

Executive bio of Peter Kirkov

Cybersecurity Executive · vCISO · Former National Cybersecurity Coordinator of Bulgaria 20+ years across government, Big 4 consulting, MSSP delivery, and entrepreneurial advisory · CISA · ISO 27001 & ISO 42001 Lead Auditor

Career Journey

Co-Founder— Stihia.AI (2025–Present)

Co-founded AI cybersecurity platform company, that focuses on visibility and establishing efficient controls over AI Agentic environment, while keeping open and able to be integrated in the existing infrastructure such as SOCs. Primary focus on the financial and defense sectors.

Head of Audit & Compliance — SoCyber (2024–2025)

Led the professional services and compliance practice for a specialist cybersecurity firm, designing and overseeing ISMS implementations under ISO 27001, and DORA / NIS2 / PCI-DSS readiness engagements and audit support for clients in financial services and critical infrastructure.

Director of Cybersecurity & National Cybersecurity Coordinator — Ministry of Electronic Governance, Bulgaria (2021–2024)

Reported to the Cybersecurity Board of the Council of Ministers. Led national-level incident coordination as well as international coordination with CyCLONe and the EU CSIRT Network, represented Bulgaria as an alternative member of the ENISA and European Cybersecurity Competence Center (ECCC) governing boards, and contributed to the development and the transposition into Bulgarian law of NIS2. Personally built and operationalized:

- The National Security Operations Center (NSOC) — a greenfield SOC for government networks and critical infrastructure, delivered under a €5M Internal Security Fund program.
- A Strategic Sites SOC for monitoring and response across critical national infrastructure, delivered under a €6M ISF program for State Agency National Security.
- Capacity-building for CERT Bulgaria under a €1.3M Connecting Europe Facility grant, including forensic and malware-analysis laboratories.

Personally managed national-level incidents, including a zero-day nation-state APT DDoS campaign affecting large organizations and critical economic sectors, coordinating with law enforcement, military, and intelligence services.

Cybersecurity Business Development Manager — Telelink Business Services (2018–2021)

Owned the regional cybersecurity P&L for Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, North Macedonia, and the UK. Built a Risk Management and consulting team specializing in ISO 27001 ISMS, GDPR, and NIS Directive

compliance. Penetrated the financial sector as an MSSP client base — directly relevant to banking-sector procurement cycles.

Manager, Enterprise Risk Services — Deloitte Bulgaria (2014–2018)

Led the ERS practice with a team of 12–18 across IT advisory, IT governance, and security. Served as the Deloitte network expert for IT Audit Reviews and training across Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Belgium. During his tenure, he led the IT audits of most major Bulgarian banks, including the design of technologically advanced audit programs that are now standard across the network.

Earlier Career (2002–2014)

Country Manager at CLICO Bulgaria, Security & Privacy Services Leader at IBM Bulgaria, and a stretch as CISO of Information Services — where he defended Bulgarian parliamentary and referendum election infrastructure against the country's first recorded election-related DDoS attack and successfully migrated the ISMS to ISO 27001:2013 with minimal advisories.

Scope of Impact

- National-scale SOC builds: 2 (NSOC, Strategic Sites SOC, and supported the SOC at Telelink Business Services).
- EU-funded cybersecurity programme delivery: €15M+ across four major programmes, completed.
- Banking-sector audit and advisory: IT audits of most major Bulgarian banks at Deloitte; MSSP delivery to financial institutions at Telelink; ERS communications with banking-sector Boards.
- Regulatory and standardization work: Contributed to NIS2 and CRA transposition; represented Bulgaria on ENISA and ECCC governing boards; co-authored audit programs deployed across the Deloitte CEE network.
- Incident response: Coordinated national-level incidents including nation-state APT campaigns, election-infrastructure attacks, and cross-sector cyber crises.
- Thought leadership: ISO/IEC 42001 Lead Auditor; upcoming ISACA chapter presentation on LLM risks; regular keynote speaker engagements on AI governance, cybersecurity, and national cyber resilience.
- Team-building: Successfully built and improved efficient and effective teams in vastly different domains — Big 4 and Bulgarian public service.

Strategic Responsibilities Held

- Reporting line to a Cabinet-level Cybersecurity Board.
- Cross-government crisis coordination (law enforcement, military, intelligence, private sector).
- Direct Board-level communication in banking and regulated industries.
- Program leadership for multi-million-Euro EU-funded cybersecurity builds.
- International representation at ENISA, ECCC, EU CSIRT Network, and NATO cyber cooperation workstreams.

