

March 21, 2021

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS 2021

On April 4th we are electing the MP's for the 45th National Assembly. Since 2009 BILI follows closely what the political parties propose in their election platforms and programmatic documents, especially on the areas of the Rule of Law, the judiciary and the fight against corruption. In the running, quite sluggish campaign, we have noticed that the only political party, that did not have any proposals for the judiciary is the MRF. All the other parties developed certain ideas, but nowhere in them can be found fundamentally new proposals. Since 2009, the leading proposals for judicial reforms can be summarized as:

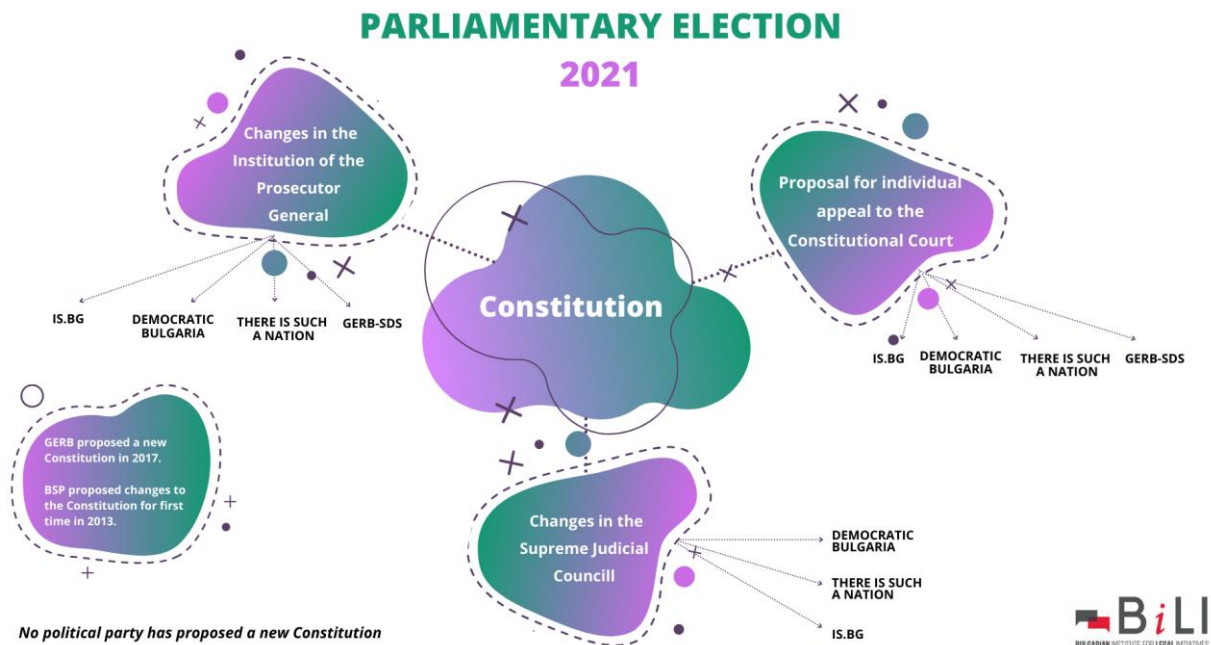
- reduction of the Supreme Judicial Council's political influence through various modifications in its parliamentary quota or its complete division;
- establishing a working mechanism for bringing the Prosecutor General to justice;
- changes in the Constitution or elaborating a new one (proposed by GERB in 2017);
- Reducing the mandates of the three big in the judicial system.

This is not about lack of ideas in the political headquarters, but rather about the non-fulfillment, poor or partial accomplishment of what was promised over the years. A problem that is not unique only to the judiciary.

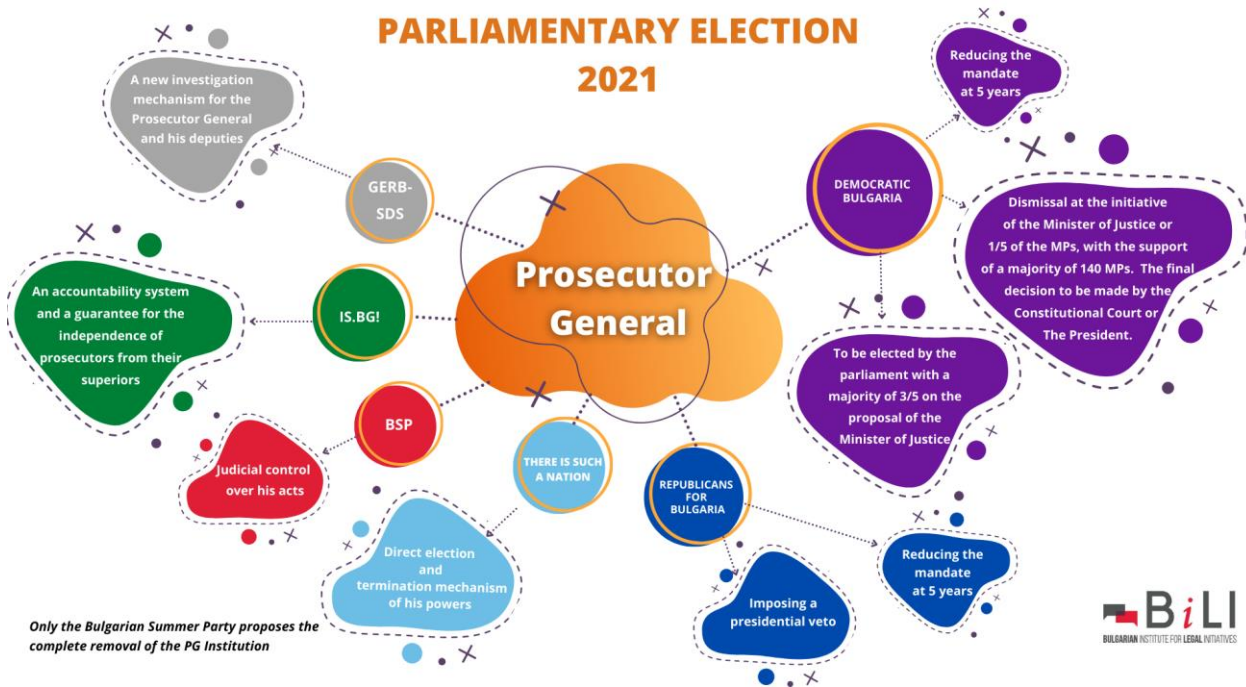
What is, after all, new or should we say, different? There isn't a single political party to present the idea of elaborating a new Constitution. The proposals in this field are about amendments and changes. This is actually quite odd, due to the fact that in August 2020, GERB started the initiative for convening of Grand National Assembly and a project for a new Constitution. There is a serious consensus about the idea of eliminating the specialized courts and prosecution offices, and in fact, GERB is the only political

party against it. There are several proposals, which can be classified as “out-of-the-box-thinking”, compared to all the others - the proposal for direct election of the Prosecutor General (coming from “There is such a Nation”, as the idea was also included in the Referendum held a few years ago) and the proposal for elimination of the figure of the Prosecutor General (coming from political party “Bulgarian Summer”, but mentioned before by experts and activists from the civil sector).

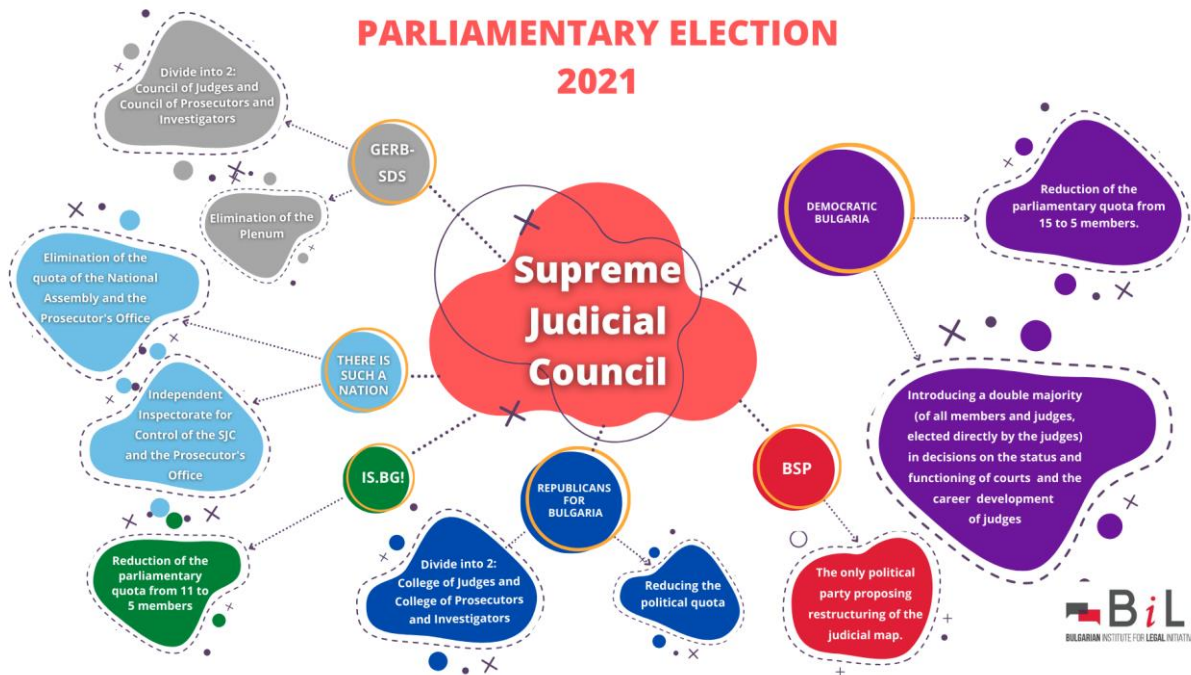
The next Parliament will be colorful, but nobody knows how long it will last. For the society, and for the judiciary, which is definitely the guinea pig of the transition period, it will be crucial to see what will be the implementation in practice of the latest promises for an independent and accountable judicial system. If immoral (dirty) coalitions are formed and if all that was written before April 4th 2021 once again remains only on paper, it will be a very bad sign for the citizens of Bulgaria as well as for our international and European allies.



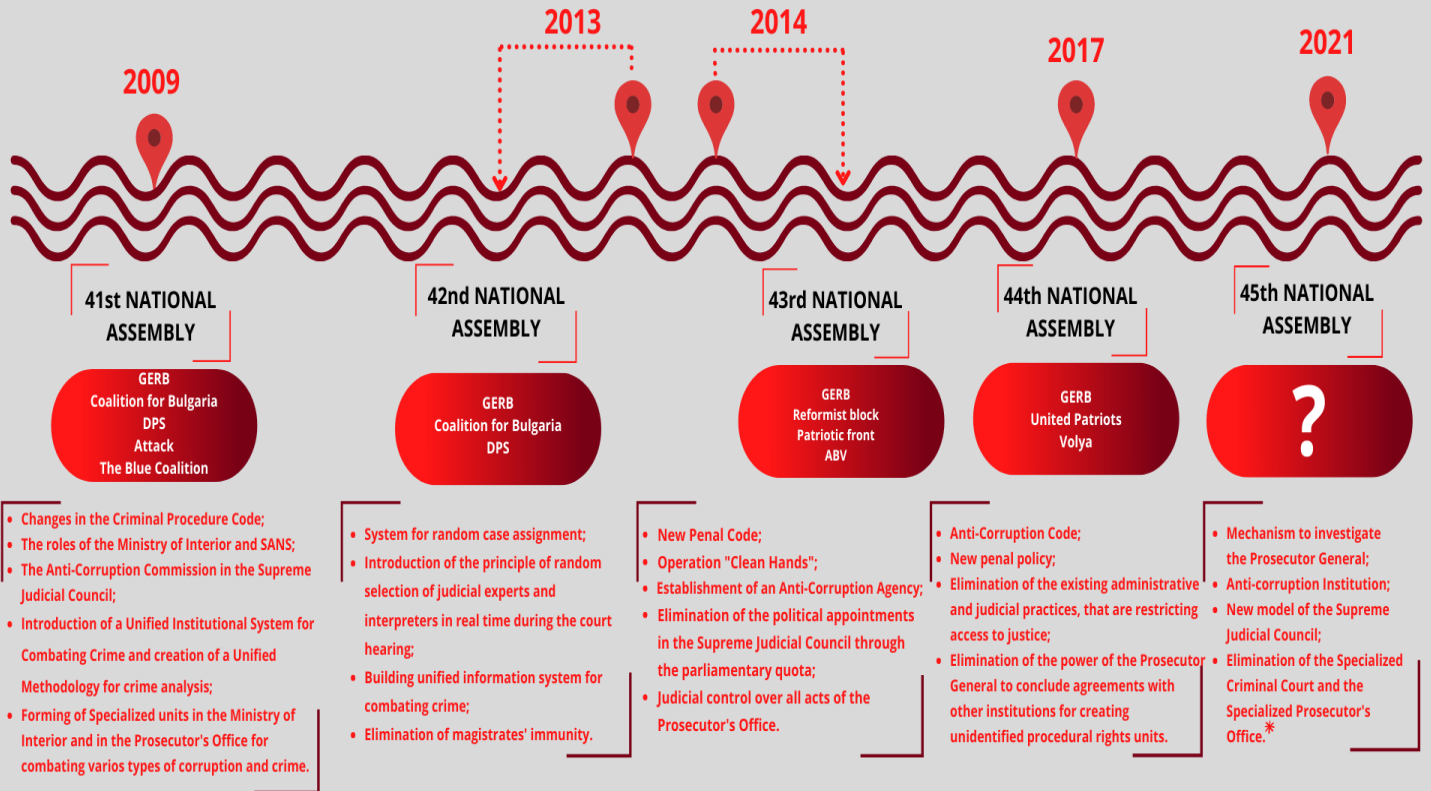
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Parliamentary election and anti-corruption proposals



* BSP, Democratic Bulgaria, IS.BG, There is such a Nation and Republicans for Bulgaria, have explicitly indicated this Elimination in their election programs. The ruling political party GERB has not.