

15

Nov  
2017  
▲ Lvl. 2

State  
replied

Belgium

n° 85/2015

Alert created on: 27 Oct 2015

## Journalists Arrested and Forced to Delete Material During Anti-TTIP Event

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ State

CATEGORY ⓘ ▶ Other acts having chilling effects on media freedom

**PARTNER: EFJ/IFJ**

On 15 October 2015, during a protest in Brussels against the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), at least three freelance journalists were arrested by the Belgian police, who subsequently destroyed press material. Thomas Michel and Maxime Lehoux, two journalists covering the event for the Internet television channel Zin TV, as well as a professional Italian freelance journalist with an official press card, were forced to delete their material featuring police violence against protesters. The police invoked alert level 3 (terrorism) to justify the deletion of all material. The journalists say, however, that they clearly identified themselves as journalists to the police and stated that they were only filming public images and not concentrating on the security measures. The Belgian League of Human Rights specifies that the Italian journalist was deprived of freedom for six hours for filming, in a public space, the police intervention during this anti-TTIP protest.

### UPDATES

**25 Feb 2019:** On 22 February 2019, the Brussels Council Chamber referred the case to the Criminal Court for trial of the federal police officers, on charges of unlawful taking and erasure of video data.

➔ Article published by BX1 (in French): **Deux policiers renvoyés en correctionnelle pour avoir effacé des images d'un reportage à Bruxelles**

**03 Dec 2018:** On 29 November 2018, Patrick Lefebvre said he would file a complaint with the Standing Committee on Police Service Control (Comité P).

➔ Article published by DH.be (in French) : **Le reporter de la DH arrêté samedi soir à Charleroi va déposer plainte au Comité P**

**15 Nov 2017:** On 14 November 2017, following the complaint lodged by Thomas Michel and Maxime Lehoux (ZIN TV) against two Dutch-speaking federal police officers, the Chamber of the French-speaking Council at the Brussels Court of First Instance referred the case to the Chamber of the Dutch-speaking Council.

- ➔ Article published on Sudinfo.be : 'Deux policiers sont suspectés d'avoir effacé des données vidéo de reporters de ZIN TV'

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ➔ Article on Zin TV website: "Arrestation d'une équipe de ZIN TV lors de la manifestation contre le TTIP à Bruxelles"
- ➔ Article on LDH website: "Journalistes et citoyens ont le droit de filmer l'action policière"

## STATE REPLIES



29 Apr 2016 | Reply from the Government of Belgium

- ➔ Letter from the Permanent Representation of Belgium to the Council of Europe (in French)

## RELEVANT COE INSTRUMENTS

29 Feb 2016 | Factsheet on media coverage of protests and demonstrations

- ➔ Overview of the ECHR case law and European regulations and standards (CoE, EU, OSCE) related to media coverage of protests and demonstrations.

### DISCLAIMER

This section presents a non-exhaustive selection of CoE instruments and ECHR case-law. This information is not a legal assessment of the alert and should not be treated or used as such.