

Cases and rulings

Country Code	Year	Reference details title	Reference details URL	Hate Bias motivation	Court / Body	Key facts of the case	Results (sanctions, outcome) and key consequences or implications of the case	Main reasoning / argumentation	Key issues (concepts, interpretations) clarified by the case	Key quotation in original language and translated into English with reference details
Poland	2016	Poland / I instance: Regional Court in Bialystok / Ref. no. VII K 285/14 / II instance: District Court in Bialystok / Ref. no. VIII Ka 157/16		Religion	I instance: Regional Court in Bialystok, II instance: District Court in Bialystok	In the period of 2009-2011, the accused was posting offensive statements on various Internet websites, inciting hatred towards Chechens and insulting them due to their religion, nationality and migration status (refugees and asylum-seekers).	The accused was sentenced to 3 months of imprisonment. The sentence was suspended for the probation period of 2 years.	The Regional Court established that comments of the accused posted on the Internet directly concerned Chechens and that words used by the accused in the public discourse were clearly pejorative and abusive within the meaning of Article 257 of the Criminal Code. The accused aimed at discrediting the Chechen minority as a nation and to demonstrate the superiority of the Polish nation over them. The accused lodged an appeal. However, the District Court upheld the judgement of the I instance court.	The right to freedom of expression is not unlimited.	"Nie jest absolutnie intencją Sądu Odwoławczego w niniejszej sprawie kwestionowanie bądź odbieranie oskarżonemu (...) prawa do krytyki oraz do wolności wyrażania i głoszenia poglądów (art. 54 Konstytucji RP), tym nie mniej jednak wyrok niniejszy winien być czytelnym i jasnym sygnałem, iż owo fundamentalne prawo obywatela, nie może być uznawane za prawo w żaden sposób i niczym nieograniczone." "It is not an intention of the Court to deprive the accused of (...) the right to criticism and the freedom of expression (Article 54 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland). However, this verdict must be a clear signal that this fundamental right of a citizen cannot be considered as unrestricted".

DISCLAIMER The information presented here is collected under contract by the FRA's research network FRANET. The information and views contained do not necessarily reflect the views or the official position of the FRA.

<http://fra.europa.eu/en/databases/anti-muslim-hatred/>

Copyright © 2026 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights