

31

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▲ Lvl. 2

Bulgaria

n° 41/2015

Alert created on: 02 Apr 2015

Bulgarian Financial Supervision Commission Tries to Silence Newspapers Working on Banking Disclosures

Resolved

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ State

CATEGORY ⓘ ▶ Other acts having chilling effects on media freedom

PARTNER: RSF, AEJ

The Financial Supervision Commission is an administrative body established to maintain "stability and transparency on the non-banking financial sector". The Commission has distinguished itself by ordering medias to pay record fines to media outlets and news websites in 2014, such as Economedia (weekly Capital) for 80000 euros, Alpiko publishing (zovnews.bg) and Konkurent news (Konkurent newspaper). investigative news website Bivol.bg, Wikileaks' partner in the Balkans, was also fined and asked to reveal sources.

The Bulgarian banking sector has been put through important "turbulences" during summer 2014. In response to a wave of panic, the Financial Supervision Commission has launched a war against the media. Prevaling itself of protecting the stability of the banking sector, the administrative authority has contributed to silence the debate on mismanagement of the banks by sanctioning with heavy fines those who were publishing "unofficial news" about financial difficulties in the sector.

RESOLVED

31 Aug 2017: On 31 August 2017, after consideration of the authorities' response and follow-up to this alert, the partner organisations of the Platform declared this case to be "resolved", concluding that it was no longer an active threat to media freedom.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ▼

➔ Letter to Bulgaria's legislators about threat to media coverage of banks

[➔ Article on the RSF website on "Investigative news site ordered to name sources, employees"](#)

[➔ Article on the RSF website on "Authorities ramp up pressure on media over banking disclosures"](#)

STATE REPLIES



28 Aug 2017 | Reply from the Government of Bulgaria

[➔ Letter from the Permanent Representation of Bulgaria to the Council of Europe](#)

RELEVANT COE INSTRUMENTS

22 Jun 2015 | Report by Nils Muižnieks, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, following his visit to Bulgaria, from 9 to 11 February 2015. CommDH(2015)12. 22 June 2015

[➔ See chapter on 'Sanctions on the media related to reporting on the banking and financial sectors' page 37](#)

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.