DATABASE 2012-2024 ON ANTI-MUSLIM HATRED

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
Cyprus	2020	Cyprus / Media Complaints Commission, "Complaint against the newspaper 'Simerini'" (Παράπονο εναντίον της εφημερίδας «Σημερινή»), Complaint No. 08/02/02/20. 17 May 2020.		Racial or ethnic origin, Racial or ethnic origin, Religion	Cyprus Media Complaints Commission	The Media Complaints Commission examined a complaint against the national daily newspaper 'Simerini' for three articles published on 2 February 2020 under the titles: (1) 'Immigration sinks Cyprus', (2) 'Explosion of Immigration' and (3) 'Turkish games with refugee flows'. The complaint argued that the article attempts to spread fear and xenophobia with false data about the numbers and unproven allegations about flows directed and manipulated by Turkey.	The Media Complaints Commission obliged the newspaper to publish this decision and the newspaper complied. This is the only measure foreseen in the mandate of the Media Complaints Commission.	The Commission concluded that the articles indeed contained false data. The article entitled 'Explosion of immigration' referred to 31,200 asylum applicants, allegedly amounting to 3,6% of the Cypriot population, when the real figure was 15,137 applications on behalf of 17,171 persons, amounting to 1,37% of the population. The article 'Immigration sinks Cyprus' contains a table with the right figures but the analysis again repeats the wrong total of 31,200. The Commission found that the presentation of the data cannot be justified on the basis of the right of a media outlet to analyse and support a certain position, because there is a clear intention of misleading the readers with false data. The Commission nevertheless concluded that the articles do not contain hate speech but, rather, exaggerations through phrases like "immigration is sinking Cyprus" from which a framework of spreading fear may emerge. These phrases were found to be mere opinions of the newspaper and did not amount to a violation of the non-discrimination principle of the Journalistic Code. The allegation that the immigration flows are directed by Turkey does not contain any infringement either, since the newspaper is merely repeating the statements of the Interior Minister.	Statements containing false data about the numbers of asylum seekers and exaggerated phrases suggesting that the country is collapsing under the weight of immigration do not necessarily amount to hate speech, even if a frame of instilling fear emerges from the language used. Allegations about migration flows which are not grounded on objective data and can spread fear in the population are also legitimate if they are supported by statements of the competent government Minister.	"Άρα, παρατηρείται ... παραβίαση ως προς την ακρίβεια των δεδομένων που προέρχονται από τις αναλύσεις... Περαιτέρω, η Επιτροπή έκρινε ότι το περιεχόμενο του ρεπορτάζ δεν εμπεριέχει το στοιχείο ρητορικής μίσους αλλά υπάρχει υπερβολή, η οποία φανερώνεται μέσω της φράσης «το μεταναστευτικό βουλιάζει την Κύπρο» και μέσω αυτής δυνατό να σκιαγραφείται ένα πλαίσιο εκφοβισμού. Όμως, πρόκειται για άποψη της εφημερίδας που το καθιστά μη παραβίαση του άρθρου 12 (Δυσμενείς διακρίσεις)." "There is a violation .. regarding the accuracy of the data derived from the analysis... Furthermore, the Commission considered that the content of the report did not contain the element of hate speech but there was an exaggeration, which is manifested through the phrase "immigration sinks Cyprus" through which a framework of instilling fear could be outlined. However, this is an opinion of the newspaper that does not amount to a violation of Article 12 (Discrimination)."

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