been applied incorrectly or the law which shall be applied has not been applied.

(3) The breach of procedural rules shall be significant if:

1. (amend. – SG 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) has led to limitation of the procedural rights of the parties if has not been removed;

2. there is no reasons or a record of a Court session of the first instance or the appellate instance;

3. the verdict or the decision have been rendered by a non-lawful body;

4. the confidentiality of the deliberation has been broken during the rendering of the verdict or the decision.

(4) The procedural breach which cannot be removed does not establish ground for cancellation of the verdict.

(5) The punishment is obviously unjust, if:

1. it is not relevant to the social danger of the deed and the perpetrator, to the extenuating and the aggravating the liability circumstances, as well as to the purposes of **Art. 36 of the Penal Code**;

2. incorrectly has been applied or incorrectly has been refused to apply suspended conviction.

Right to cassation appeal or to challenge

Art. 349. (1) The procedure before the cassation instance shall be instituted upon challenge of the prosecutor or upon appeal of the other parties.

(2) The prosecutor may submit cassation challenge as in favour of the indictment as in favour of the defendant.

(3) The rest of the parties may submit cassation appeal where their rights and legitimate interest have been injured.

Term and order of submission of the cassation appeal and the challenge

Art. 350. (1) The appeal and the challenge against the verdict of the Court of appeal shall be submitted within the terms of **Art. 319, Para. 1.**

(2) The appeal and the challenge against the decision of the Court of appeal shall be submitted within fifteen-day period from its announcement under the order of **Art. 340, Para. 2.**

(3) (Suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The appeal and the challenge shall be submitted through the Court which has rendered the appealed verdict of decision. They can be submitted electronically, signed with a qualified electronic signature.

(4) (Suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) To the appeal and the challenge shall be attached copies in accordance to the number of the interested parties, except for those submitted electronically.

Contents of the cassation appeal and challenge

Art. 351. (1) In the cassation appeal and in the challenge the following shall be stated: the submitting person; the verdict, the decision and the appealed part, the essence of the cassation grounds and the data which supports it; the request made.

(2) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, declared unconstitutional with Decision of the Constitutional Court № 14 of 2018 - SG 87 of 2018, amend. - SG 96/18) With the cassation appeal and challenge no objections may be made for substantial breaches of the procedural rules in the pre-trial procedure, with the exception of those relating to the admission, collection, verification and evaluation of evidence and means of proof.

(3) (Former Para. 2 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) The appeal and the challenge shall be signed by the submitting person, unless sent electronically and signed with a qualified electronic signature.

(4) (Former Para. 3 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) An objection against the submitted appeal and challenge, as well as a supplementation to them, may be done in writing before the start of the proceedings on the case, and if submitted electronically - they shall be signed with a qualified electronic signature.

(5) (Former Para. 4 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The appeal and the challenge shall be returned back by a judge of the Court of appeal through which they are submitted, if:

1. (amend. - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) they do not meet the requirements under Para. 1 and 3, if within the granted by the judge of the Court of appeal seven-day period the omission or the discrepancy are not removed;

2. they are not submitted within the term, or are submitted by a person who has no right to appeal or challenge;

3. they shall not be subject to review under cassation procedure.

(6) (Former Para. 5, suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The return of the appeal and the challenge shall be subject to appeal within 7-day term from the announcement before the Supreme Cassation Court, which shall render judgment in closed session.

Withdrawal of the appeal and the challenge

Art. 352. (1) Until the start of the proceedings on the case with the Court session, the appeal and the challenge for review may be withdrawn by the parties having lodged them.

(2) The defender may withdraw the appeal only with the consent of the sentenced person and the trustee – with the consent of his/her principal.

Procedure of consideration of the cassation appeal and the challenge

Art. 353. (1) The cassation appeal and the challenge shall be considered in a Court session with summoning the parties.

(2) Participation of a prosecutor shall be obligatory

(3) Non-appearance of the other parties without good reasons shall not establish obstacle to try the case. The case shall be tried in the absence of the party, if the party has not been found at the indicated address.

(4) In the report of the reporting judge the circumstances under the case, the content appealed verdict or decision and the complaints against them of he shall be stated.

(5) (suppl. – SG 19/12, in force from 06.03.2012) Court investigation shall not be conducted, except in the cases under **Art. 354, para 5, sentence two**.

(6) The parties shall be heard following an order as established by the Court.

Powers of the cassation instance at rendering a decision

Art. 354. (1) After trying the submitted appeal or challenge, the cassation instance may:

1. remain the verdict or the decision;

2. cancel the verdict or the decision and to discontinue or suspend the penal procedure in the stipulated by the law cases, and in the case of **Art. 24, Para. 1, Item 1** – to acquit the defendant;

3. (new – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) cancel the verdict or the judgment, acquit the defendant and impose him/her administrative punishment, where the perpetrated deed is punished in administrative order in the provided in the **Special Part of the Penal Code** cases, or where the deed is administrative breach, provided by an act or decree;

4. (former p. 3 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) amend the verdict or the decision;

5. (former p. 4 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) cancel the verdict or the decision - as whole or partially, and to remand the case for a new trying.

(2) The cassation instance shall amend the verdict, where it is indispensable:

1. to mitigate the punishment;

2. to apply a law for the same or more lightly punishable offence;

3. to apply **Art. 64, Para. 1** or **Art. 66 of the Penal Code**;

4. to apply a law for more heavily punishable offence, which does not require aggravation of the punishment, in case there had been an accusation of such offence in the first instance.

5. to recognize or dismiss the civil claim, where there is an offence of the law, to increase or reduce the granted compensation for general damages or to discontinue the proceedings with regard to the civil claim.

(3) (suppl. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The cassation instance shall cancel the verdict entirely or partially and shall remand the case back for new trial in the first or appellate instance, where it is indispensable:

1. to impose a heavier punishment;

2. to remove caused material procedural breaches;

3. to remove violations of the material law caused upon pronouncement of the of acquittal verdict.

(4) (Suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The decision of the cassation instance shall be drafted in accordance with the rules of **Art. 339, Para. 1 and 2** and shall be pronounced within not later than thirty days from the Court hearing, and on cases, which are of factual and legal complexity – not later than 60 days. This decision shall not be subject to appeal.

(5) (new – SG 93/11) If the appealed or contested verdict or decision is repealed again by the court of cassation, the latter shall refer the case back-for final ruling on its merits only to the appellate authority. If

the verdict or decision of the appellate court is then appealed or contested, the Supreme Court of Cassation shall rule on the case, without referring it back for retrial, provided that the court also has the powers of the appellate authority.

(6) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The Cassation court shall send immediately a copy of the ruling to the prosecutor, who has participated in the court session, where the ruling has determined a punishment – deprivation of liberty, which has not been postponed under [Art. 66 of the Penal Code](#) or other more severe punishment.

(7) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The prosecutor, having received a copy of the cassation ruling may order moving the sentenced person to the relevant or in the closest prison, about which he/she shall notify the prosecutor of the first instance prosecution, who shall undertake the actions of implementation of the verdict after its receiving from the court.

Mandatory instructions of the cassation instance and terms under which the status of the defendant may be aggravated

Art. 355. (1) (1) Upon the review of the case, the instructions of the cassation instance shall be mandatory with regard to:

1. the stage from which the review of the case must proceed;
2. the application of the law, save in the cases where other states of facts have been established;
3. removal of the admitted significant breaches of procedural rules.

(2) The Court, to which the case has been remanded for a new hearing, may impose a heavier punishment or apply an act for a more heavily punishable offence, where the verdict has been revoked on a challenge of the prosecutor, an appeal of the private complainant or of the private prosecutor on a request for aggravating the defendant's condition.

(3) The Court, to which the case has been remanded for a review, may convict the found "not guilty" defendant, in case the verdict has been cancelled on a challenge of the prosecutor, a complain of the private complainant or a request of the private prosecutor owing to a request for conviction.

Part five. SPECIAL RULES

Chapter twenty four. FAST PROCEDURE

Cases under which the fast procedure shall be performed

Art. 356. (1) Fast procedure shall be conducted, if:

1. the person has been detained at or directly after the commitment of the crime;
2. there are on the body or on the clothes of the person, obvious vestiges of the crime
3. the person appeared before the respective bodies of the Ministry of Interior, the investigating body or the prosecutor with a confession of the committed crime;
4. a witness indicates the person who has perpetrated the crime.

(2) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The prosecutor may order conducting of fast procedure for a crime, for which punishment is provided up to 3 years deprivation of liberty or another lighter punishment, with the exception of such, because of which death or serious bodily injury has occurred.

(3) (Suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The fast procedure shall be considered instituted

with the drafting of the act of the first action of investigation, for which the investigating body shall immediately notify the prosecutor.

(4) The person about who a grounded assumption exists that has perpetrated the crime, shall be considered defendant from the moment of the drafting of the act of the first action of investigation against him/her.

(5) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The investigating body has finished the investigation within a period of seven days from the establishment of the respective ground under Para. 1, and in the cases of Para. 2 – within the term of 14 days.

(6) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) In the cases under Para. 2 in a factual or legal complexity of the case, the prosecutor may extend the term for investigation for another 14 days.

(7) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) During the investigation, the victim shall not be summoned.

Actions of the prosecutor

Art. 357. (1) (Suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The supervising prosecutor shall rule within three-day period from the finalization of the investigation under **Art. 356, Para. 1**, and in the cases of Art. 356, Para. 2 – within 7-day term and shall:

1. discontinue the penal procedure on the grounds of **Art. 24, Para. 1**;
2. suspend the penal procedure under the conditions of Art. **25** and **26**;
3. bring indictment by act of indictment and shall table the case for trial at the Court;
4. table the case with a decree of discharging from penal liability with imposition of administrative penalty or with a proposal for agreement on the settlement of the case;
5. render additional investigation to collect new evidence or to remove admitted significant breaches of procedural rules and shall determine a period not longer than seven days.

(2) Where the case constructs factual or legal intricacy, the supervising prosecutor shall rule to conduct investigation under the general order.

(3) In the cases of Para. 1, Item 5, the supervising prosecutor may by him/herself perform additional actions of investigation within a shortest term, but not later than seven days.

Actions of the reporting judge

Art. 358. (1) In the cases of **Art. 357, Para. 1, Item 3**, the reporting judge shall:

1. discontinue the penal procedure in the cases and following the order of **Art. 250**;
2. suspend the penal procedure in the cases and following the order of **Art 251**;
3. (suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) discontinue the Court procedure and remand the case to the supervising prosecutor, if a significant breach of the procedural rights has been admitted, led to restriction of the procedural rights of the defendant under **Art. 249, Para. 4, p. 1**;
4. (suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) fix the date of hearing the case within seven-day period from its receipt, while not conducting dispensary session under **Art. 248**.

(2) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) In the cases under Para. 1, p. 3 the case shall not be returned again on the same ground.

(3) (amend. – SG 109/08, former Para. 2 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) In the cases of Para. 1, Item 4 the reporting judge shall rule to the supervising prosecutor to hand immediately a copy of the act of indictment to the defendant and to summon the defendant, the witnesses and the experts for the Court session. In this case the supervising prosecutor may use the assistance of relevant bodies of the Ministry of Justice or of the Ministry of Interior.

(4) (Former Para. 3 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Within a three- day period from

delivering the copy of the act of indictment the defendant shall be entitled to give answer where to state his/her objections and to make new requests.

Trying the case before the first instance

Art. 359. (1) (Suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the grounds of **Art. 358, Para. 1, Items 1-3** appear, the Court shall try the case and render the verdict together with the reasons, and if the case constructs factual and legal intricacy, the reasons may also be drafted after the announcement of the verdict, but not later than seven days.

(2) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The court shall discontinue the judicial procedure and shall send the case to the relevant prosecutor, where a removable substantial breach has been made of the procedural rules, led to restriction of the procedural rights of the defendant under **Art. 249, Para. 4, p. 1.**

(3) (Former Para. 2 – SG, 63.17, in force from 05.11.2017) In this procedure civil claim shall not be admitted.

(4) (Former Para. 3 – SG, 63.17, in force from 05.11.2017) In this cases private prosecutor shall not participate.

Term of submission of appeal or challenge

Art. 360. (Former text of Art. 360 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) In the cases of **Art. 359, Para. 1** the appeal and the challenge shall be submitted in a seven-day period from the announcement of the verdict, and where the drafting of the reasons is delayed – within a fifteen- day term.

(2) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) With the appeal and challenge shall not be made requests, based on substantial breaches of the procedural rights in the pre-trial phase, with the exception of those, related to admittance, collection, checks and assessment of the evidences and the evidence means.

Application of the general rules

Art. 361. As far as the procedure under this Chapter does not establish special rules, the general rules shall be applied.

Chapter twenty five.

IMMEDIATE PROCEDURE (REPEALED – SG, 63/17, IN FORCE FROM 05.11.2017)

Actions of the investigating body

Art. 362. (Repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

Actions of the prosecutor

Art. 363. (Repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

Bringing the case to Court

Art. 364. (Repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

Trying the case before the first instance

Art. 365. (Repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

Term of submission of appeal or challenge

Art. 366. (Repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

Application of the general rules

Art. 367. (Repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

Chapter twenty six.

ACCELERATION OF THE PENAL PROCEDURE (REVOKED – SG 32/10, IN FORCE FROM 28.05.2010; new – SG 71/13, TITLE, AMEND. – SG, 63/17, IN FORCE FROM 05.11.2017)

Acceleration of the pre-trial procedure

Art. 368. (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010; new – SG 71/13, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) (1) In those cases where more than two years have elapsed from involvement in pretrial proceedings of a particular person as a defendant being charged with a serious crime and more than 6 months in the rest of the cases, the defendant, the victim and the damaged legal person may make a request for acceleration of the investigation. The said time limits shall not include the time periods during which the case has been in court or has been suspended on the ground of **Art. 25**.

(2) The request under Para. 1 shall be made through the prosecutor, who shall be obliged immediately to send the case to the court.

(3) The court shall pronounce in a single judge session within 15-day term.

Acceleration of the court procedure

Art. 368a. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017). (1) If from the formation of the procedure before the first instance more than 2 years have passed, or more than 1 year in the appeal proceedings, the parties may make a request for acceleration. This term shall not include the time, during which the case has been discontinued under **Art. 25**.

(2) The request shall be submitted through the court, which hears the case. It shall contain the non-performed actions, which slow down the court proceedings.

(3) The request shall be considered as withdrawn if within 1-month term from its submission, the court, which hears the case. Performs the relevant actions.

(4) In cases of the Regional court, the request shall be heard by the District court, and in cases, heard by the District court as a first and appellative instance – by the Court of appeal. In cases of the Court of Appeal, the request shall be heard by the Supreme cassation court.

(5) After expiry of the term under Para. 3, the reporting judge shall send the case with the request to the competent court, which shall hear it in a panel of 3 judges in a closed session. The court shall pronounce within 7-day term with a determination, which shall not be subject to appeal and challenge.

Pronunciation of the court. Measures for acceleration of the penal proceedings

Art. 369. (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010; new – SG 71/13) (1) (amend. - SG 42/15, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The court shall pronounce while estimating the factual and legal complexity of the case, are there delays while conducting the activity of collection, checks and assessment of the evidence and the evidence means and the reasons for this.

(2) Where the court finds an unreasonable delay, it shall determine a suitable term for conducting the actions. The determination shall be final.

(3) New requests for acceleration may be made after expiry of the term under Para. 2.

Chapter twenty seven.

BRIEF COURT INVESTIGATION IN THE PROCEDURE BEFORE THE FIRST INSTANCE

Conditions for non-admissibility of a brief Court investigation

Art. 369a. (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, new - SG 83/19) Shortened judicial investigation in the cases under **Art. 371, item 2** shall not be allowed in case of deliberate infliction of death.

Decision for a preliminary hearing of the parties

Art. 370. (1) A decision for preliminary hearing the parties shall be taken by the Court ex-officio or upon request of the defendant.

(2) (new – SG 109/08) The Court may not reject defendant's request for preliminary hearing, where the terms and conditions referred to in this Chapter are present.

(3) (new – SG 109/08) Where the defendants are more than one, brief Court investigation shall be allowed only provided that the terms and conditions of this Chapter are present for all defendants.

(4) (prev. par. 2 – SG 109/08) The Court shall render preliminary hearing of the parties without summoning the witnesses and the experts.

Issues which shall be decided on the preliminary hearing of the parties

Art. 371. At the preliminary hearing the parties:

1. the defendant and his defender, the civil claimant, the private prosecutor and their trustees may grant a consent not to conduct interrogation of the all or of some of the witnesses or experts, and upon the rendering the verdict to use directly the contents of the respective records and expert conclusions of the pre-trial procedure;

2. the defendant may recognize fully the facts as stated in the circumstantial part of the act of indictment by granting consent not to collect evidence of these facts.

Order of conducting preliminary hearing of the parties

Art. 372. (1) The Court shall clarify to the defendant his/her rights under **Art. 371** and shall notify him/her that the respective evidence from the pre-trial procedure and the made by him/her confession under Art. 371, Item 1 shall be used in the rendering of the verdict.

(2) The Court shall appoint a defender for the defendant if he/she has no such.

(3) In the cases of Art. 371, Item 1 the Court shall by a determination approve the explicit consent, if the respective actions of the investigation have been performed under the conditions and the order as provided in this Code.

(4) In the cases under Art. 371, Item 2, where it finds that the confession is supported by the collected at the pre-trial procedure evidence, the Court shall by a determination announce that in the rendering the verdict they shall use the confession, without collecting evidence of the facts stated in the circumstantial part of the act of indictment.

Consequences of the preliminary hearing of the parties

Art. 373. (1) In the cases of **Art. 372, Para. 3** at the conduction of the Court investigation by the first instance, interrogation of the witnesses and of the experts, which the approved by the Court consent refers to, shall not be conducted, and the respective records of interrogation and expert conclusions shall be read under the procedure of **Art. 283**.

(2) (amend. - SG 27/09) In the cases of **Art. 372, Para. 4** at the conduction of the Court investigation interrogation of the defendant, the witnesses and the experts concerning the stated in the circumstantial part of the act of indictment facts shall not be performed and the Court, if renders a conviction verdict shall determine the punishment under the terms of **Art. 58a of the Penal Code**.

(3) In the cases of **Art. 372, Para. 4** the Court in the reasons of the verdict shall assume the stated in the act of indictment circumstances and shall refer to the made confession and to the supporting it evidence collected at the pre-trial procedure.

Application of the general rules

Art. 374. As far as there are no special rules with regard to the procedure under this chapter established, the general rules shall be applied.

Chapter twenty eight.

DISCHARGE FROM CRIMINAL LIABILITY WITH IMPOSITION OF ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY

Proposal of the prosecutor for discharging the defendant from criminal liability with imposition of administrative punishment

Art. 375. (Suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) Where the prosecutor finds that the grounds of **Art. 78a of the Penal Code** are there, he/ she shall bring the case before the respective Court of first instance with a reasoned decree making a proposal that the defendant shall be released from criminal liability and administrative penalty be imposed. The ruling can be submitted through the unified portal for e-justice, signed with a qualified electronic signature, and in the other cases it shall be entered in the single information system of the courts by the order of **Art. 360g of the Judiciary System Act**.

Setting the case for trial

Art. 376. (1) Where the Court finds that the conditions for trying the case exist, it shall set it down for hearing within one-month period.

(2) A copy of the decree shall be submitted to the defendant, who may within seven day period

from service thereof reply stating his/her objections and lay new requests.

(3) No civil claim shall be admitted in this proceeding.

(4) In this cases private prosecutor shall not participate.

Discontinuing the Court procedure and remanding the case to the prosecutor

Art. 377. (1) (prev. text of Art. 377 - SG 42/15, amend. – SG 7/19) Where the grounds of **Art. 78a of the Penal Code** are not present, or where a material breach of procedural rules has been committed resulting in a limitation of the procedural rights of the accused under **Art. 249, Para. 4, item 1**, the Court shall discontinue the Court procedure and remand the case to the prosecutor.

(2) (new - SG 42/15) The order under Para 1 shall be subject to appeal or challenging as set out in **Chapter Twenty-Two**.

Trying of the case by the first instance

Art. 378. (1) The Court shall try the case in an open sitting of a single judge, for which the prosecutor and the defendant shall be summoned. The non-appearance of the parties, who have been regularly subpoenaed, shall not be an obstacle to hearing the case.

(2) During the hearing, the evidence gathered in the criminal proceedings may be accessed and new evidence may be gathered.

(3) The Court shall hear the case within the limits of the states of facts as stated in the decree. Where it establishes new states of facts, the Court shall discontinue the Court proceedings and shall remand the case to the prosecutor.

(4) The Court shall pronounce a decision, by which it shall:

1. discharge the defendant from criminal liability and impose administrative penalty on him/her;
2. acquit the defendant;
3. discontinue the criminal proceedings in the cases provided by the law.

(5) The Court decision shall be subject to appeal and challenge under the procedure of **Chapter Twenty One**.

Application of the provisions of the Law of the Administrative Offences and Sanctions

Art. 379. Upon settlement of the case, the applications of **Art. 17 – 21 of the Administrative Violations and Penalties Act** shall be applied.

Re-establishing the case

Art. 380. (1) The proposal for re-establishing of the case under this Chapter shall be made by the appellate, respectively by the military-appellate prosecutor and shall be considered by the appellate, respectively by the Military Court of appeal following the procedure and within the periods laid down in the **Administrative Violations and Penalties Act**.

(2) Where the proposal is grounded, the Court shall also pronounce on the essence and shall collect evidence if needed.

Chapter twenty nine.

SETTLEMENT OF THE CASE BY AGREEMENT

Agreement on the settlement of the case at the pre-trial procedure

Art. 381. (1) After the finalization of the investigation, upon a proposal of the prosecutor or of the defender an agreement may be drafted between them on the settlement of the case. If the defendant has not empowered a defender, upon a request of the prosecutor a judge of the respective first-instance Court shall appoint to him/her a defender with whom the prosecutor shall discuss the agreement.

(2) (suppl. – SG 60/12, in force from 08.09.2012) Agreement shall not be admitted for serious malicious crimes under **Chapter One, Chapter Two**, Sections I and VIII, **Chapter Eight**, Section IV, **Chapter Eleven**, Section V, **Chapter Twelve, Chapter Thirteen**, Section VI and VII and under **Chapter Fourteen** of the **Special Part of the Penal Code**. Such an agreement shall not be allowed for any other crimes which have caused death.

(3) Where material damages have been caused as a result of the crime, the agreement shall be admitted after their restitution or securing.

(4) By the agreement, a punishment under the provisions of **Art. 55 of the Penal Code** may be determined even in the absence of exclusive and multiple attenuating circumstances.

(5) The agreement shall be made in writing and shall contain consent on the following issues:

1. is there a committed deed, was it committed by the defendant and was it committed guiltily, does the deed constitute a crime and its legal qualification;

2. what shall the kind and the scale of the punishment be;

3. (suppl. - SG 27/09, in force from 01.06.2009, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) what shall the initial regime for serving a term of imprisonment be, in the case where **Art. 66 of the Penal Code** is not applied;

4. whom shall the instructive work be assigned to in the cases of probationary verdict;

5. what instructive measure shall be imposed on the under age defendant in the cases under **Art. 64, Para. 1 of the Penal Code**;

6. what should be done with the material evidence, where they are not necessary for the needs of a criminal procedure in respect of other persons or other crimes and whom shall the expenses be imposed on.

(6) The agreement shall be signed by the prosecutor and the defender. The defendant shall sign the agreement, if he/she agrees therewith, after he/she declares that he/ she waives the Court jurisdiction with regard to the case by order of the general procedure.

(7) Where the proceedings are against several persons or for several crimes an agreement may be reached on some of the persons or some of the crimes.

(8) (amend. – SG 93/11) If by one act the defendant has committed several crimes, or if one defendant has committed several separate crimes, **Art. 23 of the Penal Code** shall be applied with the agreement.

Pronouncement on the agreement by the Court

Art. 382. (1) The agreement shall be brought by the prosecutor at the respective first-instance Court immediately after it is drafted, together with the case.

(2) The Court shall set the hearing within seven-day period after the introduction of the case and shall hear it in a sitting of a single judge.

(3) In the Court session the prosecutor, the defender and the defendant shall participate.

(4) The Court shall question the defendant if he/she understands the accusation, does he/she plead guilty, does he/she understand the consequences of the agreement, does he/ she agree with them and did

he/she sign the agreement of his/her own will.

(5) The Court may propose amendments to the agreement, which shall be discussed with the prosecutor and the defender. Last shall be heard the defendant.

(6) In the Court record shall be entered the contents of the final agreement, which shall be signed by the prosecutor, the defender and the defendant.

(7) The Court shall approve the agreement where it does not contravene the law or morality.

(8) Where the Court does not approve the agreement, it shall remand the case to the prosecutor. In such case, the confession of the defendant made before the Court according to Para. 4, shall bear no evidentiary value.

(9) The determination by the Court shall be final.

(10) About the determination under Para. 7 the victim and his/her heirs shall be notified by an instruction that they may submit a civil claim for non-material damages before the civil Court.

Consequences of a settlement of the case by an agreement.

Art. 383. The approved by the Court agreement on settlement of the case shall have the consequences of a verdict entered into force.

(2) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The court shall determine a general punishment under Art. 25 and 27 of the Penal Code and shall pronounce on the application of Art. 53 of the Penal Code under **Art. 306, Para. 1, p. 1.**

(3) (Former Para. 2 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the agreement concerns an act committed under the provisions of **Art. 68, Para. 1 of the Penal Code**, the Court shall also rule in respect of serving the suspended punishment according to the procedure of Art. 306, Para. 1, Item 3.

(4) (Former Para. 3 – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the agreement concerns an act committed under the provisions of Art. 68, Para. 2 of the Penal Code, the suspended punishment shall not be served.

Agreement on settlement of the case in the Court procedure

Art. 384. (1) Under the conditions and in accordance with the procedure of this chapter, the Court of first instance may approve an agreement on the settlement of the case, reached after the institution of the Court proceedings but before the conclusion of the Court investigation.

(2) The Court shall appoint a defender for the defendant, where he/she has not authorised one himself/herself.

(3) In such a case, the agreement shall be approved only with the consent of all the parties.

Pronunciation on the agreement, achieved with some of the defendant or for some of the crimes

Art. 384a. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) (1) Where after formation of the court proceedings, but before signing the judicial investigation, an agreement is reached with some of the defendants or for some of the crimes, the court shall postpone the hearing of the case.

(2) On the achieved agreement within 7-day term from receiving the case, another court panel shall pronounce.

(3) The court panel under Para. 1 shall continue hearing of the case after the pronouncement on the agreement.

Chapter thirty .

SPECIAL RULES FOR TRYING CASES OF CRIMES PERPETRATED BY MINORS

Pre-trial procedure

Art. 385. In cases of crimes perpetrated by minor age persons, the pre-trial procedure shall be carried out by determined investigating authorities with special training.

Restraining measures

Art. 386. (1) As regards minor age persons, the following restraining measures may be taken:

1. surveillance by parents or trustee;
2. surveillance by the administration of the education establishment where the minor age person is accommodated;
3. surveillance by the inspector with the children's educational unit or by a member of the local board for combating antisocial manifestations of underage or minor age persons;
4. detention in custody

(2) The restraining measure detention in custody shall be taken in exceptional cases.

(3) Placing minor age persons under surveillance to the persons and authorities under Para. 1, Items 1 – 3 shall be carried out against signature whereby they shall be obliged to exercise education surveillance on the minor age person, to monitor his/her behaviour and ensure his/her appearance before the investigating authority and the Court. In the event of guilty failure to execute the undertaken obligations, fines of up to five hundred BGN may be imposed on these persons.

(4) In cases of detention, the minor age persons shall be accommodated in suitable premises separate from the adults, where their parents or trustees and the principal of the educational establishment, when the detained person is a student, shall immediately be notified.

(5) (New – SG 7/19) In order to protect the best interests of the underage person, the notification of a specific person under Para. 4 may be postponed for up to 24 hours when there is an urgent need to prevent serious adverse effects on the life, freedom or physical integrity of a person, or when it is imperative to take action by investigative bodies whose obstruction would hamper serious criminal proceedings. The postponement of this notification shall be applicable in the light of the different circumstances of each particular case and does not go beyond what is necessary, and is not based solely on the type or the gravity of the criminal offense committed. In this case, the State Agency for Child Protection shall be immediately informed of the detention and of the delay of the notification.

(6) (New – SG 7/19) In the cases under Para. 5, the provisions of **Art. 63, Para. 10 and 11** shall apply.

Collection of data of the minors

Art. 387. In the investigation and the judicial inquiry, evidence shall be collected about the day, month and year of birth of the person at minor age, about the education, the environment and conditions in which he/she has lived, and evidence of whether the crime was not due to the influence of persons of age.

Participation of a pedagogue or psychologist in the interrogation of persons at minor age

Art. 388. Whenever necessary, a pedagogue or psychologist shall participate in the interrogation of

a minor age defendant, who may ask him/her questions with the permission of the investigating authority. The pedagogue or psychologist shall have the right to become acquainted with the transcript from the interrogation and to address remarks on the accuracy and fullness of its contents.

Submission of the investigation

Art. 389. (1) The parents or trustees of a minor age defendant shall mandatory be notified about the submission of the investigation.

(2) The parents or trustee of a minor age defendant shall attend the submission, if they wish to.

Court composition and transfer of a case to another Court

Art. 390. (1) In the cases under **Art. 28, Para. 1, Items 1 - 2**, the cases against minor age persons as first instance shall be tried by one judge and two jurors, and in the cases under Art. 28, Para. 1, Item 3 – by two judges and three jurors.

(2) The jurors shall be teachers or educators.

(3) When the minor age person is a serviceman/woman, the case shall be tried under the procedure of **Chapter Thirty-One**.

Court Session

Art. 391. (1) The Court session in cases against minor age persons shall be held behind closed doors unless the Court finds that it is in the public interest to try the case in a public session.

(2) At the discretion of the Court, inspectors with the children's education unit and representatives of the education establishment where the minor age person studies may be invited to the Court session.

Persons participating in trying the cases

Art. 392. (1) In trying cases against minor age persons, their parents or trustees shall mandatorily be summoned. They shall have the right to participate in collecting and verifying the evidence materials and to address requests, remarks and objections.

(2) The failure of parents or trustee to appear shall not be an obstacle for trying the case, unless the Court finds their participation to be necessary.

(3) In cases against minor age persons, the participation of a prosecutor shall be mandatory.

(4) A private prosecutor shall not participate in such cases.

Provisional removal of a minor age person from the Courtroom

Art. 393. When it is necessary to elucidate facts, which could affect negatively the minor age defendant, the Court may remove him/her provisionally from the Courtroom, after hearing the defence, the parents or trustee and the prosecutor.

Trying under general procedure cases for crimes perpetrated by minor age persons

Art. 394. (1) When an adult is prosecuted for a crime perpetrated by him/her before he/she turned of age, the case shall be tried under general procedure.

(2) When a minor age person is prosecuted for an act perpetrated in complicity with a person of age, the cases shall not be separated and the proceedings shall be tried under general procedure.

Execution of verdict

Art. 395. (1) When the Court reprieves the execution of the punishment as regards a minor age person, it shall notify the respective local board for combating antisocial manifestations of underage and minor age persons in view of organising the necessary education care.

(2) When the Court rules an education measure, it shall send a copy of the verdict to the respective local board.

(3) The proposal of the prosecutor or the local board for combating antisocial manifestations of underage and minor age persons under **Art. 64, Para. 2 of the Penal Code** for substituting the accommodation at an education boarding school with another education measure shall be considered in a Court session after enacting the verdict while summoning the minor age person and his/her defender.

Chapter thirty .

"a" SPECIAL RULES FOR HEARING CASES FOR CRIMES COMMITTED BY PERSONS WHO DO NOT SPEAK AND UNDERSTAND BULGARIAN LANGUAGE

Providing Interpretation and Translation in Penal Proceedings

Art. 395a. (New - SG 21/14) (1) (Amend. – SG 7/19) In those cases where the defendant does not speak and understand Bulgarian language, the court and the pre-trial authorities shall provide interpretation in a language that is understandable to the accused person, as well as a written translation of the documents under **Art. 55, para 4**.

(2) (Amend. – SG 7/19) On their own motion or upon a reasoned written request by the defendant or his/her defense counsel, the court and the pre-trial authorities may also provide written translation of documents other than the ones under Art. 55, para 4, where these documents are essential to the exercise of the right of defense.

(3) As an exception, interpretation or oral summary may be provided instead of written translation under para 1 and 2, provided that the defendant consents thereto, has a defense counsel and his or her procedural rights are not infringed.

Testing the Defendant`s Knowledge of Bulgarian Language

Art. 395b. (New - SG 21/14) (1) The court and the pre-trial authorities may establish the fact that the defendant does not speak and understand Bulgarian in any phase of the case.

(2) Rulings of the investigating authority establishing that the defendant has a command of Bulgarian language shall be subject to appeal before the supervising prosecutor.

(3) The ruling or order of the court finding that the defendant has a command of Bulgarian language shall be subject to appeal as provided in **Chapter Twenty Two**.

Waiver of the Right to Translation of Documents

Art. 395c. (New - SG 21/14) (1) The court and the pre-trial authorities shall explicate to defendants their right to waiver of interpretation or translation of the acts and documents under **Art. 395a**.

(2) Any waiver shall be stated in a record, which shall be signed by the defendant or their defense counsel, unless drafted in a court hearing.

Refusal to Provide Interpretation and Translation of Documents

Art. 395d. (New - SG 21/14) (1) The court and the pre-trial authorities may refuse to provide interpretation or translation of the documents under **Art. 395a, para 2** in those cases where these documents are not essential to the exercise of the right of defense or may refuse written translation of parts thereof when they are irrelevant to the right of defense of the accused person.

(2) The ruling of investigating authority, with which the defendant is refused oral or written translation of documents or parts thereof, shall be subject to appeal before the supervising prosecutor within three days. The ruling of the supervising prosecutor shall be final.

(3) The ruling or order of the court by which the defendant is refused oral or written translation of documents or parts thereof shall be subject to appeal pursuant to **Chapter Twenty Two**.

Objection to the Accuracy of Translation

Art. 395e. (New - SG 21/14 (*)) (1) The defendant shall be entitled to object to the accuracy of translation in any phase of the case.

(2) Where the competent body establishes that the objection is justified, it shall remove the translator and appoint a new one or re-order translation.

Appointment of a Translator

Art. 395f. (New - SG 21/14) (1) The court and the pre-trial authorities shall state information about the languages spoken by the defendant, full names, education and specialty of the translator or the name of the office where he or she works, as well as the type of translation in the act for appointment of a translator.

(2) The authority appointing the translator shall summon the latter, check their identity, education, specialty, their relations with the defendant and the victim, as well as the existence of grounds for disqualification.

(3) The persons stated в **Art. 148, para 1, items 1 - 3** may not be translators.

(4) The act of appointment shall be given to the translators whereafter they shall be informed of their rights and obligations as well as of their liability in case of inaccurate translation.

Rules for Participation of a Translator

Art. 395g. (New - SG 21/14) (1) The translator shall be involved in all actions in which the defendant participates, as well as in the meetings of the latter with the defense counsel regarding interrogation of the accused person or his/her requests, comments, objections and appeals.

(2) Interpretation can be done via videoconference, telephone conference or other technical means, provided that this will not prevent the exercise of the right of defense.

(3) Where a translator fails to appear or to carry out the translation without good reasons, he or she shall be punishable by a fine amounting up to BGN 500. Where the translator has valid reasons for his or her failure to appear, the fine shall be canceled.

Interpreter in Bulgarian Sign Language (Title amend. – SG 9/21, in force from 06.02.2021)

Art. 395h. (New - SG 21/14) (1) (amend. – SG 9/21, in force from 06.02.2021) Where the defendant is deaf or dumb, an interpreter in Bulgarian sign language shall be appointed.

(2) (amend. – SG 9/21, in force from 06.02.2021) The provisions of the present Chapter shall also apply to interpreters in Bulgarian sign language.

Chapter thirty one.

SPECIAL RULES FOR TRYING CASES UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF MILITARY COURT

Cases under the jurisdiction of Military Courts

Art. 396. (1) The Military Courts shall have jurisdiction over cases for crimes perpetrated by:

1. (amend. - SG 42/15) servicemen;
2. (new – SG 109/07, in force from 01.01.2008; revoked – SG 109/08);
3. (prev. Item 2 – SG 109/07, in force from 01.01.2008) generals, officers and persons from the sergeant and rank-and-file corps from other ministries and administrations;
4. (prev. Item 3 – SG 109/07, in force from 01.01.2008; amend. – SG 20/12, in force from 10.06.2012) reservists on active service at the volunteer reserve and the persons in wartime service;
5. (prev. Item 4 – SG 109/07, in force from 01.01.2008; revoked – SG 109/08);
6. (prev. Item 5, amend. and suppl. – SG 109/07, in force from 01.01.2008; amend. – SG 109/08; amend. - SG 79/15, in force from 01.11.2015) civilians employed at the Ministry of Defence, in the Bulgarian Army and in the structures subordinated to the Minister of Defence, at the National Security Service, in the State Intelligence Agency during or on the occasion of carrying out their service.

(2) (Suppl. - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) Military Courts shall also have jurisdiction over criminal cases involving civilians as well, except where the case is within the jurisdiction of the European Public Prosecutor's Office.

Jurisdiction to appeal and cassation instances

Art. 397. The cases tried by the Military Courts, shall be heard as appeal instance by the Military Court of Appeal, and as cassation instance – by the Supreme Cassation Court, which shall also consider the proposals for reviving penal cases tried by the military Courts.

Jurisdiction disputes

Art. 398. Disputes about jurisdiction between first-instance military courts shall be decided by the Military Court of Appeal.

Authorities of military pre-trial procedure

Art. 399. (1) The authorities of the military pre-trial procedure shall be the military prosecutor and the military investigating authorities.

(2) (amend. - SG 69/08) Military investigating authorities shall be the military investigators and the military investigating policemen.

(3) (amend. - SG 69/08) The military investigating policemen shall be appointed by order of the

Powers of the military police authorities

Art. 400. (suppl. - SG 42/15) The authorities of the military police shall have the powers of the respective authorities of the Ministry of the Interior under **Art. 60, Para 3, Art. 62, Para 5, Art. 196, Para. 1, Item 6, Art. 212, Para. 2, Art. 215, Art. 218, Art. 245, Para. 1 and Art. 356, Para. 1, Item 3.**

Restraining measures

Art. 401. (1) (amend. - SG 46/07, in force from 01.01.2008; amend. – SG 109/07, in force from 01.01.2008) With regard to the persons under **Art. 396, Para. 1, Item 4**, one of the following restraining measures shall be taken:

1. placement under the closest surveillance at their outfit;
2. detention in custody in premises of the barracks or at the common places of imprisonment.

(2) As regards regular-duty servicemen/women and civilians at the Ministry of Defence, in the Bulgarian Army and in the structures subordinated to the Minister of Defence, one of the restraining measures under **Art. 58** shall be taken.

Procedure for taking procedural compulsion measures in military pre-trial proceedings

Art. 402. (1) Procedural compulsion measures shall be taken under the procedure of **Chapter Seven, Section II**, except for the provisional removal from office under **Art. 403**.

(2) Placement under the closest surveillance at the outfit shall be taken by the investigating authority or by the respective military prosecutor.

(3) The respective Minister shall be notified immediately about detention in custody of officers and civilians.

Provisional removal from office

Art. 403. (1) When the restraining measures detention in custody or house arrest are taken as regards the defendant, he/she shall be provisionally removed from office until these restraining measures are overturned or substituted with lighter ones.

(2) When the taken restraining measure is lighter than those specified in Para. 1, the defendant may be provisionally removed from office by determination of the military Court at a grounded request from the chief, the military prosecutor or the military investigating authority.

Cooperation for executing the taken restraining measure

Art. 404. The investigating authority or the prosecutor shall notify about the taken restraining measure the respective chief who shall be obliged to cooperate for its execution.

Distribution of cases in military pre-trial procedure among the investigating authorities

Art. 405. (1) The investigation shall be carried out by military investigators in cases for crimes:

1. specified in **Art. 194, Para. 1, Item 1;**

2. perpetrated by officers;
 3. (new – SG 71/13) with factual and legal complexity, assigned by the administrative head of the respective military regional prosecutor's office.
- (2) (amend. - SG 69/08) Apart from the cases under Art. 1, the investigation shall be carried out by military investigating policemen.
- (3) The respective chief shall be immediately notified about instituted pre-trial procedure.

Acceptance of investigation actions carried out by a non-military authority

Art. 406. (revoked – SG 109/08)

Inspection and certification

Art. 407. Inspection and certification in the area of the military outfit or the site shall be carried out in the presence of the closest situated commander or chief or a person authorised by him/her. In this case servicemen/women shall be invited as witnesses.

Splitting cases

Art. 408. (1) When several crimes have been perpetrated and an investigation has been carried out of the gravest of them, while more time is needed for investigating the lighter ones, the military investigating authority shall conclude the investigation of the gravest crime and shall send the case to the military prosecutor while continuing the investigation of the lighter crimes in a separate case.

(2) Para. 1 shall also be applied when the crime has been perpetrated by several persons. If so, the case shall be split provided that this will not impede revealing the objective truth.

Restricting the publicity of a Court session

Art. 409. (1) The Court may ask the defenders and the clients, the witnesses and other persons present in the Courtroom to declare that they will not make public the circumstances, which will be disclosed in the Court session, if these constitute classified information.

(2) In trying cases against officers, sergeants and soldiers shall not be admitted to the Courtroom as audiences.

Assuring the execution of the verdicts

Art. 410. The execution of the verdicts against persons from the officer, sergeant and soldier corps who have not been discharged, shall be assisted by the respective commander or chief.

Application of the general rules

Art. 411. Insofar as there are no special rules in this section, the general rules shall be applied.

Chapter thirty one.

**"a" SPECIAL RULES FOR DEALING WITH CASES UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF
SPECIALIZED CRIMINAL COURTS (NEW - SG 13/11, IN FORCE FROM 01.01.2012, AMEND. –
SG 61/11, REPEALED - SG 32/22, IN FORCE FROM 27.07.2022)**

Cases within the jurisdiction of the Specialized Criminal Court

Art. 411a. (New - SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11, repealed - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022)

Jurisdiction before appellate and cassation instances

Art. 411b. (New - SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11, repealed - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022)

Pre-trial authorities as regards to cases under the jurisdiction of the Specialized Criminal Court

Art. 411c. (New - SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11, repealed - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022)

Actions of the public prosecutor after completion of the investigation

Art. 411d. (new - SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11; revoked - SG 42/15)

Special rules in court proceedings under the jurisdiction of the Specialized Criminal Court

Art. 411e. (new - SG 13/11, in force from 01.01.2012, amend. – SG 61/11, repealed - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022)

Implementation of common rules

Art. 411f. (new - SG 13/11, in force from 12.08.2011, repealed - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022)

Part six.

EXECUTION OF EFFECTIVE COURT ACTS. RE-ESTABLISHING PENAL CASES

Chapter thirty two.

EXECUTION OF EFFECTIVE COURT ACTS

Court acts subject to execution

Art. 412. (1) The verdicts, decisions, determinations and dispositions shall be executed after they become effective.

(2) The verdicts, decisions, determinations and dispositions shall become effective from:

1. the time of enacting them, when they are not subject to verification under an appeal or challenge;
2. the time of enacting the decision of the cassation instance, when the appeals and challenges are

left without consideration, or the verdict is changed;

3. the expiry of the period for appealing them, when no appeal or challenge has been filed.

Obligatory force of Court acts

Art. 413. (1) The effective verdicts, decisions, determinations and dispositions shall be obligatory for all administrations, legal entities, officials and citizens.

(2) The effective verdicts and decisions shall be obligatory for the civil Courts on the following matters:

1. has the act been perpetrated;
2. is the perpetrator guilty;
3. is the act indictable.

(3) The provisions of Para. 2 shall also be applied to the acts of the regional Court under **Chapters Twenty-Eight** and **Twenty-Nine**.

Court decision in connection with execution of verdicts and determinations

Art. 414. (1) The Court, which has enacted the effective verdict or determination shall pronounce itself on:

1. all difficulties and doubts relating to their interpretation;
2. (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010)
3. the release from serving a punishment imposed for a crime, which is prosecuted under a plea from the victim, when prior to starting its execution, the private plaintiff has asked for this.

(2) The matters specified in Para. 1, shall be considered in a Court session while summoning the convicted person, and in the cases under Para. 1, Item 3 – the plaintiff as well.

(3) The participation of the prosecutor shall be mandatory.

Deferral of the execution of punishments

Art. 415. The district prosecutor or the regional prosecutor may, with a decree, defer the execution of the punishments imprisonment and probation:

1. in the event of a grave illness impeding the serving of the punishment – up to six months; after the expiry of this period, the execution of the punishment may be deferred for the same period on the grounds of a new medical certification;
2. in the event of pregnancy of the convicted person or giving birth – up to six months prior and one year after giving birth;
3. when due to special circumstances such as fire, elemental calamity, grave illness, death of the only member of the family capable of work, and others, the immediate execution of the verdict may lead to grave consequences for the convicted person or his/her family – up to three months;
4. as regards particularly needed specialists in enterprises, administrations or organisations – up to three months;
5. for completing a current academic year or a started qualification course – up to two months.

Actions for execution of verdicts and determinations

Art. 416. (1) A copy of the verdict whereby the defendant has been acquitted or released from penal liability or from serving the punishment as well as a copy of the determination for terminating the penal

procedure, shall be sent to the respective authorities for returning seized documents, valuables and other objects as well as for lifting police registration. When a guarantee measure has been overturned, a copy of the verdict or determination shall be sent to the respective authorities.

(2) (Amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) A copy of the verdict whereby the defendant has been sentenced to serve the respective punishment shall be sent to the prosecutor for execution. The prosecutor shall notify the court, which has ruled the verdict, which has been enforced, about the actions, undertaken on the enforcement of the imposed punishment.

(3) (amend. – SG 12/09, in force from 01.05.2009) When the confiscation of certain properties or the seizure of properties pursuant to **Art. 53 of the Penal Code** have been ruled with the verdict, the Court shall send a copy of the verdict to the National Revenue Agency for execution. The National Revenue Agency shall notify the Court about the takeover of the seized and confiscated properties within seven days.

(4) When a fine has been imposed with the verdict or indemnifications in favor of the state, Court expenses and fees have been adjudicated with the verdict, the Court shall issue a writ of execution and shall send it to the respective authority for execution.

(5) (new - SG 42/15) The enforcement of claims of judicial costs and fees under Para 4 may be directed towards the money and securities deposited as a guarantee.

(6) (prev. text of Para 05 - SG 42/15) The actions under Para. 1 - 4 shall be carried out within seven days from the effectiveness of the verdict.

(7) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The judgment, by which the verdict has been enforced under Para. 2 shall be published on the internet site of the relevant court after receiving notification by the prosecutor about the actions, undertaken on the enforcement of the imposed punishment.

Deduction of the time of detention and divesting of rights

Art. 417. When **Art. 59 of the Penal Code** has not been applied by the Court, it shall be applied by the prosecutor with a decree.

Informing the victim with specific protection needs for the release of the convict

Art. 417a. (New - SG 16/19) In the cases of **Art. 415** or **417**, the respective prosecutor shall immediately notify the victim with specific protection needs.

Authorities detaining the convicted person

Art. 418. (suppl. – SG 109/08) The detention of the convicted person and taking him/her away to the place of execution of the punishment shall be carried out by the services of the Ministry of Justice, which may use the assistance of the respective bodies of the Ministry of Interior.

Chapter thirty three. RE-ESTABLISHING PENAL CASES

Acts which shall be subject to check

Art. 419. (1) (suppl. – SG 109/08, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Subject to check under this chapter shall be the entered in force verdicts and decisions. Subject to check under this Chapter shall also be the determinations under **Art. 112, Para. 3, Art. 243, Para. 6, Items 1 and 2, Art. 382, Para.**

7, as well as the determinations and rulings under **Art. 341, Para. 1.**

(2) (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010; new – SG 71/13, repealed, - SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017).

Persons who shall be entitled to make request for re-establishment

Art. 420. (1) (suppl. – SG 93/11, in force from 01.01.2012, suppl. - SG 103/20, amend. - SG 32/22, in force from 27.07.2022) A request for revival of a penal case under **Art. 422, Para. 1, Items 1-3** may be done by the district, respectively by the military prosecutor, and under Art. 422, Para. 1, Items 4-6 by the General prosecutor. Request for reopening of a criminal case within the competence of the European Public Prosecutor's Office under Art. 422, Para. 1 may be made by the European Delegated Prosecutor.

(2) (Amend. – SG 7/19) The convicted for a crime of general nature, who has not been discharged from penal liability with imposing of administrative penalty on the ground of **Art. 78a of the Penal Code**, may file by him/herself a request for re-establishment of the penal case in the cases of **Art. 422, Para. 1, Item 4-6.**

(3) (amend. - SG 42/15) The request for revival shall not suspend the execution of the verdict, except the prosecutor or the court that is competent to examine the request rules otherwise.

(4) In the cases of Art. 422, Para. 1, Item 4, where the decision of the European Court of Human Rights is in favour of the convicted, as well as in the cases of Art. 422, Para. 1, Item 6, the suspension of the execution shall be obligatory.

Period of request

Art. 421. (1) The request of revival of the penal case, finalized by an acquittal verdict or by a determination or a ruling for discontinuation, as well as a request by which increasing of the punishment or to apply a law for more heavily punishable crime, may be filed not later than six months from the respective act under **Art. 422, Para. 1, Item 5 and Para. 2** enters into force or from the detection of the new circumstances.

(2) The General prosecutor shall make the request under Art. 422, Para. 1, Item 4 within one month period from the learning about the decision, and under Art. 422, Para. 1, Item 6 – within one- week period from the learning of the admitted extradition.

(3) (suppl. – SG 109/08, amend. – SG 7/19) The convicted may file the request under Art. 422, Para. 1, Item 4-6 within six months of notification about the decision under Art. 422, Para. 1, item 4, from the entry into force of the respective act under Art. 422, Para. 1, item 5 or from the actual transfer in the cases under Art. 422, Para. 1, item 6. For the convicted person by default the term shall start elapsing from the date, on which he/she learnt, that the verdict has been enforced.

(4) The penal case may also be revived after the death of the convicted.

Ground for re-establishment

Art. 422. (1) The penal case shall be revived, where:

1. Some of the circumstances, on which the verdict, the decision or the determination is based, turn out to be unauthentic;

2. (amend. - SG 69/08; amend. – SG 93/11, in force from 01.01.2012) a judge, a Court juror, a prosecutor, or an investigating body has committed a crime in connection with his/her participation in the penal procedure;

3. by way of investigation circumstances or evidence are detected which have not been known to

the Court, which has pronounced the verdict, the decision, the determination or the disposition are of significant importance to the case;

4. by a decision of the European Court of Human Rights has been established a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights, which are of significant importance to the case;

5. (amend. – SG 93/11) substantial violations have been committed under **Art. 348, para 1, items 1 – 3** in relation to court instruments issued under **Art. 354, para 2, item 2 and para 5**, as well as in relation to verdicts, decisions and determinations, which have not been checked under the cassation procedure upon an appeal or a challenge of the party, in favour of which the cancellation is proposed;

6. extradition is admitted in the case of verdict by default against provided by the Bulgarian State bails for the revival of the suit – for the crime for which the extradition has been admitted.

(2) The circumstances under Para. 1, Items 1 and 2 shall be established by an entered in force verdict, and where a verdict cannot be rendered – by way of investigation.

Re-establishing of the penal case upon request of the sentenced by default due to his/her non-participation in the penal proceedings (Title amend. – SG 109/08)

Art. 423. (1) (amend. – SG 109/08 amend. – SG 93/11, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017, suppl. – SG 7/19, suppl. - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) Within six-month period from learning about the enforceable verdict or from the actual transfer from another state to the Republic of Bulgaria, the sentenced by default may file a motion for revival of the criminal case due to his/her non-participation in the penal proceedings. The motion shall be sustained, unless the convict, upon being charged within the pre-trial proceedings, absconded and thus hindered the procedure under **Art. 247c, para 1** or, once the afore-mentioned procedure was completed, the convict failed to appear to a court hearing with no good reason.

(2) The request shall not suspend the execution of the verdict, except the Court rules otherwise.

(3) The proceeding for revival of the criminal case shall be discontinued if the sentenced by default fails to appear before the Court without valid reasons.

(4) Where the sentenced by default has been detained in execution of the enforceable verdict and the Court revives the penal proceedings, in its judgement it may impose detention in custody or house arrest as a measure of compulsion, if the prosecutor has motioned for such in Court hearing.

(5) (amend. – SG 109/08, suppl. – SG 7/19) If the request has been filed by a sentenced by default and handed by another state to the Republic of Bulgaria, after extradition has been allowed, against provided bails over the suit, the Court shall revive it, without assessment of if the person had been or had not been aware of the Court proceedings against him/her.

Court which shall consider the request

Art. 424. (1) (amend. - SG 42/15) The request for revival of the penal case on the grounds of **Art. 422, Para 1, Item 5** shall be considered by the corresponding appellate court, where the act under **Art. 419** was issued by a district or regional court as an appeal instance, with the exception of the new judgements.

(2) (new - SG 42/15) Apart from the cases under Para 1 the request for revival of the penal proceedings shall be examined by the Supreme Cassation Court.

(3) (prev. text of Para 02, amend. - SG 42/15) The request shall be brought through the respective first-instance Court, which shall immediately forward a copy of it to the prosecutor, the sentenced or the acquitted person, and the case – to the corresponding appellate court or the Supreme Cassation Court.

(4) (prev. text of Para 03 - SG 42/15) The case shall be tried in an open session.

Powers of the Court

Art. 425. (1) Where Court finds the request for revival grounded, may:

1. cancel the verdict, the decision, the determination or the ruling and remand the case for a new trial and shall point the stage from which the new trying shall start;
 2. cancel the verdict, the decision or the determination and discontinue or suspend the penal procedure, and in the case of **Art. 24, Para. 1, Item 1** – acquit the defendant within the frames of the factual status as per the entered into force verdict;
 3. (new – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) cancel the verdict or judgment, acquit the defendant as innocent and impose him/her administrative punishment, where the deed is to be punished under Administrative order in the provided cases in the special part of the **Penal Code** or represents an administrative breach, provided by an act of decree;
 4. (former p. 3 – SG, 63/17 in force from 05.11.2017) amend the verdict, the appellate decision or the new verdict in the cases where the grounds for this are in favor of the sentenced.
- (2) In the cases of **Art. 423, Para. 1** the procedure shall be revived and the case remanded on the stage, where the procedure by default has started.

Application of the rules of the cassation procedure

Art. 426. As far as in this chapter no special rules are established, the rules of the cassation procedure shall be applied.

Part seven.

SPECIAL PROCEDURES

Chapter thirty four.

APPLICATION OF COMPULSORY MEDICAL MEASURES. REHABILITATION

Section I.

Application of Compulsory Medical Measures

Proposal for Application of Compulsory Medical measures

Art. 427. (1) (suppl. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Proposal for application of compulsory medical measures under **Art. 89 and the following of the Penal Code** shall be made by the prosecutor in the regional prosecution office, and in the cases of interruption of the execution of the imprisonment or probation punishment – by the district prosecutor.

(2) Prior to making the proposal, the prosecutor shall appoint an expert examination and shall assign to a body of investigation to make clear the behaviour of the person before and after the perpetration of the act and whether that person is of public danger.

(3) (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) In cases of interruption of the execution of the penalty the regional prosecutor shall assign examination for clarification of the mental state of the convicted.

Court to consider the proposal

Art. 428. (suppl. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The proposal for applying compulsory medical measures shall be considered by the regional Court in the place of residence of the person, and in the cases of interruption of the execution of the imprisonment or probation punishment – of the district Court in the place of serving the punishment.

Closed session

Art. 429. (1) After the institution of the case, a reporting judge shall be determined.

(2) The reporting judge shall assess if all conditions for hearing the case in Court session are there and shall set the case down for hearing within three day period from the receipt of the proposal.

Court hearing

Art. 430. (1) For the Court hearing shall be summoned through prosecutor the person, to whom the application of compulsory medical measures is demanded, his/her parents, his/her guardian or trustee and the victim.

(2) The participation of a prosecutor and of a defender of the person, to whom the application of compulsory medical measures is demanded, shall be mandatory.

(3) The attendance of the person, to whom the application of compulsory medical measures is demanded, shall not be mandatory, when his/her health status is an obstacle thereto.

(4) In all cases, the Court shall hear the opinion of an expert-psychiatrist.

Court determination

Art. 431. (1) The Court shall rule in a sitting of a single judge by a determination.

(2) The determination under Para. 1 shall be subject to appeal or challenge within seven-day period from its pronouncement under the procedure of **Chapter Twenty-One**.

(3) If the appellate instance reviews the determination, it shall settle the case.

Continuation, substitution or discontinuation of the compulsory medical measures

Art. 432. (1) (Suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Following the expiration of six months from the placement under compulsory medical treatment, the Court upon location of the medical institution, in which the person has been placed, shall ex officio rule on the continuation, substitution or discontinuation of the compulsory medical treatment.

(2) Before the expiration of the six-month period from the placement under compulsory treatment, and in the cases under **Art. 89, letter "a" of the Penal Code**, the Court may discontinue the compulsory medical treatment on a proposal of the prosecutor.

(3) The Court shall rule on the continuation, substitution or discontinuation of the compulsory medical measures in a Court session, after taking the opinion of the respective medical establishment and the opinion of an expert-psychiatrist.

Section II. Rehabilitation

Court to pronounce rehabilitation

Art. 433. (1) Rehabilitation may be pronounced by the Court which has pronounced the verdict as the first instance.

(2) Where the person is sentenced with several verdicts by various Courts, competent shall be the Court, which has imposed the heaviest punishment, and where the punishments are equally heavy, the Court, which has passed the last verdict.

Petition for rehabilitation

Art. 434. (1) The procedure for rehabilitation shall commence on a petition in writing of the convicted.

(2) The following shall be enclosed with the petition for rehabilitation:

1. A copy of the verdict, and where the case file has been destroyed - a transcript of the bulletin of conviction;
2. Evidence of the existence of the conditions under [Art. 87 of the Penal Code](#).

Considering the petition

Art. 435, (1) The petition for rehabilitation shall be considered by the Court in a Court session with summoning the petitioner.

(2) The participation of the prosecutor shall be obligatory.

Determination by the Court

Art. 436. (1) The Court shall rule by a determination.

(2) Against the determination, appeal or a challenge may be submitted within seven day period from its announcement, which shall be considered under the procedure of **Chapter Twenty One**.

(3) If the determination has been cancelled, the appellate instance shall settle the case.

(4) If the petition is not recognized, a new petition may be submitted not earlier than one year from the date the determination.

Chapter thirty five.

PROCEDURES IN CONNECTION WITH THE EXECUTION OF THE PUNISHMENTS. SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS

Section I.

Release Ahead of Term

Proposal or an application for release ahead of term (Title, amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017)

Art. 437. (1) Proposals for release ahead of term under Articles [70](#) and [71](#) of the Penal Code may be made by:

1. the district prosecutor, respectively the military prosecutor, in the place of execution of the

punishment;

2. (amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017) the head of the prison.

3. (revoked – SG 109/08).

(2) (New – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017, suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The convicted person may submit an application himself for pre-term release under Art. 70 and 71 of the Penal Code. The application may be submitted through the head of prison, who shall obligatorily give opinion on the application.

(3) (revoked – SG 109/08, former Para. 2, amend, and suppl. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017) To the proposal, or application shall be enclosed the personal file of the person, the other materials of significance for the proper determination of the case and the list of the persons to be summoned.

Court to consider the proposal or application (Title, amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017)

Art. 438. (Amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017) The proposal or application under **Art. 437, Para. 1 or 2** shall be considered by the District, respectively by the Military Court in the place of execution of the punishment.

Procedure of consideration of the proposal, or the application (Title, amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017)

Art. 439. (1) (Suppl. - SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017). The Court shall consider the proposal, or the application in a sitting of a single judge.

(2) (amend. – SG 109/08, amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017). The participation of the prosecutor, the head of prison or his representative and the convicted person shall be obligatory.

(3) (Amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017). The convicted person shall have the right to a defender. The court shall appoint official defender only where the convicted person cannot pay a lawyer's remuneration, wishes to have defender and the justice interests require this.

(4) (New - SG 98/20) When this will not prevent the exercise of the right to defence, the convicted person may, with his consent, participate in the case by video-conference, in which case his identity shall be verified by the Head of the prison or an employee appointed by him.

(5) (Amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017, previous Para. 4 - SG 98/20) After the gathering and the check of the evidence are completed, the Court shall give the floor to the head of prison and to the prosecutor.

(6) The convicted shall speak last.

Evidences for correction of the convicted person

Art. 439a. (New – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017) (1) Evidences for correction shall be all the circumstances, which indicate the positive change of the convicted person during servicing the punishment, like, good behavior, participation in labor, educational, training, qualification or sport activities, in specialized impact programmes, public events.

(2) The evidences for correction shall be established by the assessment of the convicted person under **Art. 155 of the Execution of Penalties and Detention Act**, the work on the individual plan for execution of the verdict under **Art. 156** of this act, as well as of all other sources of information for the behavior of the convicted person during servicing the punishment.

(3) Not applying measures for encouragement, not participating in programmes and activities under

Para. 1, where such have not been accessible for the convicted persons or the length of the not services part of the punishment shall be the only reasons for refusal of decreeing conditions pre-term release, without examining the whole behavior of the convicted person during servicing the punishment.

Determination by the Court

Art. 440. (1) The Court shall rule by a reasoned determination.

(2) (Amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

The court determination shall be subject to appeal by the convicted person and by the head of prison and to protect by the prosecutor under **Chapter Twenty-Two**. The determination shall be executed immediately after expiry of the appealing term, unless a private protest has been submitted, or an appeal, which are not in the interest of the convicted person.

New proposa or applicationl

Art. 441. (Amend. - SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017) Where the proposal or the application under **Art. 437** are not considered by the court, a new proposal, or application may be made no earlier than 6 months after the day of enforcement of the determination.

Court which shall rule on serving the remainder of the punishment

Art. 442. Where the conditionally released person commits a new offence during the probationary period, the issues referred to in **Art. 70, Para. 7 and 8 of the Penal Code** shall be decided by the Court, within the cognisance of which falls the case on the new offence.

Section II.

Cancellation of Taking into Consideration Working Days

Proposal for cancellation

Art. 443. A proposal for cancellation of taking into consideration working days upon imprisonment under **Art. 41, para 4 of the Penal Code** may make:

1. the district prosecutor in the place of execution of the punishment;
2. the warden.

Consideration of the proposal

Art. 444. (1) The proposal shall be heard by the District Court in the place of serving the term of imprisonment in a body of a judge and two Court jurors.

(2) The determination by the Court shall be subject to appeal within seven-day period from pronouncing it, under the procedure of **Chapter Twenty Two**.

(3) If the appellate instance cancels the determination, it shall decide the case.

(4) 3) To the extent, to which there are no special rules in this section, the rules of **Section I** of this Chapter shall apply.

Section III.

Substitution of the Regime of Serving the Term of Imprisonment for a Heavier One

Proposal for substitution

Art. 445. The proposals for substitution of the regime of serving the term of imprisonment for a heavier one than that determined by the Court, may be made by:

1. the district prosecutor in the place of punishment;
2. the warden of the prison or of the reformatory institution.
3. a monitoring commission in the place of execution of the punishment.

Procedure of considering the proposal

Art. 446. (1) The regional Court in the place of execution of the punishment in a composition of a judge and two Court jurors shall hear the proposal

(2) (Amend., No. 21/1998) The Court ruling shall be subject to appeal within seven-day period from its pronouncing under the order of **Chapter Twenty-Two**.

(3) If the appellate instance of review reverses the ruling, it shall determine the case.

(4) Insofar as there are no special rules in this Section, the rules of Section I of this Chapter shall apply.

Section IV.

Interruption of the Execution of a Verdict of Imprisonment or Probation (Title amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010)

Grounds for the interruption

Art. 447. (suppl. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The execution of the verdict of imprisonment or probation may be interrupted:

1. (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) where the sentenced woman gives birth during execution of the penalty – until the child becomes one year old;
2. for exclusive reasons of family or social nature – for no longer than three months;
3. in case of health scourge suffered by the convicted – until his or her recovery;
4. for taking an examination in an educational establishment – for up to ten days;
5. (new – SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) in cases of temporary extradition of the convicted to another state and temporary surrender of the requested person by European Arrest Warrant to the issuing Member State of the European Union – until the expiry of the term, specified in an agreement in writing between the two states.

Body to interrupt the execution

Art. 448. (1) The execution of the punishment shall be interrupted by the district prosecutor in the place of serving it.

(2) Proposals for interruption may also be made by the warden of the prison or the reformatory.

Section V.

Substitution of Life Imprisonment for Punishment Imprisonment

Proposal or application for substitution

Art. 449. (Amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017) The proposal for substitution of the life imprisonment for imprisonment punishment may be filed by the district prosecutor by place of the execution of the punishment, or the head of prison. The convicted person may submit an application for substitution.

Procedure of consideration of the proposal, or the application (Title, amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017)

Art. 450. (1) (Suppl. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017) The proposal, or application shall be considered by the District Court in the place of execution of the verdict in a body of two judges and three Court jurors.

(2) The participation of the prosecutor, the warden and the convicted shall be obligatory.

(3) (Amend. and suppl.- SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The Court shall rule by a reasoned determination. The determination, of the court shall be subject to appeal by the convicted person and by the head of prison, as well as of a challenge of the prosecutor under the procedure of **Chapter Twenty-Two**. The determination shall be fulfilled immediately after expiry of the term for appeal, unless a private challenge of appeal has been submitted, which are not in the interest of the convicted person.

(4) (Amend. – SG, 13/17, in force from 07.02.2017) If the proposal, or the application under **Art. 449** are not recognized, a new proposal, or a new application may be filed, or submitted not earlier than two years from the determination is pronounced.

Section VI.

Substitution of Probation Punishment with Imprisonment Punishment

Substitution proposal

Art. 451. Proposals to the Court for substituting a probation punishment with imprisonment punishment may be filed by:

1. the district prosecutor at the place of execution of the punishment;
2. the chairperson of the probation council at the place of execution of the punishment.

Procedure for considering the proposal

Art. 452. (1) (suppl. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The proposal shall be considered by the District Court at the place of execution of the probation, composed of one judge and two jurors. The Court shall deliver a determination that may be appealed and challenged within seven days from its delivery under the procedure of **Chapter Twenty-One**.

(2) (suppl. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The participation of the prosecutor, the chairperson of the probation board and the convicted person shall be mandatory, except in the cases of **Art. 269, Para. 3**.

(3) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The provisions of Para. 1 and 2 shall apply also to imposition of probation measures and substitution of a probation measure by another. The Court shall

pronounce itself with a determination, which may be appealed and challenged within seven days from its enactment under the procedure of **Chapter Twenty-Two**.

(4) Insofar as there are no special rules in this section, the provisions of Section I of this Chapter shall be applied.

Chapter thirty six.

PROCEDURES IN CONNECTION WITH INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON PENAL CASES

Section I.

Transfer of Convicted Persons

Competent authority

Art. 453. (1) The transfer of persons convicted by a Court of the Republic of Bulgaria, for serving the punishment in the state whose citizens they are, and the transfer of Bulgarian citizens convicted by a foreign Court, for serving the punishment in the Republic of Bulgaria, shall be decided by the General prosecutor under an agreement with the competent authority of the other state, with a consent in writing from the convicted person.

(2) The decision for the transfer of the convicted person may also be made after the execution of the punishment has started.

Transfer without the person's consent

Art. 454. (1) The consent of a Bulgarian citizen convicted by a foreign Court or of a foreign citizen convicted by a Bulgarian Court shall not be required for the transfer when:

1. the verdict or the subsequent administrative decision of the state, which has convicted the person, includes an order for expulsion (deportation) or another act under which the person, after his/her release from the place of imprisonment, cannot stay on the territory of the state, which has convicted him/her;
2. before serving the verdict, the convicted person has fled from the state, which has convicted him/her, to the territory of the state whose citizen he/she is.

(2) In the cases under Para. 1, Item 1, before enacting the decision for transfer, the opinion of the convicted person shall be taken into consideration.

Determination of the place, time and procedure for transmitting and receiving the convicted person

Art. 455. The place, time and procedure for transmitting and receiving the convicted person shall be determined by agreement between the General prosecutor and the competent authority of the other state.

Detention request

Art. 456. (1) When there are data that the person convicted by a Bulgarian Court is in the territory of the state whose citizen he/she is, the General prosecutor may address a request to the foreign authorities for detaining the person for whom a request will be done for accepting the execution of the verdict, while informing that there is an effective verdict with regard of this person.

(2) In the event of a submitted request for detaining a Bulgarian citizen by another state, **Art. 64** and **Art. 68** shall be applied respectively.

Deciding by the Court of the issues in connection with the execution of the verdict

Art. 457. (1) After the convicted person arrives in the Republic of Bulgaria or it is established that he/she is in its territory, the General prosecutor shall send the verdict accepted for execution and the materials of the Sofia City Court attached thereto with a proposal for deciding the issues connected to its execution.

(2) The Court shall pronounce itself on the proposal with a determination in a Court hearing with the participation of a prosecutor and summoning the convicted person.

(3) (suppl. - SG 27/09, in force from 01.06.2009, amend. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The determination shall contain the number and date of the verdict accepted for execution, the case in which it has been enacted, the text of the law of the Republic of Bulgaria stipulating liability for the perpetrated crime, the term of the imprisonment punishment imposed by the foreign Court, and the initial regime for serving the punishment shall be determined.

(4) When under the law of the Republic of Bulgaria the maximum term of imprisonment for the perpetrated crime is shorter than that determined with the verdict, the Court shall reduce the imposed punishment to this term. When under the law of the Republic of Bulgaria imprisonment is not stipulated for the perpetrated crime, the Court shall determine a punishment corresponding most fully to that imposed with the verdict.

(5) The pre-trial detention and the served punishment in the state where the verdict has been enacted shall be deducted, and when the punishments are different, these periods shall be taken into consideration in determining the term of the punishment.

(6) The additional punishments imposed with the verdict shall be subject to execution, if such ones are stipulated in the respective text of the legislation of the Republic of Bulgaria and have not been executed in the state where the verdict was enacted.

(7) The Court determination shall be subject to appeal before the Sofia Court of Appeal.

Execution of a decision of a foreign Court for changing the verdict

Art. 458. (1) The decision for changing the verdict enacted by a Court of the other state after the transfer of the convicted person shall be accepted for execution under the procedure of **Art. 457**.

(2) The decision for rescinding the verdict enacted by the Court of the other state after the transfer of the convicted person shall be executed immediately by order of the General prosecutor.

(3) When the verdict of the foreign Court has been rescinded and a new investigation or hearing of the case has been decreed, the issue of instituting a penal procedure as regards the person transmitted for serving the punishment shall be decided by the General prosecutor in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Verification of the verdict

Art. 459. (1) The verdict as regards a person transmitted or accepted under the procedure of this section for serving the punishment shall be subject to verification only by the competent authorities of the state where it was enacted.

(2) When the verdict as regards a person transmitted for serving the punishment in another state is rescinded or changed, the Supreme Cassation Prosecution shall send a copy of the Court decision to the

competent authority of that state. If a new investigation or hearing of the case has been decreed, the materials necessary for this shall also be sent.

Termination of the execution of the punishment under amnesty

Art. 460. (1) In the event of amnesty in the Republic of Bulgaria, the execution of the punishment under a foreign verdict accepted for execution shall be terminated under the general procedure.

(2) In the event of amnesty in the state where the verdict accepted for execution has been enacted, the execution of the punishment shall be terminated immediately by order of the General prosecutor.

(3) In the event of amnesty in the Republic of Bulgaria, the General prosecutor shall inform immediately the competent authority of the state where the person has been transmitted for serving the punishment.

Force and effect of the verdict

Art. 461. The verdict as well as the decisions for changing or rescinding it, accepted for execution under the procedure of this section, shall have the force and effect of a verdict and decisions enacted by a Court of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Application of the provisions of the section

Art. 462. The provisions of this section shall be applied insofar as an international agreement in which the Republic of Bulgaria participates does not stipulate otherwise.

Section II.

Recognition and Execution of a Verdict of a Foreign Court

Terms for recognition and execution of a Verdict of a foreign court

Art. 463. An effective verdict enacted by a foreign Court shall be recognised and executed by the authorities of the Republic of Bulgaria in accordance with **Art 4, Para. 3**, when:

1. the act for which the request was made constitutes a crime under the Bulgarian law;
2. the perpetrator bears criminal liability under the Bulgarian law;
3. the verdict has been enacted fully in accordance with the principles of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the protocols thereto, to which the Republic of Bulgaria is a party;
4. the perpetrator has not been convicted for a crime considered to be political or for one connected with a political crime, or for a war crime;
5. as regards the same perpetrator for the same crime the Republic of Bulgaria has not recognised a verdict of another foreign Court;
6. the verdict does not contradict the basic principles of the Bulgarian penal and penal procedure law.

Terms of refusal to recognise and execute a verdict of a foreign Court

Art. 464. A request by another state for recognising and executing a verdict enacted by its Court

shall be rejected when:

1. the imposed punishment cannot be executed due to the expiry of the prescription stipulated in the Bulgarian **Penal Code**;
2. against the convicted person at the time of perpetrating the crime, a penal procedure could not have started in the Republic of Bulgaria;
3. for the same person for the same crime in the Republic of Bulgaria there is an uncompleted penal procedure, an effective verdict, decree or effective determination or disposition for terminating the case;
4. there are sufficient grounds to consider that the verdict has been imposed or aggravated for racial, religious, national or political considerations;
5. the execution contradicts the international obligations of the Republic of Bulgaria;
6. the crime was perpetrated out of its territory.

Recognition procedure

Art. 465. (1) A request for recognition in the Republic of Bulgaria of a verdict of a foreign Court shall be addressed from the competent authority of the other state to the Ministry of Justice.

(2) The Ministry of Justice shall send the request and the verdict and other documents attached thereto to the district Court at the place of residence of the convicted person. If the latter does not reside in the country, competent to consider the request shall be the Sofia City Court.

(3) The Court shall consider the request for recognition of the verdict of the foreign Court, composed of three judges in an open hearing with the participation of a prosecutor, where the convicted person shall be appointed a defence attorney unless he has engaged one himself/herself.

(4) The Court, after hearing the prosecutor, the convicted person and his/her defence, shall enact a decision within ten days, whereby it shall grant or reject the request for recognition of the verdict of the foreign Court.

(5) The Court decision shall be subject to appeal or challenge before the respective Court of appeal within seven days from making it public.

(6) The appeal and the challenge shall be considered by the respective Court of appeal within ten days from their submission to the Court. The decision of the Court of appeal shall be final.

(7) A certified copy of the effective decision shall be sent to the Ministry of Justice to be forwarded to the competent authorities of the state requesting the recognition of the verdict. If at the time of enacting the decision the convicted person is serving an imprisonment verdict in another state, the Court shall hand him/her over a copy of the decision through the Ministry of Justice.

Effect of the decision whereby a verdict of a foreign Court has been recognised

Art. 466. (1) The decision whereby a verdict of a foreign Court has been recognised has the effect of a verdict enacted by a Bulgarian Court.

(2) If the verdict of the foreign Court has imposed imprisonment punishments as regards several persons, the recognition has effect only as regards the person for whom recognition of the verdict has been requested.

(3) If the recognised verdict of the foreign Court refers only to an individual act of a continued crime perpetrated in the territory of another state, the recognised verdict shall not be an obstacle for penal prosecution of the convicted person for other acts included in the continued crime, which have been perpetrated in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Detention in custody

Art. 467. (1) For ensuring the execution of the imprisonment punishment imposed with the verdict of the foreign Court, the competent Court under **Art. 465, Para. 2**, may at any time after the institution of the procedure for recognition and execution of the verdict of the foreign Court until the entering in effect of the decision take the measure detention in custody of the convicted person who is in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

(2) The determination whereby the measure detention in custody is taken shall be appealed under the general procedure.

Execution procedure

Art. 468. (1) Competent to enact execution of the decision whereby a verdict of a foreign Court has been recognised, is the district Court at the place of residence of the convicted person, and when he/she does not have a place of residence in the country – the Sofia City Court.

(2) The Court under Para. 1 shall be competent to enact also the execution of the decision on the rights to seized and confiscated property.

(3) The Court under Para. 1 shall be competent on all issues related to the execution procedure, including the consideration of a request for rehabilitation as regards the imprisonment punishment imposed with the verdict of the foreign Court.

(4) The Court shall decide the issue of the term of serving the imprisonment punishment, where the time of the detention in custody and the imprisonment punishment served in the other country shall be deducted.

(5) The Court shall terminate the procedure of execution of the imprisonment punishment under the recognised verdict when the state whose Court has enacted it informs about amnesty, pardon or another reason for which the further execution of the verdict is unallowable. If under the amnesty, pardon or another reason the imposed punishment is reduced, the Court shall decide what part of the verdict should be served. The Court decision shall be subject to appeal under the general procedure.

(6) The provisions of this Code for execution of punishments shall also be applied to the execution of the decision whereby a verdict of a foreign Court has been recognised.

Recognition and execution of other Court acts

Art. 469. (suppl. – SG 15/10; amend. – SG 25/12, in force from 28.04.2012) Under the procedure of this section, shall also be recognised and executed other acts of a foreign Court, whereby seizure or confiscation of the means of the crime and of property acquired through crime, or of its equivalence, is enacted.

Terms for a request to another state for recognition and execution of a sentence of a Bulgarian court

Art. 470. A request to another state for recognition and execution of a verdict of a Bulgarian Court shall be addressed by the respective Bulgarian Court and shall be sent by the Ministry of Justice when:

1. the convicted person has permanent residence in the other state;
2. the execution of the verdict in the other state may improve the possibilities for socialisation of the convicted person;
3. the person was convicted to imprisonment and is already serving or should serve another

imprisonment punishment in the other state;

4. the other state is the state of origin of the convicted person and it has declared that it wishes to accept the execution;

5. the punishment cannot be implemented in the Republic of Bulgaria even through extradition.

Implementation of the provisions of this Section

Art. 470a. (new - SG 25/12, in force from 28.04.2012) The provisions of this Section shall apply inasmuch as otherwise is not provided for in an Act or international agreement which has been ratified, promulgated and entered into force in the Republic of Bulgaria.

Section III.

International Legal Assistance in Penal Cases

Grounds for and content of the international legal assistance

Art. 471. (1) International legal assistance in penal cases of another state shall be rendered on the terms of a concluded international treaty to which the Republic of Bulgaria is a party, or on the principle of mutuality. International legal assistance in penal cases shall also be rendered to an international Court of justice whose jurisdiction has been recognised by the Republic of Bulgaria.

(2) The international legal assistance shall include:

1. submission of documents;

2. investigation actions;

3. collection of evidence;

4. providing information;

5. other forms of legal assistance if they are stipulated in an international treaty to which the Republic of Bulgaria is a party, or are imposed on the terms of mutuality.

Refusal of international legal assistance

Art. 472. The international legal assistance may be refused if the granting of the request could endanger the sovereignty, national security, public order or other interests protected by law.

Appearance of a witness and an expert before a foreign Court

Art. 473. (1) The appearance of a witness and an expert before foreign Court authorities shall only be allowed if assurance is given that the summoned persons, irrespective of their citizenship, would not bear criminal liability for acts committed prior to summoning them. In the event of a refusal to appear, no coercive measures may be applied to them.

(2) Turning over persons detained in custody, in order to be interrogated as witnesses or experts, shall only be allowed in exceptional cases at the discretion of the respective district Court on the grounds of papers submitted by the other state or the international Court of justice, provided that the person gives his/her consent for being turned over and provided that his/her stay in the other state will not extend the term of his/her detention in custody.

Interrogation of persons through video conference or telephone conference

Art. 474. (1) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) A Court authority of another state may carry out through a video conference or a telephone conference the interrogation of a person who is a witness or an expert in penal procedure and is in the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as questioning with the participation of a defendant, only if not in breach of the primary principles of the Bulgarian law. An interrogation through video conference with the participation of a defendant may only be carried out with his/her consent and after the participating Bulgarian Court authorities and the Court authorities of the other state have agreed on the manner of holding the video conference.

(2) The request for interrogation from the Court authority of the other state shall contain:

1. the reason for which the appearance of the person himself/herself is undesirable or impossible;
2. the name of the Court authority of the other state;
3. the data of the persons who will carry out the interrogation;
4. the consent of the person who will be interrogated as a witness or an expert through a telephone conference;
5. the consent of the defendant who will participate in a hearing for interrogation through a video conference.

(3) (Suppl. – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) The Bulgarian competent authorities in penal procedure shall execute requests for interrogation through video conference or telephone conference. For the needs of a pre-trial procedure, a request for interrogation through video conference or telephone conference shall be executed by the National Investigation Service. For the needs of a Court procedure, a request for interrogation through telephone conference shall be executed by a judge of equal degree at the place of residence of the person, and for interrogation through video conference – by a judge of the Court of Appeal at the place of residence of the person. The competent Bulgarian authority may require the requesting state to ensure the technical means of interrogation.

(4) The interrogation shall be held directly by the Court authority of the requesting state or under its direction in accordance with its legislation.

(5) Prior to the interrogation, the Bulgarian competent authority shall establish the identity of the person who is to be interrogated. After the interrogation, a protocol shall be drawn up, reflecting:

1. the date and place of holding it;
2. the data of the interrogated person and his/her consent, should this be required;
3. the data of the persons participating from the Bulgarian side;
4. the fulfilment of other terms accepted by the Bulgarian side.

(6) A person who is abroad may be interrogated by a competent Bulgarian authority or under its direction through video conference or telephone conference, when the legislation of the other state allows this. The interrogation shall be carried out in accordance with the Bulgarian legislation and the provisions of the international treaties to which the Republic of Bulgaria is a party, regulating the said means of interrogation.

(7) Interrogation through video conference or telephone conference under Para. 6 in the pre-trial procedure shall be carried out by an investigator from the National Investigation Service, and in the Court procedure – by the Court.

(8) The provisions of Para. 1 - 5 shall also be applied respectively to the interrogation of the persons under Para. 6.

Procedure for submitting an order for another state or an international Court of justice

Art. 475. (1) The order for international legal assistance shall contain data of: the authority addressing it; the subject and motive of the request; the names and citizenship of the person to whom the

request refers; the name and address of the person to whom the papers are to be handed over; if necessary – the indictment and a brief statement of the its facts.

(2) The order for international legal assistance shall be sent to the Ministry of Justice unless an international treaty to which Bulgaria is a party stipulates another procedure.

Execution of order from another state or an international Court of justice

Art. 476. (1) The order for international legal assistance shall be executed under the procedure stipulated in the Bulgarian laws, or under a procedure stipulated in an international treaty to which the Republic of Bulgaria is a party. The order may also be executed under the procedure stipulated in the law of the other state or the statutes of the international Court of justice, provided that this has been requested and does not contradict the Bulgarian laws. The other state or the international Court of justice shall be informed about the time and place of execution of the order, if this is requested.

(2) The request for legal assistance and all the other notices from the competent authorities of another state, sent and received by facsimile and electronic mail, shall be received and executed by the Bulgarian competent authorities under the same procedure as those sent by ordinary mail. The Bulgarian authorities may ask for verification of the authenticity of the sent materials and may receive the originals by express mail.

(3) The Supreme Cassation Prosecution shall establish together with other states joint investigation teams in which Bulgarian prosecutors and investigation authorities shall participate. An agreement shall be concluded with the competent authorities of the participating states about the activities, term and composition of the joint investigation team. In the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria the joint investigation team shall observe the provisions of the international treaties, the terms of the agreement and the Bulgarian legislation.

(4) The Supreme Cassation Prosecution shall file requests to other states for investigation through an undercover officer, through controlled delivery and cross-boundary observation, and shall pronounce itself on such requests from other states.

(5) On the terms of mutuality, the foreign authority carrying out an investigation through an undercover officer in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria may collect evidence in accordance with its national legislation.

(6) In urgent cases of crossing the state boundary for cross-boundary observation in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Supreme Cassation Prosecution shall be informed immediately. It shall adopt a decision for the continuation or termination of the cross-boundary observation on the terms and under the procedure of the [Special Intelligence Devices Act](#).

(7) The execution of requests from other states for controlled delivery and cross-boundary observation shall be carried out by the competent investigating authority. It may ask for assistance the police, customs and other administrative authorities.

Expenses for execution of orders

Art. 477. The expenses for the execution of the order shall be distributed between the countries in accordance with the international treaties to which the Republic of Bulgaria is a party, or on the principle of mutuality.

Section IV.

Penal Procedure Transfer

Transfer of penal procedure by another state

Art. 478. (1) A request for transfer of penal procedure by another state shall be sent to:

1. the Supreme Cassation Prosecution – for pre-trial procedure;
2. the Ministry of Justice – for Court procedure.

(2) (amend. - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010) The authorities under Para 1 shall immediately forward the application for transfer of the penal proceedings to another state to the competent authority in respect of the penal proceedings according to the provisions of this Code, and when the jurisdiction may not be determined under the rules of **Art. 37** – to the Courts in Sofia. The application for transfer of the penal proceedings from another state shall be received by the penal proceedings authority, if several of the following grounds are present:

1. the act for which the request has been addressed constitutes a crime under the Bulgarian law;
2. the perpetrator bears criminal liability under the Bulgarian law;
3. the perpetrator has permanent residence in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria;
4. the perpetrator is citizen of the Republic of Bulgaria;
5. the crime for which the request is addressed is not considered to be political or to be related to a political crime, or a war crime;
6. the request does not aim at prosecution or punishment of the person due to his/her race, religion, ethnicity, gender, civil status or political convictions;
7. a penal procedure has started against the perpetrator in the Republic of Bulgaria for the same or for another crime;
8. the transfer of procedure is in the interest of establishing the truth, and the major evidence is in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria;
9. the execution of the verdict, if a verdict should be enacted, will improve the possibilities of the convicted person for socialisation;
10. the presence in person of the perpetrator may be ensured in the procedure in the Republic of Bulgaria;
11. the verdict, if a verdict should be enacted, may be executed in the Republic of Bulgaria;
12. the request does not contradict the international obligations of the Republic of Bulgaria;
13. the request does not contradict the basic principles of the Bulgarian penal and penal procedure law.

(3) (revoked - SG 32/10, in force from 28.05.2010)

(4) Any procedure action carried out by an authority in the requesting state in accordance with its national legislation, shall enjoy in the Republic of Bulgaria the same force of evidence it would have enjoyed had it been carried out by a Bulgarian authority.

Transfer of penal procedure to another state

Art. 479. (1) If the person against whom a penal procedure has been instituted in the Republic of Bulgaria is a citizen of another state or has permanent residence in another state, the authorities under Para. 2 may send a request for transfer of the penal procedure to this state.

(2) A request for transfer of a penal procedure to another state at the proposal of the competent Bulgarian authority of penal procedure shall be sent by:

1. the Supreme Cassation Prosecution – for pre-trial procedure;
2. the Ministry of Justice – for Court procedure.

(3) A request for transfer of penal procedure to another state may be addressed when:

1. the extradition from the requested state of the person, perpetrator of the crime, is not possible, is not allowed or has not been requested for another reason;

2. for establishing the facts, for determining the punishment or for executing the verdict, it is expedient that the penal procedure be held in the requested state;

3. the person who has perpetrated the crime is or will be extradited to the requested state, or for another reason his/her appearance in the penal procedure in that state is possible;

4. the extradition of a person convicted by a Bulgarian Court with an effective verdict of imprisonment is not possible or is not allowed by the requested state, or the execution of the verdict in that state is not possible.

(4) If the requested state allows the transfer of the penal procedure, this procedure cannot continue in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria against the person who has perpetrated the crime, and the imposed verdict under Para. 3, Item 4 on the crime in connection with which a transfer of penal procedure has been made, shall not be executed.

(5) The authorities of the pre-trial procedure or the Court shall continue the penal procedure or shall send the verdict to be executed, if the requested state:

1. having accepted the request for transfer, fails to institute a penal procedure;
2. subsequently rescinds its decision for transfer of the penal procedure;
3. fails to continue the procedure.

Section V.

Decision on subsidiary competence. Parallel penal proceedings (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017)

Decision by subsidiary competence

Art. 480. In the event of receiving information from an authority of another state for instituted penal procedure or for procedure which will be instituted in connection with a crime perpetrated in that state, the respective prosecutor under **Art. 37** shall decide whether the Bulgarian authorities shall exercise their power under **Art. 4, Para 1** for instituting a penal procedure for the same crime.

Information in parallel penal proceedings

Art. 481 (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) In parallel penal proceedings in the Republic of Bulgaria and other EU Member States, the competent bodies shall provide mutually information about:

1. the facts and circumstances, which are subject to the penal proceedings;
2. data about the personality of the perpetrator and about the victims of the crime;
3. the procedural actions performed;
4. imposed measures for procedural coercion;
5. name, address, telephone N, fax N and e-mail of the competent body;
6. other information.

Exchange of Information

Art. 482. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) (1) The exchange of information may be performed through:

1. the contact units of the European Judicial Network;
2. Eurojust;
3. mail, e-mail or fax N;
4. any other duly protected manner, in which its authenticity may be established.

(2) The information shall be provided by the Bulgarian competent body to the competent body of

the other EU Member State, within the indicated term, together with a translation in the official language of the Member State, which has sent the request, of in another official language of the EU institutions, which it has accepted through a declaration, deposited at the General Secretariat of the Council.

(3) Information, sent to a competent body in the Republic of Bulgaria shall be accompanied with a translation in the Bulgarian language.

Consultations

Art. 483. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) (1) A decision for conducting penal proceeding in the Republic of Bulgaria or in another EU Member State shall be taken after direct consultations and a written agreement between the relevant competent bodies.

(2) (New - SG 103/20) When making the decision under Para. 1, the competent authority shall take into account the circumstances which are subject of the criminal proceedings, including:

1. the territory of the Member State where the offense was committed;
2. the citizenship or the permanent residence of the perpetrator;
3. the citizenship or the permanent residence of the victim;
4. the territory of the Member State where the perpetrator was found.

(3) (Previous Para. 2 - SG 103/20) Competent to provide information and to participate in decision taking under Para. 1 shall be the observing prosecutor – for the pre-trial phase and the court, which hears the case.

Results of reaching agreement

Art. 484. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) (1) With a reached agreement for conducting the penal proceedings in another EU Member State, formed in the Republic of Bulgaria shall be terminated under **Art. 24, Para. 1, p. 6.**

(2) With an agreement for conducting penal proceedings in the Republic of Bulgaria, the competent Bulgarian body shall notify the body of the other Member State about the Result.

Chapter thirty seven.

PREJUDICIAL INQUIRIES ON PENAL-LEGAL ISSUES (NEW – SG, 63/17, IN FORCE FROM 05.11.2017)

Competence of the national court

Art. 485. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) Where the interpretation of a provision of the EU law in the area of police and judicial cooperation on penal legal issues or pronouncement on the validity and interpretation of the acts of the EU institutions, bodies, services or agencies on such issues is of significance for the correct ruling of the case, the court, before which the case is pending, shall submit a prejudicial inquiry to the EU Court of Justice.

Sending an inquiry

Art 486. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) (1) The inquiry shall be sent officially by the court or upon request of some of the parties.

(2) The court, whose verdict or judgement is subject to appeal may not respect a request for prejudicial inquiry, unless itself finds the grounds under Para. 4. The determination shall not be subject to appeal and objection.

(3) The court, whose verdict or judgement is not subject to appeal shall send an inquiry, unless

where the respond of the issue comprises clearly and unambiguously from a previous judgment of the EU Court of Justice or the meaning and contents of the provision or act are so clear, that they do not cause any doubt.

(4) The court shall always send an inquiry, where there is doubt for the validity of an act under **Art. 485**.

(5) When making a reference for a preliminary ruling, the court shall send a copy thereof to the unit representing the procedural representation of the Republic of Bulgaria before the Court of Justice of the European Union.

Contents of the inquiry

Art. 487. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017). The prejudicial inquiry shall contain:

1. the relevant facts and circumstances on the case and the subject of the dispute;
2. the applicable national law and the case law;
3. the provision or act, whose interpretation is required;
4. the reasons, because of which the court accepts, that the prejudicial conclusion is of significance for the correct ruling of the case;
5. short summary of the relevant statements of the parties;
6. the concrete prejudicial questions;
7. summary of the facts and circumstances, which justify the need of examining a prejudicial inquiry under the urgent proceedings, if such need exists;
8. e-mail or fax N for realization of direct contact.

(2) The court may keep in secret the personality of one or several participants or parties in the proceedings.

(3) The prejudicial inquiry shall be sent with certified copies of the relevant documents of the case.

Termination and renewal of the proceedings before the national court

Art. 488. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017). With sending the inquiry, the court shall terminate the proceedings of the case. The determination for termination shall not be subject to appeal and objection.

(2) The proceedings of the case shall be renewed immediately after receiving the judicial act on the prejudicial proceedings.

(3) The court may renew the proceedings of the case also before receiving the judicial act of the prejudicial proceedings, if conducting procedural actions are needed as the only possibility for collection and keeping evidences. In case that new facts of significance are established for the prejudicial inquiry, the court shall immediately notify the EU Court of Justice.

Measures for procedural coercion in termination of the proceedings

Art. 489. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017). (1) With termination of the penal proceedings under **Art. 488, Para. 1**, the court shall pronounce on the measures for procedural coercion.

(2) The parties may make requests for amendment or cancellation of the measures for procedural coercion also in terminated proceedings.

(3) The determinations under Para. 1 shall be subject to appeal and challenge under **Chapter Twenty- Two** with a private claim or private challenge.

Sending a copy

Art. 490. (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017). The court shall send to the EU Court of

Justice a copy of the enforced act on the case in relation to which the prejudicial inquiry has been sent.

Additional provisions

§ 1. (1) "Close relatives" in the meaning of this code shall be the direct descendants (including the adopted and stepchildren), the relatives of collateral branches up to fourth degree included, relatives in law up to third degree.

(2) (revoked - SG 24/15, in force from 31.03.2015)

(3) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017) “Parallel proceedings” in the meaning of this Code are penal proceedings, which are conducted in 2 or more EU Member States in relation to one and the same facts to one and the same person.

(4) (New – SG, 63/17, in force from 05.11.2017). “Specific needs of protection” in the meaning of this Code are present, where application of additional protection means are needed of secondary and repeat victimization, intimidation and revenge, emotional or mental suffering, including for keeping the dignity of the victims during interrogation.

(5) (New - SG 98/20) "Video-conference" within the meaning of this Code shall be a communication link through a technical means for simultaneous transmission and reception of image and sound between participants in the process, located in different places, thus allowing the recording and storage of information on electronic media.

(6) (New - SG 110/20, in force from 30.06.2021) "Electronic address" within the meaning of this Code shall be a personalized space in the single e-Justice portal, through which individuals receive electronic statements, messages, summons and papers from the courts, a qualified e-mail address, and an e-mail address.

§ 1a. (New – SG 7/19) This Code introduces the requirements of Directive 2013/48/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2013 on the right of access to a lawyer in criminal proceedings and in European arrest warrant proceedings, and on the right to have a third party informed upon deprivation of liberty and to communicate with third persons and with consular authorities while deprived of liberty (OJ, L 294/1 of 6 November 2013). The United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark are not bound by the Directive and its implementation.

Transitional and concluding provisions

§ 2. The Penal Procedure Code shall be revoked (prom. SG, 89/ 1974; corr., 99/ 1974; 10/ 1975; amend. 84 / 1977, 52/ 1980, 28/1982; corr., 38/ 1982; amend., 89/ 1986, 31 / 1990; corr, 32 and 35 /1990; amend., 39, 109 and 110 / 1993, 84/ 1994, 50/1995 ,107 and110 / 1996, 64 / 1997; corr., 65/ 1997; amend., 95/ 1997, 21/ 1998, 45/ 1998 - Decision No. 9 of the Constitutional Court of year 1998; amend., бр. 70/ 1999, 88/ 1999 - Decision No. 14 of the Constitutional Court of year 1999; amend., 42/ 2001, 74/ 2002, 50 and 57/ 2003, 26, 38, 89 and 103 / 2004, 46/ 2005 г.).

§ 3. (1) The pending penal cases, which jurisdiction is altered by this code shall be considered by the courts, where they have been instituted.

(2) The pending pre-trial procedures shall be finalized by the bodies, before which they are pendant.

§ 4. Regarding the periods which have started to run before this code enters into force, the provisions which were effective before shall be applied if by them a longer period is stipulated.

§ 5. In the Penal Code (prom. SG, 26/ 1968; corr. 29/ 1968; amend., 92/ 1969, 26 and 27/ 1973, 89/ 1974, 95 /1975, 3/ 1977, 54/ 1978, 89/ 1979, 28/ 1982; corr., 31/ 1982; amend., 44/ 1984, 41 and 79/ 1985; corr. 80/ 1985; amend., 89/ 1986; amend., 90/ 1986; 37, 91, 99/ 1989, 10, 31 and 81/ 1990, 1 and 86/ 1991; corr, 90/ 1991; amend., 105/ 1991, 54/ 1992, 10 от 1993, 50/ 1995, 97/ 1995 – Decision of the Constitutional Court No. 19 of year 1995; amend., 102/ 1995, 107/ 1996, 62 and 85/ 1997, 120/ 1997 - Decision of the Constitutional Court No. 19 of year 1995; amend, 83, 85, 132, 133 and 153/ 1998, 7, 51 and 81/ 1999, 21 and 51/ 2000, 98/ 2000 - Decision of the Constitutional Court No. 14 of year 2000; 41 and 101/ 2001, 45 , 92 / 2002, 26 and 103/ 2004, 24, 43 and 76/ 2005) the following amendments and supplementations shall be done:

1. In Art. 78a

a) In Para 1 letter "a" the words "up to two years" shall be replaced by "up to three years" and the words "up to three years" – by "up to five years"

b) Para 6 shall be created

"(6) Where the grounds of Para 1 present and the act has been committed by a juvenile, the court shall release him/her from criminal liability. In this case the court shall impose to the perpetrator administrative punishment public reprobation if he/she is of age of 16 years, or a corrective measure if he/she is under the age of 16 years."

2. In Art. 343, Para 2 the words "the perpetrator shall be punished" shall be replaced by "the penal procedure shall be discontinued"

3. In Art. 343a, Para 2 the words "the perpetrator shall be punished" shall be replaced by "the penal procedure shall be discontinued"

4. In Art. 406 paras 3 and 4 shall be revoked

5. In Art. 424:

a) Para 6 shall be amended as it follows:

"(6) Regarding the militaries, as well as the officers and sergeants, as well as persons from the rankers staff of other institutions, the administrative sanctions stipulated by this code shall be imposed by the respective commander and superiors, who have the right to impose disciplinary punishments. In this case the appeals against the penal decrees shall be heard by a military tribunal."

b) Para 7 shall be revoked.

6. In the transitional and concluding provisions of the Law of Amendment and Supplementation of the Penal Code) SG 62/2004) in § 90 the words "Art. 304" shall be replaced by "Art. 306".

7. In the transitional and concluding provisions of the Law of Amendment and Supplementation of the Penal Code (SG 103/2004) in § 44 the words "Art. 304" shall be replaced by "Art. 306".

§ 6. In the Civil Procedure Code (Promulg. Izv. 12/ 1952; amend. 92/ 1952, 89/ 1953, 90/ 1955, 90/1956, 90/ 1958, 50 and 90/ 1961; corr., 99/ 1961; amend., SG 1/ 1963, 23/ 1968, 27/ 1973, 89/ 1976, 36/ 1979, 28/ 1983, 41/ 1985, 27/ 1986, 55/ 1987, 60/ 1988, 31 and 38/ 1989, 31/ 1990, 62/ 1991, 55/ 1992, 61 and 93/ 1993, 87/ 1995, 12 and 26/1996, 37, 44 and 104/ 1996, 43, 55 and 124/ 1997, 21, 59, 70 and 73/ 1998, 64 and 103/ 1999, 36, 85 and 92/ 2000, 25/ 2001, 105 and 113 / 2002, 58 and 84/ 2003 and 28 and 36/ 2004, 38, 42, 43 and 79/ 2005) the following amendments and supplementations shall be done:

1. In Art. 63, Para 1:

a) In letter "b" the conjunction "and" after the word "expenditures" shall be deleted.

b) letter "e" shall be created:

"e) from the claimant on claims for damages from tort arising from offence for which an entered in force sentence exists."

2. In Art. 65. Para 2 at the end shall be added "except in the cases under Art. 63, Para 1, letter "e".

3. In art. 97, Para 4 the words "Art. 21, Para 1, items 2-5" shall be replaced by "Art. 24, Para 1, items 2-5", and the words "Art. 22, item 2 and Art. 22a" shall be replaced by "Art. 25, item 2 and Art. 26".

4. In Art. 126a:

a) in Para 1 shall be created letter "r"

"r) on claims for damages from tort, for which an entered in force sentence exists."

b) in Para 2 the words "letter "l", and the change" shall be replaced by "letters "l" and "r" in case of change"

§ 7. In the Tax Procedure Code (Prom. SG 103/ 1999; 29/ 2000 – Decision No. 2 of the Constitutional Court of year 2000; amend., 63 / 2000, 109/ 2001, 45 and 112/ 2002, 42, 112 and 114/ 2003, 36, 38, 53 and 89/ 2004, 19, 39, 43 and 79 / 2005) in Art. 91 the words "Art. 97a" shall be replaced by "Art. 123".

§ 8. In the Law of Special Intelligence Devices (Promulg. SG 95/ 1997; amend., 70/ 1999, 49/ 2000 and 17/ 2003) the following supplementations shall be done:

1. In Art. 2, Para 3 after the word "information" comma shall be put and added "controlled delivery, trust-transaction and investigation through officer under coverage".

2. Articles 10a, 10b and 10c shall be created:

"Art. 10a. The controlled delivery shall be applied by the intelligence body and shall be used by the investigating body within its competence under permanent control on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria or other country within the frames of the international cooperation and shall consist of import, export, transfer or transit transportation through the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria by the controlled person of an item – object of offence, in order to reveal the participants in trans-border offence.

Art. 10b. The trust-transaction shall be used by the officer under coverage and shall be expressed in simulative sail or other type of transaction with an order in order to obtain the trust of the other party participating in the transaction.

Art. 10c. The officer under coverage shall be an officer from the competent services under the Law of Ministry of Interior, the Law of the Defence and Armed Forces or from the National Intelligence Service, empowered to establish or maintain contacts with controlled person in order to obtain or reveal information about serious deliberate crime or about the organization of the criminal activity."

§ 9. In the Law of Execution of the Penalties (Promulg SG, 30/ 1969; amend, 34/ 1974, 84/1977, 36/ 1979, 28/ 1982, 27 and 89/ 1986, 26/ 1988, 21/ 1990, 109/ 1993, 50/ 1995, 12 and 13/ 1997, 73 and 153/ 1998 , 49/ 2000, 62 and 120/ 2002, 61, 66, 70 and 103/ 2004) the following amendment shall be done:

1. In Art. 100, letter "f" the words "Art. 361, Para 2" shall be replaced by "Art. 420 Para 3" and the words "Art. 362a, Para 2" by "Art. 423, Para 2"

2. In the concluding and transitional provisions of the Law of Amendment and Supplementation of the Law of Execution of the Penalties" (SG 103/2004) in § 54 the words "Art. 304" shall be replaced by "Art. 306".

§ 10. Law of the Extradition and the European Arrest Warrant (SG 46/05) the following amendments shall be done

1. In Art. 13:

a) In Para. 7 the words "Art. 152a, Para 5 and 8" shall be replaced by "Art. 64, Para 3 and 5".

b) in Para 10 the words "Art. 152b" shall be replaced by "Art. 65".

2. In Art. 15, Para 1 the words "Art. 152a, Para 5 and 8" shall be replaced by "Art. 64, Para 3 and 5"

3. In Art. 43:

a) in Para. 2 the words "Art. 152a" shall be replaced by "Art. 64"

b) in Para 4 the words "Art. 152b" shall be replaced by "Art. 65".

§ 11. In the Law of the Ministry of Interior (Promulg., SG, 122/ 1997, 29/ 1998 – Decision of the

Constitutional Court No. 3 of year 1998; amend., 70, 73 and 153/ 1998, 30 and 110 / 1999, 1 and 29/ 2000, 28/ 2001, 45 and 119/ 2002, 17, 26, 95, 103, 112 and 114 2003, 15, 70 and 89/ 2004, 11, 19 and 27/ 2005) the following amendment shall be done:

1. In Art. 181a, Para 2, item 2 the words "Art. 21, Para 3" shall be replaced by "Art. 24, Para 3".
2. In Art. 259 the words Art. 154 and 392" shall be replaced by "Art. 69 and 403"

§ 12. In the Law of Divestment in Favour of the State of Property Acquired from Criminal Activity (SG 19/05) Art. 3, Para 2, item 3 the words "Art. 22" shall be replaced by "Art. 25".

§ 13. In the Law of Fighting the Illegal Traffic of People (SG 46/2003) in Art. 31 the words "Art. 97a" shall be replaced by Art. 123.

§ 14. In the Law of the Bulgarian Identity Documents (Prom., SG 93/ 1998; amend., 53, 67, 70 and 113/ 1999, 108/ 2000, 42/ 2001, 45 and 54/ 2002, 29 and 63/ 2003, 96, 103 and 111/ 2004, 43 and 71 / 2005), in Art. 75, item 3 the words 'Art. 153a" shall be replaced by "Art. 68".

§ 15. In the Law of the Judicial System (Promulg., SG 59 / 1994, 78/ 1994 – Decision No. 8 of the Constitutional Court of year 1994, 87 / 1994 - Decision No. 9 of the Constitutional Court of year 1994, 93/ 1995 г. - Decision No. 17 of the Constitutional Court of year 1995.; amend., 64 / 1996, 96 / 1996 - Decision No. 19 of the Constitutional Court of year 1996; amend, 104 and 110/ 1996, 58, 122 and 124/ 1997, 11 and 133/ 1998, 6 /1999 - Decision No. 1 of the Constitutional Court of year 1999; amend., 34, 38 and 84/ 2000, 25/ 2001, 74/ 2002, 110 / 2002 - Decision No. 11 of the Constitutional Court of year 2002 118/ 2002 - Decision No. 13 of the Constitutional Court of year 2002; amend 61 and 112 of 2003, 29, 36 and 70 / 2004, 93/ 2004 - Decision No. 4 of the Constitutional Court of year 2004, 37/ 2005 - Decision No. 4 of the Constitutional Court of year 2005; amend., 43 / 2005) the following supplementations shall be done:

1. Art. 118 a shall be created:

"Art. 118a. In execution of the function under Art. 118. item 1 the prosecutor shall govern the investigation and perform permanent supervision for its lawful conduction as a supervising prosecutor.

(2) Where the participation of the supervising prosecutor in hearing the case at court session is impossible with reason, the superior prosecutor shall appoint another prosecutor who shall take his/her place."

2. In Art. 168, Para 1 after the words "as well as" shall be supplemented "offending the terms provided by the procedure laws, for committing actions which unreasonably slow down the procedure and".

3. Art. 188t:

"Art. 188t. (1) Where is possible, all acts and documents on the cases shall be made out also on a electronic carrier.

(2) Whereas a pending case or correspondence shall be attached to another case, a full photographing of the materials shall be done, which materials shall be certified by the body before which the procedure is pending, and the copy shall be sent for attachment."

§ 16. In the Law of the customs (Prom. SG1 15/ 1998; amend., 89 and 153/ 1998, 30 and 83/ 1999, 63/ 2000, 110/ 2001, 76/ 2002, 37/ 95 2003, 38/ 2004, 45/ 2005) Art. 15, Para 2 shall be revoked.

§ 17. The execution of the code shall be assigned to the Minister of Justice and to the Minister of Interior.

§ 18. The code shall enter in force six months after its promulgation in the State Gazette.

The code was adopted by the XL National Assembly on the 14 of October 2005 and was affixed by the official seal of the National Assembly.

Transitional and concluding provisions
TO THE LAW ON AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE LAW ON DEFENCE
AND ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

(PROM. - SG 46/07, IN FORCE FROM 01.01.2008)

§ 77. This Law shall enter into force from 1 January 2008 except:

1. Paragraph 1, § 2, Item 1, § 4, Item 1, Letter "a" and Item 2, § 5, 13, 15, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, § 38, Item 1, Letter "a" and Item 2, § 40, 43, 44, 46, 55, 59 and 75 which shall enter into force three days after its promulgation in the State Gazette.

2. Paragraph 2, Item 2, § 3, § 4, Item 1, Letter "b", § 6, 7, 60, 61 (regarding addition of the words "and 309b") and 63, which shall enter into force 6 months after its promulgation in the State Gazette.

Transitional and concluding provisions
OF THE LAW FOR THE STATE AGENCY "NATIONAL SECURITY"

(PROM. - SG 109/07, IN FORCE FROM 01.01.2008)

§ 44. This Law shall enter into force from 1 January 2008.

Transitional and concluding provisions
OF THE LAW FOR AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE PENAL PROCEDURE
CODE

(PROM. - SG 109/07)

§ 37. (1) The pending penal cases, the jurisdiction of which is being changed, shall be referred to the court, where they have been instituted.

(2) The pending pre-trial procedures shall be finalized by the bodies, before which they are pending.

(3) The expired prior to entering of this law into force term of Art. 112, par. 3 shall be taken into consideration.

Transitional and concluding provisions
TO THE LAW OF AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE TAX-INSURANCE
PROCEDURE CODE

(PROM. – SG 12/09, IN FORCE FROM 01.05.2009; SUPPL. - SG 32/09)

§ 68. (suppl. - SG 32/09) This Law shall enter into force from 1 May 2009 except § 65, 66 and 67, which shall enter into force from the date of promulgation of the Law in the State Gazette and § 2 - 10, § 12, Items 1 and 2 - regarding Para 10 and 11, Item 8, Letter "a", Items 9 and 12 and § 53 - 64, which shall enter into force from 1 January 2010.

Transitional and concluding provisions
TO THE LAW ON AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE PENAL CODE

(PROM. - SG 27/09)

§ 65. In pending cases, for which the court has decided to conduct preliminary hearing under Art. 372, Para 4 of the Penal Procedure Code, shall apply the hitherto effective order for determining the punishment under Art. 373, Para 2.

.....

§ 70. Paragraphs 36, 50, 51, 52, 53 and § 64, Item 1 shall enter into force from 10 April 2009, and § 64, Items 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 shall enter into force from 1 June 2009.

Transitional and concluding provisions
TO THE LAW ON AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE PENAL PROCEDURE
CODE

(PROM. - SG 32/10, IN FORCE FROM 28.05.2010)

§ 65. The information obtained through special investigation means before entry into force of this Law shall not be used during penal proceedings under the conditions and order of Art. 177, Para 3.

§ 66. (1) The pending proceedings in the court under Chapter Twenty-Six shall continue under the old procedure.

(2) The determinations of the court under the revoked Art. 369, Para 5 shall be subject to control under the proceedings of Chapter Thirty-Three after entry into force of this Law. The control shall be carried out pursuant to Art. 422, Para 1, Items 1 – 3, as well as in cases of substantial breach of the procedural rules.

.....

§ 72. This Law shall enter into force one month after its promulgation in the State Gazette except the provision of § 5, which shall enter into force one year after the promulgation in the State Gazette.

Transitional and concluding provisions
OF THE LAW FOR AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE PENAL PROCEDURE
CODE

(PROM. - SG 13/11, IN FORCE FROM 01.01.2012, AMEND. – SG 61/11; SUPPL. – SG 19/12,
IN FORCE FROM 06.03.2012)

§ 9. (1) The initiated court proceedings under the jurisdiction of the Specialized Criminal court to which has not been given course of investigation shall be terminated by the Judge-Rapporteur and forwarded to the competent public prosecutor.

(2) (suppl. – SG 19/12, in force from 06.03.2012) Pre-court proceedings which have not been completed, shall be finished off by the pre-trial authorities before which they are pending prior to the entry into force of this Act. Judicial control over such proceedings shall be carried out by the court which was competent until December 31, 2011.

.....

§ 11. (amend. – SG 61/11) The Law shall enter into force on January 1, 2012.

Transitional and concluding provisions

THE LAW FOR AMENDMENT AND SUPPLEMENTATION OF THE PENAL PRCEEDURE CODE

(PROM. - SG 93/2011)

§ 17. (In force from 01.01.2012 г.) Open pre-trial proceedings shall be completed by the authorities before which they are pending.

Concluding provisions

THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE PENAL PRCEEDURE CODE

(PROM. – SG 19/12, IN FORCE FROM 06.03.2012)

§ 5. This Act shall enter into force from the date of its promulgation in the State Gazette.

Transitional and concluding provisions

TO THE ARMED FORCES RESERVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA ACT

(PROM. - SG 20/12, IN FORCE FROM 10.06.2012)

§ 12. This Act shall enter into force from the date of its promulgation in the State Gazette, except for the provisions of Art. 56, 57, 58 and 59, which shall enter into force from September 1, 2013.

Concluding provisions

TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE PENAL CODE

(PROM. - SG 60/12, IN FORCE FROM 08.09.2012)

§ 3. This Act shall enter into force from the date of its promulgation in the State Gazette.

Transitional and concluding provisions

TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE ACT ON THE STATE AGENCY FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

(PROM. – SG 52/13, IN FORCE FROM 14.06.2013)

§ 17. Unfinished pre-trial proceedings, which prior to the entry into force of this Act were investigated by investigating police officers at Chief Directorate “Fighting Organized Crime” at the Ministry of Interior shall be assigned to the supervising prosecutor of the competent investigating authority.....

§ 27. This Act shall enter into force from the date of its promulgation in the State Gazette.

Concluding provisions
TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE DEVICES
ACT

(PROM. - SG 70/13, IN FORCE FROM 09.08.2013)

§ 42. This Act shall enter into force from the date of its promulgation in the State Gazette, except for § 1 and 15, which shall enter into force as of January 1, 2014.

Concluding provisions
TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE PROTECTION OF PERSONS AT
RISK IN RELATION TO CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS ACT

(PROM. - SG 21/14, IN FORCE FROM 09.04.2014)

§ 24. This Act shall enter into force one month from its promulgation in the State Gazette.

Concluding provisions
TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE PENAL PROCEDURE CODE

(PROM. - SG 21/14, IN FORCE FROM 09.04.2014)

§ 5. This Act shall introduce the requirements of Directive 2010/64/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings (OB L 280/1 of October 26, 2010).

Concluding provisions
TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE PENAL PROCEDURE CODE

(PROM. - SG 21/14, IN FORCE FROM 09.04.2014)

§ 7. The Ordinance under Art. 403, para 2 of the Judiciary System Act shall be issued within two months from the entry into force of this Code.

§ 8. Paragraph 4 regarding Art. 395e shall enter into force from the date of entry into force of the Ordinance under Art. 403, para 2 of the Judiciary System Act.

Concluding provisions
TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS
ACT

(Prom.. - SG 24/15, in force from 31.03.2015)

§ 9. The Act shall enter into force from the date of its promulgation in the State Gazette.

Concluding provisions
TO THE EUROPEAN PROTECTION ORDER ACT

(PROM. - SG 41/15, IN FORCE FROM 06.07.2015)

§ 6. The Act shall enter into force one month after its promulgation in the State Gazette.

Transitional and concluding provisions

TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE PENAL PROCEDURE CODE

(PROM. - SG 42/15)

§ 30. (1) Any pending penal cases, which are subject to a changed jurisdiction, shall be heard by the courts, where they have been opened.

(2) Any pending judicial proceedings under Chapter Thirty-Three shall be heard by the Supreme Court of Cassation.

(3) Any pending pre-trial proceedings shall continue before the bodies, where they are pending.

§ 34. Paragraph 6, Item 2 shall enter into force following the entry into force of the act under Art. 68, Para 2.

Transitional and concluding provisions

TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE CUSTUMS ACT

(PROM. - SG 60/15)

§ 46. Pre-trial proceedings under Art. 194, para 3 and 5 of the Penal Procedure Code, which have not been completed prior to entry into force of this Act, shall be completed by the authorities before which they are pending.

Transitional and concluding provisions

TO THE STATE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY ACT

(PROM. - SG 79/15, IN FORCE FROM 01.11.2015)

§ 31. The Act shall enter into force from November 1, 2015, except for § 17, item 4 regarding Art. 69, which shall enter into force from January 1, 2016.

Transitional and concluding provisions

TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE ELECTION CODE

(PROM. - SG 39/16, IN FORCE FROM 26.05.2016)

§ 155. This Act shall enter into force on the day of its promulgation in the State Gazette.

Transitional and concluding provisions

TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE JUDICIARY SYSTEM ACT

(PROM. - SG 62 of 2016, IN FORCE FROM 09.08.2016)

§ 229. The Act shall enter into force on the day of its promulgation in the State Gazette, except for:

1. paragraphs 86, 126, 202, 227 and 228, which shall enter into force from January 1, 2017;

2. paragraph 194 concerning Art. 360n – 360r which shall enter into force six months after the promulgation of the Act in the State Gazette;

3. paragraph 194 concerning Art. 360c, para. 2, Art. 360g, Art. 360h, para. 1 and Art. 360l which shall enter into force three years after the promulgation of the Act in the State Gazette.

Transitional and concluding provisions

TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR ACT

(PROM. - SG 81/16, IN FORCE FROM 01.01.2017)

§ 102. This Act shall enter into force on January 1, 2017, except for:

1. paragraphs 6-8, § 12, items 1, 2 and 4, § 13, § 14, § 18-20, § 23, § 26-31, § 32, items 1 and 4, § 33-39, § 41-48, § 49 on Art. 187, para. 3, first sentence, § 50-59, § 61-65, § 81-85, § 86, item 4 and 5, § 87, item 3, § 90, item 1, § 91, item 2 and 3, § 92, § 93 and § 97-101, which shall enter into force from the day of the Act's promulgation in the State Gazette.

2. paragraph 32, item 2 and 3, § 49 on Art. 187, para. 3, new second sentence, § 69-72, § 76 concerning persons under § 70, § 78 with respect to employees under § 69 and § 70, § 79 regarding employees under § 69 and § 70, § 91, item 1 and § 94, which shall enter into force on February 1, 2017.

Transitional and concluding provisions

TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE EXECUTION OF PENALTIES AND DETENTION ACT

(PROM. – SG, 13/17, IN FORCE FROM 02.02.2017)

§ 53. The act shall come into force from the day of its publication in the State Gazette, with the exception of:

1. Para. 3, 4, 5 and § 6 on Art. 35a and Art. 36, Para. 1, which shall come into force from 1 July, 2017;

2. Para. 45 on Part Six, which shall come into force from 1 May 2017.

Additional provisions

TO THE ACT, AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE PENAL PROCEDURE CODE

(PUBL. – SG, 63/17, IN FORCE FROM 05.11.2017)

§ 104, This act shall introduce the requirements of:

1. Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA (OJ, L 315/57 of 14 November 2012);

2. Council Framework Decision 2009/948/JHA of 30 November 2009 on prevention and settlement of conflicts of exercise of jurisdiction in criminal proceedings (OJ, L 328/42 of 15 December 2009).

Transitional and concluding provisions

TO THE ACT, AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE PENAL PROCEDURE CODE

(PUBL. – SG, 63/17, IN FORCE FROM 05.11.2017)

§. 113. (1) Cases, not finalized by the enforcement of this act, whose jurisdiction is amended, shall be heard by the courts, in which they were formed.

(2) Pre-trial proceedings, not finalized by the enforcement of this act shall be finalized by the bodies, before which they are pending.

(3) Proceedings on the repealed Chapter Twenty-Five, not finalized by the enforcement of this act shall be finalized under the current order.

§. 114. The provision of Para. 13,15,36-46, 62, 72, 76, 77 and 78 shall not apply to judicial proceedings, not finalized by the enforcement of this act, on which the judicial investigation has been initiated.

§ 115. The determinations of the court, ruled by the enforcement of the act under the repealed Art. 369, Para. 5, shall be subject to a check under Chapter Thirty-Three also after the enforcement of this act.

The check shall be made under Art. 422, Para. 1, p. 1 – 3, also in case of admitted substantial breaches of the procedural rules.

Transitional and concluding provisions
TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE PENAL CODE

(PROM. – SG 7/19)

§ 18. Paragraph 7, item 6 shall enter into force 6 months after the promulgation of this act in the State Gazette.

Additional provisions
TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE PENAL-PROCEDURE CODE

(PROM.- SG 103 OF 2020)

§ 11. This Act and Art. 253, Para. 3, item 5 of the Penal Code introduce the requirements of Directive (EU) 2018/1673 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on combating money laundering by criminal law (OJ, L 284/22 of 12 November 2018).

Transitional and concluding provisions
TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE PENAL-PROCEDURE CODE

(PROM.- SG 103 OF 2020)

§ 12. In accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/1939, the European Prosecutor and the European Delegated Prosecutors may intervene in the pending criminal proceedings for crimes within the competence of the European Public Prosecutor's Office committed after 20 November 2017, instituted by the authorities of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Transitional and concluding provisions
TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE

(PROM. - SG 110/20, IN FORCE FROM 30.06.2021)

§ 28. This act shall enter into force on June 30, 2021, except for:

1. paragraphs 9 and 25, which shall enter into force on June 30, 2022;
2. paragraphs 26 and 27, which shall enter into force on December 31, 2020.

Transitional and concluding provisions
TO THE BULGARIAN SIGN LANGUAGE ACT

(PROM. – SG 9/21, IN FORCE FROM 06.02.2021)

§ 9. The act shall enter into force three days from its promulgation in the State Gazette, with the exception of Art. 10, Para. 2-5, which shall enter into force on September 15th, 2026.

Transitional and concluding provisions
TO THE ACT SUPPLEMENTING THE PENAL-PROCEDURE CODE

(PROM. - SG 16/21)

§ 8. Within three months of the entry into force of this Act, the Supreme Judicial Council shall conduct the procedure for selection of a prosecutor for the investigation against the Prosecutor General or his deputy.

Transitional and concluding provisions

**TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE ACT ON PROTECTION OF PERSONS
AT RISK IN RELATION TO CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS**

(PROM. - SG 80 OF 2021)

§ 24. With the entry into force of this Act, the Bureau for Protection under the Prosecutor General shall be transformed into an independent organizational structure, "Bureau for Protection of Persons at Risk" under the Minister of Justice.

Transitional and concluding provisions

TO THE ACT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING THE JUDICIARY SYSTEM ACT

(PROM. - SG 32/22, IN FORCE FROM 27.07.2022)

§ 67. The Act shall enter into force three months after its promulgation in the State Gazette, with the exception of § 1, 2, 5, 6, 18, 28, 32, 34, 44, 45, 57 and 58, which shall enter into force on the day of promulgation.

Relevant acts of the EU legislation

Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA

Directive 2010/64/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 on the right to interpretation and translation in the penal proceedings

Council Framework Decision 2009/948/JHA of 30 November 2009 on prevention and settlement of conflicts of exercise of jurisdiction in criminal proceedings