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Polish Court Bans Reporter Anna Wilk from Journalism for 3 years in Criminal Libel Suit

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ State

CATEGORY ⓘ ▶ Other acts having chilling effects on media freedom

PARTNER: CPJ, AEJ, EFJ/IFJ

On 24 May 2019, a district court in Poznań, in western Poland, ordered Anna Wilk, a reporter for local weekly newspaper Gazeta Powiatowa in the town of Legionowo, to pay damages and a fine totaling US\$1,800 and banned her from working in the media or publishing houses as a journalist for three years, according to media news sites Wirtualne Media and Press.pl. The charges were brought against Wilk in a private bill of indictment based on Article 212 of the Polish penal code by Amica, an electric appliances company listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange, following her reporting in the newspaper and on Facebook on 23 March 2017, about the suicide of a company employee, according to Press.pl. Press.pl reported that the company requested a suspended prison sentence against Wilk; the penal code allows a maximum one-year sentence for criminal libel. In an interview with news site Onet, and in an email to CPJ, Wilk said she would appeal the verdict and vowed to continue her reporting on the complaints of Amica's employees. In an email statement sent to CPJ, Amica's PR manager, Tomasz Pietrzyk, said that in the company's view Wilk's reporting was "unreliable, defamatory and ungrounded," and "not based on any evidence." He added that the company would pursue the case in the hopes that a court of higher instance will affirm the ruling.

STATE REPLIES



18 Jul 2019 | Information from the Polish authorities



Letter from the Permanent Representation of Poland to the Council of Europe

FOLLOW-UPS

OSCE 06 Jun 2019 | OSCE Media Freedom Representative raises serious concerns about banning of journalist Anna Wilk in Poland from practising profession for three years.

 [Statement by Harlem Désir](#)