On 4 June 2019, former Austrian Vice Chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache filed two identical criminal complaints at the public prosecutor's offices in Munich and Hamburg against "all persons" who were "responsible for the production, distribution, and publication of the so-called Ibiza video," according to the text of the complaint confirmed by the Munich prosecutor's office in an email to CPJ. The "Ibiza video" refers to a video first published on May 17 by independent German newspapers Süddeutsche Zeitung, based in Munich, and Der Spiegel, based in Hamburg, which shows Strache talking in Ibiza, Spain, in 2017 with a woman who was posing as an investor connected to Russian oligarchs, which raised questions about Russian influence in Austrian politics and media. Following publication, Strache, then Austria's vice chancellor and chairman of its right-wing Freedom Party, resigned from his government post and his leadership in the party, and the country's governing coalition collapsed. Strache's complaint, which does not mention the outlets or any journalists by name, alleges that the publication of the video constituted a violation of privacy and slanderous harm to his reputation, allegations that could carry a maximum of five years in prison for anyone charged and found guilty. Following his resignation, Strache alleged that he had been the victim of illegal entrapment and a concerted "dirty campaign" to discredit him. It remains unclear who filmed the video, and the newspapers have not revealed their sources.

25 Nov 2019: On 22 November 2019, 7 persons were under investigation over suspected “abuse of sound and picture recordings”, “falsification of documents”, “tentative blackmail”, “aggravated fraud”. 3 persons are in pre-trial detention. At least 2 persons are suspected to have been involved in the planification and production of the video.
On 26 August 2019, the Public Prosecutor’s Office at Hamburg declined to investigate the complaint, for lack of evidence. Strache has appealed the decision. His complaint is still pending at the Public Prosecutor’s Office at Munich.

Article from Kurier (in German): “Ibiza-video: U-Haft über drei Hintermänner verhängt”

09 Sep 2019:

Article from Der Standard (in German): “Ibiza-video: Strache blitzt vorerst mit Anzeige in Deutschland ab”

Additional Information

Article from Süddeutsche Zeitung (in German): “Strache stellt Strafanzeige wegen Ibiza-Video”

State Replies

02 Jul 2019 | Reply by the German authorities

Letter by the Permanent Representation of Germany to the Council of Europe