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# ALBANIAN HELSINKI COMMITTEE

## BULLETIN

NR. 5

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2018

## Legal clinic

### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF HUMAN RIGHTS

On the International Day of Human Rights, we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The statement represents the first global effort to articulate the protection of those rights many people believed were fundamental rights to all human beings.

Today, non-respect of citizens' rights continues to be a widespread problem in all parts of the globe, including our country. We appreciate that youth participation is a value to be promoted and constitutes one of the guiding principles of the Declaration. Against these values, we note with concern that a part of young people continue to leave Albania towards EU countries for a better future. For more information click on the link: [ARTICLE](#)



### ADMINISTRATIVE COURT OF THE FIRST LEVEL OF TIRANA APPROVED THE DECISION OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR PROTECTION FROM DISCRIMINATION



On 19 November 2018, the Tirana First Instance Administrative Court stated positively by leaving the Commissioner's Decision on Protection from Discrimination in force. Through this decision-making, initiated by a complaint lodged by the Albanian Helsinki Committee, it is noted the discrimination of prisoners working in the prison system, to whom the same practice as regards the recognition of work and the related remuneration is not applied. This issue is represented in the framework of the initiative "Improving the human rights situation in Albania by strengthening the rule of law - Legal Clinic XII, which is funded financially by Civil Rights Defenders. [ARTICLE](#)

### CHANGES IN THE ELECTION CODE ON THE BASIS OF THE OSCE / ODIHR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC) expresses its concern that the Assembly's calendar for the period 3 December - 21 December 2018 did not foresee anything to discuss or approve changes to the Electoral Code on the basis of OSCE / ODIHR recommendations.

It seems that the statements made that changes to the Electoral Code would be approved within December of this year will not be realized.

AH in light of the negative experience of the 2017 election, when no change was made in the Electoral Code and the difficulties that were created in this case, calls on the majority and the opposition to maximally assess this issue with dialogue, transparency and consensus .

## SIGNAL CORRUPT ACTS

LEGISLATION FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS PROTECTS YOU, AHC OFFERS LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR EVERYONE WHO IS IN THE POSITION OF WHISTLEBLOWER



Silence and indifference creates a healthy ground for corruption and abuse of office, which in one way or another directly affect everyone's life. You can see how it works or applies for a new job as soon as a corruption practice is practiced. Whistleblower is a civic reaction through which refusal to comply with corruptive actions. The law guarantees a rapid and credible administrative investigation procedure, based on the principle of maintaining the confidentiality of information and state secrecy. For more information click on the link: [ARTICLE](#)

## REFLECTION ON STUDENT PROTESTS



For nearly two weeks, public university students have had ongoing protests about the issues they face in pursuing higher education and have demanded the completion of eight recommendations to state authorities. The Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC) has followed the protest not only through the media, but since the early days of this protest has repeatedly called for meetings with a student representation to know more closely about their demands and to discussed AHC's contribution to these demands. But despite the contacts with different students and organizers, our meeting request has not been considered so far. For more information click on the link: [ARTICLE](#)

## 5% FOR THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE!



Civil society organizations through this public statement want to express their support for the student's demand for increasing the education budget in Albania at 5% of gross domestic product (GDP).

Albania invests only 3.3% of GDP on education, far from international and regional standards. This low investment rate undermines the rights of children and young people to provide free, quality and inclusive public education for all. In revenue-generating countries like Albania, a \$ 1-invested investment in education would generate more than \$ 5 in revenue per country per year. For more information click on the link: [ARTICLE](#)



AHC has been implementing the initiative "Youth Fighting Corruption in Higher Education in Albania" for almost a year, an initiative aimed at preventing and addressing different forms of corruption in the higher education system but at the same time aims at increasing the capacities of students to be the leader of a university culture based on honest success, ability and meritocracy.



The Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC) and the Institute of Political Studies (ISP) with the support of the Open Society Foundation for Albania during 2018 conducted monitoring of the process of vetting judges and prosecutors and public and political discourse on judicial reform. The main findings of the relevant reports for periods until June 2018 (vetting) and August 2018 (discourse) indicate that:

- Justice reform continues to be the main institutional priority in Albania, but progress towards its quality performance, continues to be disproportionate to public expectations and institutional needs.
- The new legal framework of justice is not yet being implemented.
- The current balance of vetting process is positive, but still insufficient to achieve results of reform and reflection on the new system..... For more information click on the link: [ARTICLE](#)



The Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC) has consistently shared the findings of monitoring hearings with judges and prosecutors who are subject to the vetting. Public co-operation and transparency of the process towards the public is one of the most important components of vetting. AHC invites you to get acquainted with the AHC observer monitoring schedules for re-evaluation subjects from November 2018 and onwards. Click the link below to see the preliminary findings.

## JUSTICE REFORM – VETTING OF JUDGES AND PROSECUTORS

This monitoring is carried out within the framework of the project "To Increase Transparency, Inclusion and Accountability in the Vetting Process" - a project funded by the Foundation for Open Society Albania (OSFA) and implemented by the Albanian Helsinki Committee.

## ON THE SITUATION OF RESPECTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS IN ALBANIA DURING 2018



During 2018, the Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC) has focused its activities on important areas such as the implementation of justice reform, access to justice for vulnerable groups, respect for human rights in penitentiary institutions, police commissariats, hospitals psychiatric, border crossing points and asylum seekers centers, prevention and fight against violent extremism and discrimination, promotion of free media, transparency and good governance of institutions, environmental protection, etc.

AHC has conducted frequent monitoring, has undertaken awareness raising campaigns and legal education, has reacted publicly to cases of flagrant violations, communicated with state institutions with requests for information and addressed concrete recommendations, provided free legal services to vulnerable groups, such as and has represented issues of public interest in the Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights. The process of vetting judges and prosecutors, although accompanied by some delays, has raised high interest in the public. Citizens have followed a considerable number of complaints to the vetting bodies, but in no case does it appear that they have requested the status of a justice collaborator. For more information click on the link: [ARTICLE](#)



# VULNERABLE GROUPS



## Real consultation required and hearings with the residents of “UNAZA E RE” (Area of Astir)

AHC has been recognized and followed the protests by residents of the Astir area of the city of Tirana, whose homes have been demolished as a result of the implementation of the New Ring Road Project. A representative of the Albanian Helsinki Committee held a meeting yesterday, with some of the residents of this area protesting their rights.

AHC assesses infrastructure projects that serve to improve the quality of road transport and citizen life in the city of Tirana. Although such projects may serve the public interest, AHC estimates that the state should test all rights fairly. For more information click on: [ARTICLE](#)

## INCIDENTS IN BULARAT



The Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC), whose mission has been and remains to respect the freedoms and rights of citizens, including those of national minorities, expresses its indignation deeply and strongly condemns what happened today in Bularat. A group of people from Greece used the citizenship ceremony of the citizen Kostandin Kacifa, turning it into a tense event, expressing hate speech to the Albanian people through nationalist banners, and legally. Such performances belonging to the distant past have nothing in common with the good neighborly relations between the Albanian people and the Greek people, as well as European standards, to live in peace, democracy and stability. For more information click on: [ARTICLE](#)

## ALBANIAN AUTHORITIES ORDERED TO OFFER PURE WATER FOR COLOURED PERSONS AFTER THE CASE OF DISCRIMINATION

Tirana, Budapest December 10, 2018: A Roma community in Fushë-Kruja, Albania, has won a case before the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination after opposing the local municipality for refusing to provide clean drinking water and sanitation. The commissioner found that the Municipality of Kruja had discriminated against Roma families living in the Kastriot neighbourhood based on their ethnicity and socio-economic status and ordered the municipality to take immediate measures to correct the situation or face a fine. The case was sent to the Commissioner of the Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC), with the support of the European Roma Rights Center (ERRC), which provided evidence on the ethnic division of access to water in Albania.: [ARTICLE](#)

## Notification to the members of the Tirana City Council not to approve some points of the draft decision on “Territorial Control and determination of some administrative offenses and the sanction imposed on them in the Municipality of Tirana”



Dear Madam / Sirs Councillors of the City Council Tirana,  
We address you publicly and urgently to express our concern about a few items of the proposed articles in the draft decision "On Territorial Control and the determination of some administrative offenses and the sanction imposed on them in the Municipality of Tirana." We as organizations of civil society, we are of the opinion that all the good intentions the drafters of this draft decision may have had in order to improve the living aspects of the capital, some amendments are contrary to international standards and human rights and we ask you not to approve them. For more information click on the link: [ARTICLE](#)

This bulletin was prepared in the framework of the project "Improving the Human Rights Situation in Albania through Strengthening the Rule of Law - Legal Clinic XII", implemented by the Albanian Helsinki Committee and supported financially by the Civil Rights Defenders organization, The Government of the Swedish Kingdom.



The content of this bulletin is the full responsibility of the Albanian Helsinki Committee and does not reflect the attitude of the Swedish Government or the Civil Rights Defenders organization.

The findings and issues published in this newsletter were provided by: Civil Rights Defenders, Open Society Foundation for Albania, US Embassy in Albania, European Commission, Open Society Institute - Budapest, Embassy of the Netherlands in Albania, Embassy of the United States United Kingdom, ERRC European Roma Right Community, Dutch Helsinki Committee, Bank Watch etc.

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