

DOSSIER / EN

Evelyn Banev 'Brendo'

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**Status:** 'The Drug Baron', 'Convicted'**Other names:** Brendo; Brendo; Evelin Banev; Evelin Banev

Evelyn Banev, known as '**Brendo**', a Bulgarian national, was convicted on charges of drug trafficking and money laundering. His criminal history spans Bulgaria, Italy and Romania. In May 2025, a Bulgarian court finally confirmed the total sentence of — **10 years and 6 months**.

According to a report by the Bulgarian Telegraph Agency dated 9 July 2026, yet another attempt to secure early conditional release was rejected. [\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)

The Bulgarian Case: Money from Drug Trafficking

The Bulgarian verdict was based on Baneva's involvement in an organised group that carried out financial transactions using proceeds from drug trafficking. According to an official statement from the Sofia Public Prosecutor's Office, the court established that the group was active from 17 October 2002 to 30 May 2005. The sentence came into force on 26 April 2018; Baneva was sentenced to six years' imprisonment. [\[3\]](#)

The prosecution described the international nature of the financial transactions: the case involved Bulgaria, the United Kingdom, the British Virgin Islands, the United States, Switzerland and Austria. Funds were deposited in cash and transferred from the accounts of foreign companies to Bulgaria to finance the activities of a Sofia-based public limited company. This is the documented part of the case concerning the movement of criminal proceeds. [\[3\]](#)

Ukraine: arrest and release

In September 2021, Banev was arrested in the Kyiv region. The Bulgarian Public Prosecutor's Office reported that it had received documentation to establish his identity and had begun extradition proceedings. At that time, he was wanted to serve a Bulgarian prison sentence. [\[3\]](#)

His subsequent release is confirmed by a report on the parliamentary hearings published by the Bulgarian Ministry of the Interior. It states that, following a request from the Bulgarian side, the Ukrainian Interpol bureau reported that the Kyiv Court of Appeal had released Banev, as it had been established that he held Ukrainian citizenship. This episode relates to the issue of his detention and extradition; it did not overturn the sentences handed down in other countries. [\[4\]](#)

Return to Bulgaria and total sentence

On 24 June 2024, Banev voluntarily presented himself at Sofia Central Prison. Subsequently, the issue of serving the sentences imposed on him in various countries within Bulgaria was considered. [\[1\]](#)

On 29 May 2025, Bulgarian National Television reported: The Sofia Court of Appeal upheld the sentence of a total of 10 years and 6 months, to be served initially under strict conditions. The decision is final. The case concerned the determination of the sentence to be served, not Banev's acquittal in relation to cases abroad. [\[2\]](#)

On 9 July 2026, BTA, citing the court, reported that the application for conditional early release had been definitively rejected. Therefore, previous information regarding the international arrest warrant must be interpreted in the light of subsequent events: her voluntary surrender in 2024 and the serving of her sentence. [\[1\]](#)

Mentioned in the context of ‘Khimprom’ and Yegor Burkin

In an ORD publication dated 15 September 2025, journalist Vitaly Gubin examines Banev’s presence in Ukraine alongside the stories of Yegor Burkin, Alexander Shchiptsov and Radoje Zvicer. The author raises questions about the circumstances surrounding these individuals’ presence in the country. However, the article does not provide any documentation regarding joint operations between Banev and Burkin, shared financial flows or agreements between them. [\[5\]](#)

Confirmation of Banev’s close collaboration with ‘Khimprom’ and Yegor Burkin.

Date of source verification: 27 September 2026. If any information requires clarification, please contact the editorial team, quoting the link to this profile and the grounds for the correction.

[View all photographs in the online gallery](#)

Sources

1. [BTA: Final refusal of Evelin Banev’s application for early release, 9 July 2026.](#)
<https://www.bta.bg/en/news/1164088-court-issues-final-ruling-keeping-evelin-brendo-banev-in-prison>
2. [Bulgarian National Television: total term – 10 years and 6 months, 29 May 2025.](#)
<https://bntnews.bg/news/cocaine-kingpin-evelin-banev--brendo-to-serve-a-total-of-10-years-and-6-months-in-prison-in-bulgaria-1340880news.html>
3. [Bulgarian Public Prosecutor’s Office: money laundering conviction and extradition proceedings, 10 September 2021.](#)
<https://prb.bg/apsofia/bg/news/53249-sofiyska-gradska-prokuratura-izvarshva-deystviya-po-ekstraditsionnoto-proizvodst>
4. [Bulgarian Ministry of the Interior: parliamentary oversight, information on the manhunt, the Ukrainian episode and Banev’s return.](#)
<https://mvr.bg/press///-/19949>
5. [ORD, Vitaly Gubin: ‘Bulgarian “Brando” cosplayed Medellín’s “El Patrón”’, 15 September 2025.](#)
<https://ord-ua.club/2025/09/15/bolgarskij-brando-skospleil-medelinskogo-jel-patrono/>

Use of materials

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Original publication

<https://kartel-khimprom.com/en/dossier/evelyn-banev-brendo/>