

Elena Udrea obtains new postponement in extradition process

The Sofia Court of Appeal postponed on Wednesday for the beginning of June, the debates in the extradition process of former Minister of Tourism Elena Udrea, who has to serve in Romania a sentence of 6 years' imprisonment.

According to the representatives of the Sofia Court of Appeal, Elena Udrea's lawyers filed a series of documents and complaints, based on which the defense argues that the extradition of the former minister should not take place, because in Romania her right to a fair trial was violated.

The lawyers also claimed that one of the Romanian judges who ruled in her case had not taken the oath as a magistrate.

Also, the defense showed that there is a decision of the Romanian Constitutional Court, which annulled the sentence received by Elena Udrea.

"However, the Romanian authorities are putting pressure on her extradition, and in the meantime she has received a number of threats," the lawyers added.

Judges at the Court of Appeal in Sofia emphasized that, by virtue of a decision of the Court of Justice of the European Union based in Luxembourg, they have the obligation to verify the allegations made by Elena Udrea's lawyers, by virtue of the right to a fair trial.

The court requested from the Romanian side all the documents related to Elena Udrea's case and, depending on the moment when they receive these documents, the court will decide on June 1 or 8 whether to admit the extradition request.

This is the second postponement ordered by the Bulgarian magistrates in the trial of Elena Udrea. On May 10, the Sofia Court of Appeal postponed the debate after one of the former minister's lawyers failed to get to court due to a medical problem or an accident.

In early April, Elena Udrea fled Romania before the Supreme Court upheld the 6-year prison sentence received in the Gala Bute case.

On April 7, Udrea was caught by the Bulgarian border police while trying to cross into Greece with a car at the Kulata checkpoint.

In mid-April, the Blagoevgrad district court approved the carrying out of the European warrant issued in her name and her extradition to Romania.

Elena Udrea appealed this verdict to the Sofia Court of Appeal.