

06

Dec
2018
▲ Lvl. 1

Resolved

Greece

Alert created on: 11 Apr 2017

Greek Journalist Arrested on Libel Charges

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ State

CATEGORY  ▶ Detention and imprisonment of journalists

PARTNER: IPI, EFJ/IFJ, Index

Greek investigative journalist Kostas Vaxevanis was detained by police on libel charges after arriving voluntarily at Kallithea police station in Athens on 10 April 2017. A prosecutor later ordered his release pending preliminary investigation.

The charges relate to a report published on 9 April 2017 in the newspaper Documento alleging that Stavroula Nikolopoulou-Stournara, wife of the Governor of Greece's central bank, had taken advantage of her husband's influence to secure public funding for organising medical conferences without going through a public tender. The report also raised questions about Nikolopoulou-Stournara's links to the pharmaceutical industry as well as the involvement of her husband, Yannis Stournaras, in the conferences. Nikolopoulou-Stournara, whose home was raided last year as part of an investigation into possible corruption involving Greece's Center for Disease Control and Prevention, denied the report's claims and filed libel charges against Vaxevanis.

In March 2015, a court sentenced Vaxevanis to 26 months in prison for defaming a prominent Greek businessman, Andreas Vgenopoulos, as part of an investigation into the 2012 to 2013 Cyprus financial crisis. A three-judge panel of the Athens Court of Appeal unanimously overturned the conviction in September 2016.

RESOLVED

06 Dec 2018: In February 2018, a domestic court acquitted journalist Kostas Vaxevanis of all charges. On 6 December 2018, the partner organisations to the Platform declared this case to be “resolved”, concluding it was no longer an active threat to media freedom.

UPDATES

15 Mar 2018: In February 2018, a domestic court acquitted journalist Kostas Vaxevanis of all charges in the judicial dispute with the family of the Central Bank Governor. The court

accepted as true all the revelations made by the journalist, against whom the wife of the Central Bank Governor had pressed charges for defamation.

- ➔ Article published on Documentonews.gr : "New vindication for Greek investigative journalist Kostas Vaxevanis in the judicial dispute with the family of the Central Bank Governor"

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



- ➔ Report published on the Mapping Media Freedom platform: "Greece: Journalist arrested following libel lawsuit from spouse of central banker "

STATE REPLIES



10 May 2017 | Response from the Greek authorities

- ➔ Letter of the Permanent Representation of Greece to the Council of Europe