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▲ Lvl. 1

State  
replied

Progress

Croatia

n° 58/2018

Alert created on: 26 Jun 2018

## Journalist Hospitalised Following Assault

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ Non-state

CATEGORY  ▶ Attacks on physical safety and integrity of journalists

**PARTNER: Index, EFJ/IFJ**

On 24 June 2018, Journalist Hrvoje Bajlo was left with severe injuries and had to be hospitalised following a brutal attack in the coastal town of Zadar, the Croatian news website Index.hr reported. Index said that Bajlo, who owns the Zadar News website and also writes for the national media outlets Index and the Nacional weekly, named his attacker as Jakov Surać, a former football player who used to play for the Zadar team and is now a businessman. Surać was arrested and was held in police custody for two days in connection with the attack, but was later released on condition that he did not come within 50 metres of Bajlo, the news website N1 reported. The incident, which happened on Sunday evening in front of a café bar in Zadar, resulted in Bajlo's right arm being broken plus other injuries to his body and head, the Croatian Journalists' Association (HND) said. In a statement published on its website, HND said that Surać first verbally abused Bajlo, referring to his work for the two national media outlets, and then threatened to kill him if he continued to write about two former senior government officials who are under investigation for corruption. According to HND, Surać then physically assaulted Bajlo, who was left unconscious after the attack. HND noted that over the last few years, Bajlo had already received threats on account of his investigative journalism, but despite reporting all these threats to the police, no progress had been made in resolving these cases. It demanded firmer action on the part of the police, and called on the government to clearly condemn the increasing number of threats and attacks against journalists.

### PROGRESS

**11 Jun 2019:** On 22 March 2019, Zadar Municipal Court found Jakov Surać guilty of committing the attack on Hrvoja Bajlo and threatening to kill the journalist. He was given a 10-month suspended sentence, which will be enforced if Surać commits a similar offence within a three-year period. Both sides announced that they will appeal the decision.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



-  Alert posted on the regional Safejournalists.net Platform: "Physical Attack, Hrvoje Bajlo, Zadar, 24.06.2018."
-  Mapping Media Freedom: Journalist hospitalised following assault

## STATE REPLIES



13 Aug 2018 | Response by the Croatian authorities

-  Letter from the Permanent Representation of Croatia

## FOLLOW-UPS



 27 Jun 2018 | The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media condemned the physical attack and death threat against a journalist Hrvoje Bajlo.

-  Statement by Harlem Désir