



British Embassy
Sofia

Round Table Discussion on Barriers to Doing Business in Bulgaria

The British Embassy and the BBCC jointly hosted a round table discussion at the Ambassador's Residence on 5th March. The discussion was chaired by Catherine Barber, Deputy Head of Mission and twenty members of the BBCC and the Embassy took part in a lively debate on the real issues facing business in Bulgaria. The topics of discussion included:

1. The importance of creating a positive climate for investment – both through improving Bulgaria's image with foreign investors, and creating a more predictable legal environment to improve investor confidence and make it easier to do business.
2. Tackling a widespread perception of corruption and lack of transparency around the public procurement process – including access to information, bribery of public officials, kickbacks and the enforcement of anti-corruption laws.
3. Reform of public administration - by supporting open competition for job vacancies, training, competitive wages, and career prospects (stability through changes of government) - in order to attract and keep good people.

Specific proposals for next steps, where the Embassy and the Chamber can work together, include: supporting government efforts to create a more positive image of Bulgaria as an investment destination; working cross-chamber to identify and recommend on changes to legislation (eg commercial code, labour code, tax legislation); policy support for the new government in administrative reform, including broader adoption of e-government, through the next round of EU operational programmes 2014-2020.