

12
Jan 2018

▲ Lvl. 2

Resolved

Poland

Alert created on: 13 Dec 2017

Poland: TVN24 Channel Fined on Incitement Charges

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ State

CATEGORY  ▶ Other acts having chilling effects on media freedom

PARTNER: Article 19, AEJ, EFJ/IFJ, IPI

On 7 December 2017 the National Broadcasting Council of Poland issued a decision fining independent broadcaster TVN 1 479 000 PLN (352 000 EUR) for inciting hatred and threatening public safety in relation to material broadcast on the channel TVN24.

They allege that TVN24 news channel's coverage of protests that took place in front of the Polish Parliament on 16-18 December 2016, violated Article 18(1) and Article 18(3) of the 1992 Broadcasting Act.

These clauses state that "Programmes or other broadcasts may not encourage actions contrary to law and Poland's *raison d'Etat* or propagate attitudes and beliefs contrary to the moral values and social interest. In particular, they may not include contents inciting to hatred or discriminating on grounds of race, disability, sex, religion or nationality" and "Programmes or other broadcasts may not encourage conduct prejudicial to health, safety or the natural environment".

The decision notes that it was issued after "thorough monitoring" of media coverage on six channels: TVN, TVN24, Polsat, Polsat News, TVP and TVP Info. The decision does not state or describe what content violated these clauses.

TVN is the most widely watched independent broadcaster, often critical of the current government. A number of media freedom and journalist organisations have raised concerns that the decision amounts to censorship and is a punishment for TVN's critical coverage. The channel announced that it would appeal the regulator's decision.

RESOLVED

12 Jan 2018: On 12 January 2018, following the repeal of the decision by the Chairman of the National Broadcasting Council, the partner organisations to the Platform declared this case to be "resolved", concluding it was no longer an active threat to media freedom.

UPDATES

11 Jan 2018: On 10 January 2018 the Decision against TVN was overturned by the Chairman of the National Broadcasting Council.

➔ [Statement released by the National Broadcasting Council \(in Polish\)](#)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

➔ [Statement by the Polish Society of Journalists](#)

➔ [Decision issued by the National Broadcasting Council \(in Polish\)](#)

FOLLOW-UPS

OSCE 14 Dec 2017 | Poland broadcasting regulator's fine against private broadcaster TVN SA is unjustified and disproportionate, says OSCE media freedom representative.

➔ [Statement by Harlem Désir](#)