

Clarity in court press communication

1. In your opinion, how much the establishment of a good relationship with the press is based on mutual help? What role does clarity play in mutual cooperation?

Albania - In order to establish a good relationship with the press both the court and the press need to collaborate with each-other. The Court should give information to the press regarding court proceedings, judgments, so that the press can have clear information to transmit to the public. The court should give information based on the requests of the press and also inform the public and the press regarding its activity. The media should have access in the activity of the court. The court has the duty to inform the press with precision, professionalism, by respecting the restrictions of the laws and the right of the others. The press should also transmit the court proceedings by respecting the right of private life of the persons taking parts in judicial proceedings. Clarity increases the chances of mutual cooperation and plays a crucial role in establishing a good relationship between the press and the judiciary.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - I think that a good relationship with the press is based on mutual help. The Court and the media have a duty to cooperate in accordance with the Freedom of Access to Information Act, the Law on Courts, and the general and normative legal acts. The media are required by the court to provide the public with information on certain phenomena occurring in the social community, problems arising from the economic system of a country, legal traffic and contractual relations between the various institutions, and cases relevant to the interest of the state, the local community etc. On the other hand, courts can use the media for the purpose of promoting and presenting their values, and creating a picture of the independence and professionalism of the judiciary as a whole and its role in society.

Bulgaria - I believe that the press should be notified of cases of high public interest. The law-making activity is public and the public should be aware of the significant cases. The effectiveness of the judicial system is dependent on citizens' confidence in the judiciary. Creating trust is a two-way process and involves mutual understanding, principle of action and reliability of information. That is why the meeting between civil society and justice needs the mediation and partnership of free media.

Czech Republic - The establishment of a good relationship with the press is based on mutual help very much.

Estonia - Mutual cooperation is very important. We put a lot effort to it, trying to explain and give as much information as we can. Still we have a long way to go, to achieve purpose. Clarity plays big role, because if there isn't enough information it may end with misconceptions and false news. This may damage cooperation.

Finland - I consider that the mutual but non-partial cooperation between the press and courts is prerequisite for good relationships and accuracy of the publicity. The accuracy of the publicity is based on a fact, that the decisions are understood correctly. Good relationship with the press is to my mind based on good and timely information from our part and on open and equal relationship with the press. The accuracy of the publicity is based on a fact, that the decisions are understood correctly. Accurate information that is given timely helps the court to give good impression and to build confidence on its work and judgements.

Hungary - The good relationship prevents the misinterpretation and political misusing of

judgements. Clarity in press communication cannot exist without mutual help and cooperation. The Press Department of the Curia strives to respond to all questions posed by press organs as soon as possible. Accordingly, the employees of the Press Department should be available all day long.

Macedonia - The relationship with the press and the media is of most importance. Sharing right and clear info to the public through the press always increases the public trust to the Court in general. In the same time, it helps decreasing the space for media speculations and other fake info which is very bad both for the judiciary and the public.

Montenegro - Is very important because it represents one of the basic links between the work of the court and the citizens Crucial role.

Netherlands - The relation with the press is highly based on mutual trust and understanding. Press is depending on the information. Courts are only willing to give the information if the press is cooperative. Assuming that trust in the judiciary is largely based on how proceedings are reported in the press, it is clearly important that the channels of communication between the judiciary and the media be transparent and open and that the judiciary has to invest in its relations with the media. The judiciary is required to create the conditions necessary to enable the media to fulfil the crucial role they play in keeping the public informed.

Portugal - The relationship with press is very difficult, but the mutual help will permit the news to be more accurate and of course, if the decision is clear, the press can understand it and has no motive to distrust the judicial system. The relationship with the press should be of mutual understanding. Issuing press releases in good time, picking up the calls and avoiding different treatment.

Romania - Press in an instrument that can help us to make a better image of justice. The role of judicial press officers is to support the judiciary, working with the media and facilitating communication between the two. That is why the press releases should also speak as clearly as possible to the press. Journalists play an important image making role. Their objective is to produce news reports of court and judicial activity for mass consumption. It is very important to understand each other's role and to respect each other's work. Mutual cooperation with the press is much needed to ensure clarity. If such a cooperation does not exists, clarity would have a lot to suffer. By informing with clarity, the media plays a huge role in any judicial system.

Serbia - Yes, this is the most important issue. Quality of mutual cooperation and confidence is based on clarity.

Slovenia - In my opinion clarity plays a great role in mutual cooperation with the press.

Turkey - The establishment of relationship with the press is broadly based on mutual assistance. According to the ECHR case-law, the press has a watchdog function in contemporary and democratic societies. Additionally, a right structuring of relations with the press is essential for the principle of transparency and of critical importance for ensuring public confidence.

Ukraine - at present, the courts have good relations with the press in isolated cases and are due to personal contacts, in Ukraine. I think that this is important for the objective and rapid provision of information

2. Do you have any regulation concerning the clarity of judicial press-communication in your country?

Albania - Yes, currently is in force the Order No.6777/5, dated 30.9.2010 “For the Adoption of the Regulation on Court relations with the Public” of the Minister of Justice. This regulation provides that the press communication should be written in a simple language, which can be understood by the public. The press communication must be informative and explicate and if it is necessary it should explain the further progress of the case. (Article 2.6 of the Regulation On Courts Relations with the Public).

Bosnia and Herzegovina - Regulation of internal organization of court defines communication by the press-responsible employee or contact-person. Law on Civil Procedure of BiH and the Rules on Internal Court Affairs of Republika Srpska.

Bulgaria - We do not have such a regulation, but separate rules of conduct can be derived from the magistrate's code of ethics The Communication Strategy of the Judiciary (2015), the Handbook on the Interaction of the Judiciary Authorities with the Media (2015) and the Media Strategy of the Judiciary (2016) are the main strategic documents that introduce uniform standards, communication channels and Instruments by which the authorities of the Judicial System can ensure transparency in public communication while respecting the laws of the Republic of Bulgaria without prejudice to the rights of persons involved in different proceedings. The Handbook and the Unified Media Strategy regulate the practical aspects of the media's communication with the media. These documents identify all communication channels for information provided by the court, as well as any communication tools that authorized officers and judges can serve.

Czech Republic - No.

Estonia - We have general recommendations but no concrete regulation. The main references come from the law. But we are working on better regulation.

Finland - Decree on the Openness of Government Activities and on Good Practice in Information Management and Guidelines for government strategic communications may be applied to the extend they are applicable for the work in the court. I ex in the decree mentioned above, it is said that the purpose of information, publishing and other communication by the courts is to promote openness and produce and distribute information that provides individuals and corporations with opportunities to formulate as true a picture as possible of the activity of the authorities, to influence matters of general importance that are pending before the administrative authorities, and to protect their interests and rights. The guidelines emphasize the importance of intelligibility of communications, the role of media as a mediator and interpreter of the authoritative information. According to the guidelines, the communications should be active, open and equal. Decree on the Openness of Government Activities and on Good Practice in Information Management and Guidelines for government strategic communications may be applied to the extend they are applicable for the work in the court. I e.g. in the decree mentioned above, it is said that the purpose of information, publishing and other communication by the courts is to promote openness and produce and distribute information that provides individuals and corporations with opportunities to formulate as true a picture as possible of the activity of the authorities, to influence matters of general importance that are pending before the administrative authorities, and to protect their interests and rights. The guidelines emphasize the importance of intelligibility of communications, the role of media as a mediator and interpreter of the authoritative information. According to the guidelines, the communications should be active, open and equal. There is also a decree on publicity in general courts, but it does not take stand on press-communication, but instead on the publicity of the documents, the personal information, and the judgement.

Hungary - In every Tribunal there are 1-3 spokesperson. The Order of the President of the National Office for the Judiciary (NJO) No. 8/2012 on the press relations of the courts and the NJO and the central website of the judiciary establishes clarity as a general principle in communication, as well as the clarity of handouts. The Order of the President of the Curia No. 1/2012 regulates the press communication of the Curia and enables the spokespersons to request a short summary of a particular decision from the judge.

Macedonia - No.

Montenegro - not right now

Netherlands - Press guidelines. We have press guidelines

Portugal - No, but the CSM has a communication plan. We do have regulation concerning the communication of the Judicial Council. The Courts communicate by the Court President.

Romania - Yes. We have a guideline. Yes we have. There are rules and guidelines concerning the clarity of judicial press-communication and they are established by the Superior Council of Magistrature. Yes, regulations have been passed.

Serbia - No.

Slovenia - No.

Turkey - The Circular No. 153 of the General Directorate of Penal Affairs of the Ministry of Justice (concerning Press Agency and Media Communication Bureaus) is a detailed regulation on the relationship between court and the press.

Ukraine - no

3. Do they communicate mostly in written or oral form?

Albania - Mostly in written form

Bosnia and Herzegovina - They communicate in both of those forms. Communication is mainly done in writing.

Bulgaria - Communication takes place in both forms Public Relations officers, Prosecutors' speakers, and judges who are authorized to perform such functions provide information to the media in writing and orally. Writing - through e-communication - e-mail, by publishing information (press releases, news, etc.) on the websites of the courts and prosecution offices. Oral - by phone or live answer with media representatives, press conferences, briefings, workshops and discussions.

Czech Republic - It depends on the type of media – writing journalists are more sending emails, tv reporters are more calling

Estonia - Press is communicating mostly in written. But there are certain journalists who prefer oral form.

Finland - Contacts from representatives of media are received via phone and/or e-mail, often depending on the urgency of the issue. Contacts from representatives of media are received via phone and/or e-mail, often depending on the urgency of the issue.

Hungary - They communicate mostly in written forms. Both. We publish press releases in written form. We always ask journalists to send their questions first by e-mail, then we try to answer them. Nevertheless, oral form is also important. If requested, we also publish informative videos and audio materials on the website related to a particular decision. Spokespersons of the Curia often give interviews to newspapers and electronic media.

Macedonia - They communicate in both forms, as our Court is quite open to the media and the press. Either way, we always tend to provide exact and clear information, but always taking care to not disclose sensitive information that can affect the procedures or the parties.

Montenegro - Written form.

Netherlands - both. The press judges mostly communicate in oral form.

Portugal - Both, depending the issue and the case. Mostly in written

Romania - Mostly in written form. Written mostly. Mostly in written form. Mostly in oral form, but the difference is not great.

Serbia - In both forms and depend on type of media.

Slovenia - Our president mostly communicate in written form, sometimes oral.

Turkey - It is impossible to generalize. The technic, written or oral, depends on the nature of the subject. According to the related Circular No. 153 of the Ministry of Justice, written statements can be made when it is beneficial and necessary to enlighten the public while oral press statements can be made in urgent emergency situations.

Ukraine - the same

4. How much emphasis is put on the clarity of communication? In which type of press releases do you find it exceptionally important regarding the subject?

Albania - A great emphasis is put on court's communications so that they could be precise and easily understood by the public. Clarity of communication is exceptionally important, if the press release has to do with the adjudication of court cases of public importance. If the cases concerns sensible subjects the courts communication should take notice on not disclosing in the media of highly intimate details of private life of the persons taking part in the courts proceedings.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - We put a lot of emphasis on the clarity in communication. Specially when we work at subject which has implications for society. Communication with the media must be in accordance with the Code of Judicial Ethics and the Freedom of Access to Information Act. The media can get acquainted with the proceedings until their termination, and with their personal presence at the hearings, appreciating the principle of the public's conduct, except where it is excluded by law or when acting by a judge determines for one part of the proceedings.

Bulgaria - Undoubtedly, individual press releases help clarify court case law in individual cases. In this way the public is informed about the activity of the magistrate. Strategic documents defining communications in the judiciary authorities explicitly state that IP experts and spokespersons of the judiciary must be well trained, aware of the organization and functions of the institution they represent, the activity and specific characteristics of each department in the judiciary; to have the necessary capacity and capabilities to present in a clear, accessible and understandable way the information about the institution's activities and to adapt the legal expression in a language that is understandable to the public, as well as being able to understand and sometimes anticipate the expectations of the representatives of the media and the possible consequences of the statements.

Czech Republic - I put a lot of emphasis on the clarity of communication. In contacts with the tabloid journalists.

Estonia - If we have very important information or decision with a great public interest then we always do press release. At the moment, we are also working to ensure that there is always a speaker of the judge who explains important decisions.

Finland - All communications are conducted as clearly as possible in order to avoid misunderstandings. Press releases are mainly published when a decision has societal, regional or other importance, the matter has previously been subject to media or other interest or if it is expected to raise interest. All communications are conducted as clearly as possible in order to avoid misunderstandings. To my mind, the most important it is with cases of high media-interest and with judicially difficult cases in order to avoid misunderstandings. Press releases are mainly published when a decision has societal, regional or other importance, the matter has previously been subject to media or other interest or if it is expected to raise interest.

Hungary - In cases of media attention the press releases are exceptionally important. The Press Department strives to draft all press releases in an understandable manner. Press releases concerning decisions of the Curia are drafted by the head of the judicial panel who heard the case. The clarity of communication is crucial in cases heightening public attention (e.g. a serious crime, politicians involved in the case, considerable social impact of the decision etc.), so any press release concerning such a case must be cautiously discussed with the judge before being published.

Macedonia - We always care to provide clear and substantive information to the press, in order to inform the public with the correct info, as much as the specific case allows. I think that clarity of communication to the press is equally important no matter of the type of the press release.

Montenegro - Very much because public relations is the responsibility of the president of the court. I think that the press conference is the best way to communicate because it provides direct contact with more journalists. Great emphasis. By publishing all final judgments on the court's website.

Netherlands - Much emphasis is put on the clarity of communication. I am not sure what is meant by the second question.

Portugal - The clarity is exceptionally important in press releases concerning public figures and children. The emphasis has been increasing in the last years. The Court Presidents have access to training with journalists. Clarity is particularly important in press releases regarding criminal cases. On one hand the communication cannot offend the case secret and the rights of the Defendant. On the other hand the silence of the official sources tends to give room for breaches of information.

Romania - Fortunately, the press usually is interested in scandalous events. It is very important to present the issues in an impartial way. Every press release is important, either in written or oral form, because it affects the public image of the court. Clarity is extremely important. We have to make sure that information can not be interpreted. The press releases regarding cases involving sexual crimes and corruption are always the sensitive ones. As said before, the clarity in communication has to be ensured, in order for the general public to be informed accordingly on the topics in matter. In the press releases that concern political personalities a delicate approach is needed in order to avoid interference in political activity by the judiciary system.

Serbia - Clarity of communication is most important. Press releases in all forms are important regarding the subject and depend on type of media.

Turkey - Relationship between court and the press is of utmost importance in terms of ensuring transparency and public confidence. Therefore, the clarity of communication is generally so important in every case. However, a greater attention could be necessary in terms of clarity in some specific cases. For instance, while making a statement due to a judicial case, not violating principles such as "presumption of innocence" and "the right against self-incrimination" may require special attention.

5. Are handouts made for the press-representatives to help their work? If yes, in what way and in what subjects?

Albania - No.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - We don't have any handouts. Such content is largely conceived through the Web site of the court, as well as brochures that are made available through the court advertising court and info-pulp.

Bulgaria - The main communication tools used to provide information in the Bulgarian court are:1. Presentations - the public document by which the court places a particular topic in the public space through the media or informs about a general / concrete situation of the current activity of the institution of public interest. The style of the message should be clear, with the shortest possible phrases, the public interest information should be presented in an accessible, understandable language, avoiding specific legal terminology or professional jargon;2. Statement of the media - may be of a pre-eminent nature (presentation of events of interest which are to be held under the aegis of the institution) or explanatory (presentation of events that have already taken place or are under way within the Of ???the institution, or may have a direct impact on its activities, including its reputation in the eyes of the public).3. Right of reply and clarification to correct and supplement the information provided to the public. The explanation is of a punctual nature, a fact that classifies it in the category of the right of rectification with all the resulting consequences.4. Press conference - for a specific informational occasion - news.5. Briefing - An attractive form (especially for electronic media) for presenting a specific work of the institution. It ensures the minimum necessary standard of transparency and publicity in the activity of the institution.6. Court web site - to provide a broad palette of static and dynamic information useful to users of forensic services. Internet pages provide citizens with the opportunity to enrich their legal culture and use links to other useful sites.7. Interviews and participation in radio and TV shows - to create a realistic public image of the institution. The authoritative presence of a court / prosecutor's representative in the media is a prerequisite for raising public confidence in the work of the judiciary.8. Informal personal contacts with journalists. Phone conversations - provide an opportunity to enrich their legal culture and are prerequisites for creating more credible, better-sourced materials from the point of view of legal norms and legal terminology.

Czech Republic - Yes, I give them a printed press release in the courtroom or some materials before a press conference or briefing.

Estonia - We do not have handouts for the press-representatives.

Finland - The representatives of media are either shared press releases, abstracts of decisions or decisions as such. The most common subject of these are the decisions made in the administrative court. The representatives of media are shared press releases and judgements as such. Sometimes, even a special handout containing e.g. basics of the case is gathered and delivered. This concerns e.g. large-scale cases with several defendants, which also have high media interest.

Hungary - The Head of the Tribunal organizes a conference with a written handout yearly about the work of the organization. Yes, we give handouts at press conferences in order to promote the preciseness of press reports. Handouts are often sent in advance by email. Digital handouts often include images, charts, or multimedia content.

Macedonia - Yes, there are certain guidelines that were provided from an international project few years ago.

Montenegro - They are somewhat. By organizing representatives of frontiers and journalists with judicial authorities.

Netherlands - See question 1. If deemed necessary or useful for “getting the message across” the judgement can be accompanied with a press release explaining the judgement in layman’s terms.

Portugal - Not in my court. There has been some handouts in criminal cases in order to explain some more complex situations.

Romania - I do not think they are wery helpfull. Yes. there are brochures for public relations and how to manage to control, or influence people's perceptions. There are no handouts made for the press-representatives There are not handouts made for press-representatives, but if requested, they may be informed (if possible) about the aspects that present interest.

Serbia - No. But mutual open and correct cooperation is necessary.

Slovenia - No.

Turkey - Press releases including important information for previously planned activities are distributed to all press-representatives. Moreover, the press-representatives are also provided with related brochures, booklets or other informative materials.

6. Do you receive any feedback from the media on the clarity of your press-releases?

Albania - No.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - We don't receive feedback from the media. Given that at the member's Court, there are no additional sub-questions from the media believe that they are correct and understandable enough for them.

Bulgaria - There is no such practice in Bulgaria Maintaining a feedback channel is a mandatory element of court communication with the media. The SJC delivers daily monitoring of all publications related to the work and activities of the bodies of the judiciary and its representatives through a deliberately created product. Attention is directed to press publications, audiovisual material from electronic editions in connection with the work of the bodies of the Judicial System, pending cases, the way in which institutions are managed, documentaries on the quality of justice and the work of the judiciary. In cases where the media reflects misinformation of court proceedings, the spokesperson or public relations expert should inform the head of the institution about the work of the judiciary bodies and immediately provide the public with the correct information: The speaker should exercise his right of reply or correction and by asking the media that has posted incorrect information to give a response or to provide clarification or correction of the information and data; This request, together with the reply or correction, is published on the website of the institution concerned.

Czech Republic - Yes, a positive feedback, sometimes they completely issue the original press release.

Estonia - We review the news and feeds to get an overview how much our information is used in media.

Finland - We may receive further questions related to the information shared among the media representatives. The questions are often related to matters that does not directly concern the decision in question. Sometimes. As a finger-rule: when journalists don't call you back, you have succeeded in writing the press release. Press release is clear enough then. Sometimes journalists ask for additional information concerning the case/judgement or the next phase in the procedure.

Hungary - It is not included in my competence, but the organization receives some feedback from the media. Yes, we do. Over and above personal feedbacks, we also proof-read the press releases.

Macedonia - No.

Montenegro - only through commentary in media reports

Netherlands - Yes.

Portugal - Yes. The Judicial High Council has promoted some meetings with press representatives and in those meetings the recent experience on media cases are evaluated.

Romania - No, I don't think so. Yes. Yes we do, and generally it is a positive feedback, considering that the press releases are guided by rules known to the press representatives. They know exactly the limits of such press release. Yes, there is a lot of feedback by the media, especially, when the press-releases concern important aspects of the judiciary.

Serbia - Yes, by verbal direct comments.

Slovenia - No.

Turkey - If there is a need for additional information concerning the press statements made, questions are received by "judicial correspondent". Thereby, it is possible to receive feedback from "judicial correspondents" of media institutions.

Ukraine - sometimes

7. How do you train colleagues who act as contact-persons? (In case of clear speech and clear phrasing)

Albania - The new legislation which is not yet applicable in practice, foresees the duty of the School of Magistrate to train the judge who will act as a contact-person with the media. Actually the contact-person (the civil servant of the Public Communication Office) is instructed by the President of the Court, and the Registrar of the Court by taking in consideration the Civil Code, Criminal Code, the Law No. 119/2014 “On the Right to information” and the Law 9887 dated 10.03.2008 “On Protection of Personal Data” and the order No.6777/5, dated 30.9.2010 “For the Adoption of the Regulation on Court relations with the Public” of the Minister of Justice.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - I help to contact-person by giving informations which public can be informed about. Seminars and expert consultations organized by the Center for Education of Judges and Prosecutors, the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Ministry of Justice of Republika Srpska.

Bulgaria - Communication takes place in writing. The media concerned puts specific questions on a particular case, with the media contact drafting a response message on the questions posed, which are published on the website. The acquisition of communication competence, knowledge and skills is assigned to the National Institute of Justice (NIJ).The NIJ created in 2016 specialized communication training courses. Their inclusion in the compulsory magistrates' professional qualification program ensures the application of uniform standards and sustainability in the implementation of the principles of active communication.The NIJ conducts a training program on communication competence of the judiciary representatives involved in the internal communication process, including administrative heads, public relations officers and judicial administration.The NIJ conducts professional public communication training for magistrates and public relations officers;The NIJ conducts a permanent training program for the judiciary administration, with a particular focus on staff contacted by ????? citizens.The NIJ conducts a training program on the use of new and social media and creating common standards for the use of institutional and ethical rules in the use of personal profiles and social networks in the communication of magistrates and officials of the government;The NIJ implements a program for ongoing crisis communication training for the individual units of the judiciary.

Czech Republic - There are some special trainings by the academy of justice.

Estonia - We have camera training for judges and ohter training for communication with the press.

Finland - The communications officer act as the main contact person towards media representatives. If the information is received from other sources, guidance may be given. The administrative court also has written guidance for other possible media contacts. The communications officer acts as the main contact person towards media representatives concentering the press releases. If journalists seek information from other sources, guidance may be given to the person in question. Our judges don't give oral comments at all.Also, the chief judge is contact person in certain cases, and when needed, the communications officer trains him before he's about to give his statements. We can go through e.g. the foreseeable questions by the media.

Hungary - It is not included in my competence: I'm a district criminal judge. We have leadership training once a year, and we have internal training for the colleagues too.

Macedonia - There are specialized trainings for Courts' spokesmen that are organized by the Academy for judges and public prosecutors.

Montenegro - Contact persons are lawyers who know the work of the court and who attend numerous public relations training. Through professional training.

Netherlands - Training courses by journalists and media experts. Once appointed as a press judge he or she receives a training course, including an on camera training. This course is coordinated by the Council for the Judiciary (the umbrella organization of all courts (except the supreme court)).

Portugal - In Portugal, Judges are not allowed to contact press concerning their cases, so the contact person is always the President of the Court or the Coordinator Judge, so we do not prepare the other judges. The training takes place with jornalists and reporters. We also have shared some drafts of press releases and have a support department in the Judicial High Council.

Romania - I am not a trainer. We study the specific guidelines and eventually search the internet for other information They attend special seminars where they are instructed. There are also guide books for spokesman. As have been pointed before, seminars and conferences take place, focusing on the clarity in court press communication

Serbia - We are trying to transfer our experience and knowledge to them.

Slovenia - There is not enough training/education of contact persons.

Turkey - A judicial member is nominated to each courthouse as "press agent". Their trainings are given by the Ministry of Justice.

Ukraine - Yes, we conduct trainings for the judges-speaker. Trainings include training for behavior. front of the camera, clarity of statements.

8. How do you prepare judges if their case is challenging for the public? Do they have special trainings or guidelines regarding the clarity of the oral reasoning of their judgement in front of the press?

Albania - The judges are not allowed to talk to the media regarding the cases which are currently ongoing. The national laws and the above mentioned Regulation on Court Relations with the Public provide guidelines to prepare the President of the Court, the individual judge and the Public Communication Office in giving information to the public.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - Our judges don't give oral reasoning of their judgement in front of the press. We communicate with public only by contact-person. The judges do not give statements to the media or publicly explain their decisions while respecting the code of ethics in their work, and information about the same media is obtained from public relations officers.

Bulgaria - No special training is being carried out. In such cases, the particular judge chooses what part of the case to disclose by making judgments depending on the case. In this activity, the judge is assisted by the court's press officer. As stated above, the NIJ implements a program of ongoing crisis communication training for the individual units of the judiciary. This training is related to the practical provision of knowledge for action in specific, crisis situations. In the framework of the training we study: Anatomy of Crisis Communication, Creating a Crisis Communication Plan and a Crisis Response Team, Types (categories) of crises, Managing the different categories of crises - general and specific rules, Communication with the media during a crisis, Rules of behavior when guilty, rules of conduct when we are innocent.

Czech Republic - Most of them are very well prepared from the past.

Estonia - With camera training and we talk about the topic. Also helps talking with colleagues. We do want to make special trainings in the future.

Finland - Most of the decisions of the administrative court are made in written proceedings in a composition of two or three judges. The decision including argumentation, is also given in written format. Due to ineligibility and autonomy reasons the general policy has been that the court does not orally comment its own decisions. However, if it can be noticed that the contents of a decision is not understood correctly, the contents of the decision can be clarified to the person in question. In exceptional cases, chief judge may give a statement if necessary. The communications officer does not take stand on writing the judgements. The judgements are in larger and judicially demanding cases given in written format. Judges don't comment on their decisions orally apart from that written decision. Due to ineligibility and autonomy reasons the general policy has been that the court does not orally comment its own decisions afterwards. However, if it can be noticed that the contents of a decision is not understood correctly, the contents of the decision can be clarified to the person in question. In exceptional cases, chief judge may give a statement or give a press conference if necessary.

Hungary - 8. The judges had only a one-day lecture about the oral reasoning in front of the press - until now. The Curia organizes a leadership training once a year, while the Press Department offers pre-interview consultations for judges.

Macedonia - The judges are always aware themselves of the public interest in a specific case that they are dealing with. There are no special trainings or guidelines on the clarity of oral reasoning in front of the press. Usually, the judge who is the Court's spokesman orally briefs the press about a certain judgement after it has been delivered by another judge, and the spokesman is usually trained for this kind of communication.

Montenegro - Informing the public of the case that is challenging for the public is never within the competence of a judge, but of a person that is in charge of public relations. Judges rarely appear in public, facts relating to the decision-making in a case or the decision itself are published through an authorized person for public relations and through the official website of the court.

Netherlands - Yes, training by media experts. Criminal cases in particular often generate great media interest and some lawyers are highly adept at bringing cases to the attention of a wider public, presented of course from the perspective of their client (be it the suspect or the victim). If this publicity is not sufficiently balanced by information from a neutral source, this can result in skewed media coverage. Large sections of the population may then misunderstand or fail to comprehend judicial decisions. This can be prevented (or at least we can try to prevent it) by issuing press releases and by being present at the hearings so that the media can be briefed or can ask questions. To make our colleagues aware of the fact that the coverage of the hearings sets the scene, and that the impressions they make can highly influence the way the hearing is covered and commented on, the press judges in the Court of Limburg provide a media training to the judges in the Court of Limburg. We do this together with the communication advisors of the court and in collaboration with a former journalist (with a degree in law) who now has become a professional media advisor. In this training we focus on how to deal with the interest of the press and public at the hearing and at the passing of the judgement. We stress the importance of avoiding legal jargon if possible, the importance of the rule “do what you say and say what you do” and, with the professional media advisor we explore what it does to you when you have a television camera pointing at you and how you come across on television. We also go into what the judges can do when a media-sensitive case arises. When such a case arises, the judge or judges that have to try it, can ask the Communications Department of the court or the press judges if the hearing at hand is already communicated to the press by the Public Prosecution Department and a press strategy can then be worked out. Often the strategy will be “wait and see”, but sometimes it is preferable to be more active or even to be proactive. It can be discussed whether or not a press judge should be on standby, or be present at the hearing (and that thus room in his schedule has to be made) and (and in that way proactive) if a press release should be issued beforehand. Proactive communications saves the Communications Department a lot of work and gives the opportunity to bring certain points to the attention of the media before the hearing takes place. These points must, of course not hold provisional opinions or preliminary assessments, but can consist of, for example, a brief explanation of the case (who is suspected of what) or an explanation of certain judicial or legal issues (when can somebody be taken in pre-trial detention?) Also questions like is the hearing open to the public, can be answered, which can save a lot of phone-calls to the Communications Department. As a rule we restrict proactive communications to cases that are already known to the press and have already been in the news. But still, if this is the case, we must always ask ourselves why do we want to communicate proactive and what impression can it make? Why is this case so rare that it calls for proactive communication? Can it mean that, if we communicate proactive, the court will be suspected of non-judicial motives by bringing this case to the notion of the press and the public? Above all we must not invite suspicion of improper motives on ourselves. The judicial impartiality should always be beyond all doubt!

Portugal - No, we do not have those guidelines. There is no specific training.

Romania - It is very important to follow the procedure and to remain impartial in any circumstance. No. We do not have special training in this matter. The judges do not address the press and do not give oral reasoning of their judgement in front of the press. The judges don't have to prepare especially on this matter, because the motives on which they rule the case, are explained extensively, in the written decision; furthermore, the most of the trials are public, so anyone who is interested in the way a case is ruled (including the press), may attend to the trial. So, the judges don't have particular training in regarding the clarity of the oral reasoning of their judgement in

front of press, but there are some guidelines that judges have to comply to, regarding the way they communicate with the media.

Serbia - Judges are communicating with public through the PR person, other communication is forbidden. They don't have special training or guidelines regarding the clarity of the oral reasoning of their judgment in front of the press.

Slovenia - The judges are not prepared, if their case is challenging for the public.

Turkey - Information concerning statement is made in what cases by which judicial member is prescribed under the Circular No. 153. The following points are prescribed by this Circular: 'aa) statements in the phase of investigations shall be made by the Assize Court chief Public prosecutor or deputy chief Public prosecutor or Public prosecutor nominated by the chief Public prosecutor, statements made by the deputy chief Public prosecutor or Public prosecutor shall be within the knowledge and consent of the chief Public prosecutor, bb) statements shall be made by the Regional Court of Justice chief Public prosecutor or a Public prosecutor nominated by him/her in the investigations carried out by the chief Public prosecutor's Office of the Regional Court of Justice, statements made by the Public prosecutor shall be within the knowledge and consent of the chief Public prosecutor, cc) for cases and proceedings in phase of prosecution or being subject to trial, statements shall be made by the president of the justice commission of first instance court for jurisdiction, çç) for cases and proceedings being subjected to the appeal review in the regional court of justice or heard in the capacity of the court of first instance, statements shall be made by the president of the regional court of justice, dd) for cases and proceedings being subjected to a case or appeal in the administrative court of first instance and regional administrative courts, statements shall be made by the president of the regional administrative court.

Ukraine - yes.

9. Are handouts available to help judges regarding clear phrasing in case of a press-release?

Albania - No.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - We don't have handouts. According to the Law in the Courts of the RS and the Rules of this Court there are clear ways of communicating with the media and they are used without major changes for a longer period of time.

Bulgaria - No such leaflets are available, if necessary, by the help of the press officer. Apart from the forms of practical training during seminars organized by the NIJ for acquiring communication competence, all strategic documents that regulate the court's specific communication with the media are provided to employees and judges who are appointed or authorized to provide information. They include detailed and precise guidelines and uniform standards for the preparation of messages intended for distribution through the media, the requirements for their content, as well as the legal restrictions when such are available.

Czech Republic - No.

Estonia - No we do not have handouts available to help judges with clear phrasing in case of a press-release. Our press-representatives help to do that based on their experience.

Finland - Guidelines regarding press releases are not done, as these are usually written by the communications officer. Guidelines regarding press releases are not done, as these are usually written by the communications officer. Some general points concerning what is important to state in the press release are given though, if needed.

Hungary - I didn't meet such handouts until now. Yes. The Order of the President No. 1/2012 (available on the intranet of the Curia) instructs the judge to sum up the facts of the case (inasmuch as it was necessary for the decision of the Curia), the tenor of the decision, as well as the main points of the reasoning part. Besides that, the Press Department also provides assistance for judges.

Macedonia - No. According to our national Law on Courts, the contact with the public, including the press and media can be made only through the President of the Court or the spokesman-judge. That is why other judges do not brief the media for their own cases. Normally, in a specific situation, the judge who had the case can also be included to the press briefing.

Montenegro - not right now. The previous answer also applies to this question. Materials are not necessary.

Netherlands - Yes, mostly written by the Judge..

Portugal - No. Yes, for Court Presidents

Romania - Yes, they help me to organize my ideas and to make sure I don't forget anything. Yes. Each Court of Appeal has a specialist in public relation, and every time I need to, I seek advice from her. There are guide books for spokesman regarding this matter. In such a case, handouts may be drafted.

Serbia - No. Handouts are available only to PRs.

Slovenia - No. But press releases are not written by judges themselves.

Turkey - Press agents can benefit from training materials they received during their trainings.