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
Serbia	2024	Sebia / Press Councile / Inicijativa mladih za ljudska prava vs. Alo, Novosti and Politika/151	http://zalbe.rs/zalba/8943	Nationality	Press Council Complaints Commission	The NGO Youth Initiative for Human Rights submitted complaints regarding texts published on the portals Politika.rs and Alo.rs, as well as in the Novosti newspaper, alleging violations of provisions in the Serbian Journalists' Code of Ethics that prohibit discrimination, among other things. The texts in question pertain to the festival "Mirëdita, dobar dan!", that promotes cultural and artistic cooperation between Serbia and Kosovo*, and whose organiser is the complainant. In the news articles published in June 2024, the festival was characterised as anti-Serbian, and Albanians were referred in derogatory terms. In other words, the reporting was discriminatory and directed against Albanians. *This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence A/N: In the Serbian context, when discussing discrimination or hate crimes against Albanians, the identification of a person as Albanian in the public discourse is always automatically linked to their Muslim religious affiliation, as the majority of Albanians in Kosovo practice Islam.	The Press Council ordered the media to publish the decisions within five days from the date of its delivery,and the decision of the Commission was published on the website of the Press Council (www.savetzastampu.rs) and is available to the public. This case addresses incidents of hate speech and discrimination against Albanians that are similarly repeated every year during the organisation of this festival. The decision interprets issues of hate speech in the press, journalistic standards and the principle of non-discrimination,and its main reasoning can be applied in the future on similar cases of discrimination by the media on any other ground, incl. religion.	The Press Council Complaints Commission concluded that it is legitimate for the media to ask questions such as who the artists participating in the festival are, how they were selected, etc., and to comment on the organisers' decisions, but in these cases professional standards were completely disregarded. The decision states that, among others, sections 2/1 and 5/1 of the Code of Ethics were violated due to biased reporting. No distinction was made between facts, comments and assumptions and very serious allegations were made against the organisers and the provisions prohibiting discrimination were also violated. See also, identical cases: http://zalbe.rs/zalba/8947, http://zalbe.rs/zalba/8946, http://zalbe.rs/zalba/8945, http://zalbe.rs/zalba/8944.	The key issues addressed by the Commission in this case were the interpretation of journalistic standards of truthfulness, objectivity and non-discrimination. The Commission found that the media had violated several sections of the Serbian Journalists' Code of Ethics. Firstly, it was found that the text did not clearly distinguish between facts, opinion and speculation. Secondly, the articles did not respect the principle of non-discrimination. The Commission also emphasised that the media should avoid discriminatory reporting and that the reports should not spread undue fear or political propaganda.	"Po mišljenju Komisije, tačka 1 poglavlja Istinitost izveštavanja prekršena je neobjektivnim izveštavanjem, a suprotno tvrdnjama urednika, nije napravljena razlika između činjenica i nagađanja, jer redakcija ne nudi nikakave dokaze koji bi potvrdili navodne informacije o tome šta su ciljevi organizatora. Takođe, prekršene su odredbe koje zabranju diskriminaciju." "In the Commission's opinion, point 1 of the Chapter Truthfulness of Reporting was violated by the unobjective reporting. Contrary to the editor's claims, no distinction was made between facts and speculation, as the editor provided no evidence for the alleged information about the organisers' objectives. Furthermore, the prohibition of discrimination was also violated."

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