

ASSESSING THE RISK OF ISOLATION OF SUSPECTS AND ACCUSED: THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA



OVERVIEW:

The ARISA-2 project

[The ARISA-2 project \(Assessing the Risk of Isolation of Suspects and Accused: The Role of the Media\)](#) is aiming to enhance the presumption of innocence in criminal proceedings and minimise, as much as possible, the negative impact of investigations on the lives of suspects and accused.

- Case Studies
- News and Resources

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Case studies

The ARISA team examined twelve criminal cases from Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Spain. Focusing on several different aspects, including the applicable law, the disclosure of information by public authorities, and review of the media coverage on each case, the aim was to demonstrate the impact of media on the lives of suspects and accused and their right to privacy and fair trial.

The collection of case studies illustrated the that suspects and accused's rights are not always respected as personal information such as their nationality, ethnic origins, social status or other characteristics are revealed. Although it does

not necessarily contribute to resolving the case, personal information become the highlight in many media publications. Moreover, cases of serious crimes or high profile cases receive significantly broader media attention and the implications are even greater in the long term, usually causing negative impact even on family members and close ones.

One of the gravest issues identified was that the presumption of innocence is frequently violated. References to guilt before conviction, media publications generating hatred and emotional public reactions are common while regulations remain insufficient to protect the rights of



suspects and accused.

Evidently, even if suspects and accused were acquitted, they could continue experiencing the 'verdict' of defamation and struggle to go back to their normal lives.

Find all case studies

Bulgaria

[The Sotirya murder](#)

[The car accident in which journalist Milen Tsvetkov died](#)

[Spas from Kocherinovo fraud case](#)

Greece

[Professor 'fakelakis'](#)

[The murder of Manolis Kantaris at Athens city center](#)

[Katerina, one of the cases of HIV positive women](#)

Italy

[The murder of Pamela Mastropietro](#)

[The murder of Antonino Barbaro](#)

[Institutional communication in raids](#)

Spain

[The "Herd"](#)

[The "Process"](#)

[Gabriel Cruz Case](#)



Man appeals conviction of indecent assault of child, citing adverse media coverage

In Irish Court of Appeal decides on whether or not the adverse coverage of Stephen “Rossi” Walsh case on the day before his trial could mean his right to a fair trial was impaired. The counsel for the appellant said that one of the grounds for appealing the conviction was that Walsh featured in articles in the newspapers on the day before his trial began and an article was headlined: “Rossi raped girl on beach, now she’s got justice”.

Media in Singapore to go on publishing names of the accused involved in court proceedings unless the court prohibits it

After a series of questions discussed in the Parliament on how press reports of ongoing trials of sex crimes are regulated and what protection exists for medical professionals whose reputations are affected by media coverage of such cases, The Law and Home Affairs Ministry made an assessment on whether accused persons should be granted anonymity until they are convicted. The decision says that media in Singapore can publish the names of the accused involved in ongoing court proceedings, as part of fair and accurate reporting, unless the court prohibits it.



COMING SOON

The upcoming **Case Studies Report** will present the conclusions on the observed repeated features in the twelve case studies in terms of the impact of media publicity on the suspects and accused's personal lives as well as on the court rulings. It will also give recommendations for international standards for disclosure of information and media coverage on criminal proceedings to ensure the safeguard of the presumption of innocence.

Available soon on the ARISA website.