



A case initiate regarding norms of Official Language Law

On 4 January 2017 the Constitutional Court initiated case “On Compliance of Section 18(1) and Section 21(1) of Official Language Law with Article 96 of the Satversme of the Republic of Latvia”.

Contested Norms

Section 18(1) of Official Language Law provides that place names in the Republic of Latvia must be created and use thereof must be in the official language. Section 21(1), in turn, provides, *inter alia*, that this rule is applicable also to private institutions, organisations, undertakings (companies), and self-employed persons, who perform, on the basis of law or other regulatory enactments, specific public functions, if the provision of information is related to the performance of the relevant functions.

Norm of Higher Legal Force

Article 96 of the Satversme: “Everyone has the right to inviolability of his or her private life, home and correspondence.”

Facts of the Case

The case has been initiated on the basis of Ludmila Rjzanova’s application, which states that she had placed on the immoveable property in her ownership a sign with the number of the building, on which the name of the street had been transcribed not only in the official language, but also in foreign languages – in English and in Russian. Such signs, allegedly, violate Official Language Law, and therefore the applicant had been imposed an administrative penalty.

The applicant holds that the contested norms place disproportional restrictions upon her right to private life and inviolability of home.

Legal Proceedings

The Constitutional Court has requested the Saeima to submit by 6 March 2017 to the Constitutional Court a written reply, presenting the facts of the case and legal substantiation.

The term for preparing the case is 4 June 2017. The Court shall decide on the type of procedure and the date for hearing the case after the case has been prepared.

The press release was prepared with the aim to facilitate understanding cases heard by the Constitutional Court. It shall not be regarded as part of a ruling and is not binding to the Constitutional Court. The judgements, decisions and other information regarding the Constitutional Court are available at the home page of the Constitutional Court www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv.

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