The judiciary in Bulgaria is subject to harassment, political attacks, and media smear campaigns. The protection of judicial independence and rule of law is further undermined by parliamentary amendments to legislation which have spurred controversy. While efforts at judicial reforms are ongoing, the judiciary continues to face institutional challenges, including parliamentary control over the structure of the Supreme Judicial Council, and a high level of political influence and interference with it. Other challenging issues include ineffective management of the court system, the never-ending introduction of e-justice, and thorny issues or judicial reorganization which might potentially lead to the closure of some courts.
The term “judicial reform” as used in Poland has actually involved implementation of measures that undermine the independence of the judiciary. Many of the changes posed by the current ruling coalition, the Law and Justice Party (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość), have been criticized as undemocratic and harmful to the fair administration of justice, raising considerations and concerns about the judiciary’s capabilities to function independently in the country. Prawo i Sprawiedliwość came to power in 2015. In the period which followed, the legislature and executive authorities have gained significant control over the functioning of the judicial system. They instituted a process of restricting the powers of the judicial self-government, asserted near total control over judicial appointments, and increased the administrative supervision of the Minister of Justice over the courts. These changes, coupled with adjustments made to disciplinary proceedings, have resulted in a growing number of disciplinary proceedings, which are perceived as a way to pressure the judiciary and interfere in court proceedings and rulings.