

# ELECTIONS

## UNDER THE MAGNIFYING GLASS

38

days  
until the  
elections



human  
rights  
violations

**DATE: 24/02/2022**

*The Three Freedoms Platform will monitor and record all irregularities in public information and the election process on a daily basis, and send its reports to the international community and the interested public.*

### **The Theater from Vranje Sued the now Deceased Editor and Actor**

The "Bora Stankovic" Theater in Vranje sued the editor-in-chief of [Infovranjske.rs](#), but also the actor in this theater, Sasa Stojkovic, who passed away 2 months ago. As it was announced from this portal, they consider the lawsuit an attempt to intimidate the independent media in this city. In support of this claim, they cite the fact that the lawsuit could have been sent more than a year earlier, while Stojkovic was still working at the Theater, and that sending the lawsuit at this moment after his death represents pressure on the media he edited. Although the lawsuit was addressed to Stojkovic, the court summoned his wife, although there were no claims because in the previous court procedure it was decided that Stojkovic be returned to work and that there are no debts on his part. This portal states that it is not possible that Stojkovic's turn to be sued has just come, but that it represents a clear message and warning before the upcoming elections.

### **Weekly Newspaper Vreme Convicted for an Article on A Doctoral Dissertation**

The High Court in Belgrade passed a verdict by which the weekly newspaper Vreme, its published, the editor Filip Svarm and the journalist Nemanja Rujevic are obliged to pay 80,000 dinars to the director of the "Official Gazette" Jelena Trivan, for damaging her honor and reputation, and inflicting mental pain. The verdict refers to the text published in Vreme in 2019, which analyzes Jelena Trivan's doctoral dissertation. The explanation of the verdict states that "the rights of the plaintiff's personality, her honor and reputation have been violated" because the information in the text is "untrue and objectively offensive".

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The court says that the analysis of the doctoral dissertation was done by a person who "does not have the necessary professional knowledge". It is stated that the allegations made are such that "they can provoke a negative assessment of the plaintiff from the average reader". The text states that Trivan, without citing sources, "copied at least 15 percent of her doctoral dissertation, from copies from unverified forums and Wikipedia, from Matica Srpska publications and Bosko Obradovic's books published by Dveri", and the Court sees this as "incorrect" information written with the intention of "creating a negative opinion about her personality". The court states that the defense did not submit evidence by the Ethics Commission, and recalls that the Ethics Commission of the Faculty of Philology rejected Bosko Obradovic's request to determine Jelena Trivan's non-academic behavior. The court did not consider the request to control the doctoral dissertation, because it is considered incompetent to check whether a paper is plagiarized or not.

### **Two thirds of the Journalist's Pension Confiscated in Court Procedure**

**According to an order of the Public Enforcement Officer, journalist Miroslav Jovanovic will be denied two thirds of the his pension amount in the future due to debts according to the lawsuit of the former newspaper "Svetlost".**

Jovanovic states that this paper, which was shut down in 2011, was faced with dozens of lawsuits during the 1990s and 2000s. All but three of the lawsuits were dismissed. Jovanovic claims that draconian sentences were handed down to them and that the judges in these trials did not know much about media law and freedom of expression, stating that far smaller amounts were handed down for similar cases in Belgrade. He states that "Svetlost" paid all the fines and that it did not ask the editors or journalists for any money. However, the change came in 2007, when the ownership changed. After financial difficulties and non-payment of salaries to employees, the editorial office founded a new "Kragujevac" newspaper in 2009, and in the same year Jovanovic received a lawsuit from "Svetlost" to take part in costs for already paid fines. He states that only he is sued, but not others. Following the verdict of the Basic Court in Kragujevac, the Court of Appeals rejected the appeal on the basis of which Jovanovic tried to prove that according to the law, employees compensate for damage caused "with intent and gross negligence", which did not happen in his case. condemn the verdict.

