

## **Online course on Freedom of Expression available in Western Balkans languages**

The second edition of the online course on Freedom of expression is now available in Albanian, Bosnian, Macedonian, Montenegrin and Serbian.

The course, initially developed in 2016 by joint European Union and Council of Europe project, has been brought to-date with the latest case-law in this field, become more interactive and visually advanced within the framework of the European Union and Council of Europe joint action: "[Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in South-East Europe \(JUFREX-2\)](#)". The second edition of the online course has been developed by the Council of Europe [Information Society Department](#), in co-operation with the [European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals \(HELP\)](#).

### **Background and aim**

In the context of an effective democracy and respect for human rights as enshrined by the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), freedom of expression is of utmost importance. Without a broad guarantee of the right to freedom of expression protected by independent and impartial courts, there is no democracy.

Within the European human rights protection system, Freedom of Expression is protected under Article 10 of the ECHR. At the same time, freedom of expression can conflict with other rights protected by the ECHR, such as the right to respect for private life, to conscience and religion etc. The conflict may further arise when authorities need to protect the interests or values listed in Article 10, paragraph 2 of the ECHR, such as national security or public health. When such conflict occurs, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) strikes a balance in order to establish the pre-eminence of one right or interest over the other. The balance of the conflicting interests, one of which is Freedom of Expression, takes into account the importance of the latter.

The ECtHR has developed an immense body of case-law in applying Article 10 of the ECHR. In deciding cases which concern freedom of expression, domestic courts are required to apply the standards developed by the ECtHR. In order to do that, they must be well acquainted with the relevant case-law of the ECtHR.

This free online course aims exactly at assisting legal professionals, but also other relevant professionals as well as university students, in understanding the European standards concerning freedom of expression and effectively applying Article 10 of the ECHR at the national level.

### **Course structure**

The course is composed of **4 substantive modules**. The first one provides an introduction to Article 10 of the ECHR and the key principles governing its application. The remaining modules provide an overview of the ECtHR approach when dealing with relevant topics frequently dealt with under Article 10. The overall length of the course is approximately 9 hours.

### **Tutored and Self-learning courses**

JUFREX-2 project partners will be able to implement **tutored courses** on Freedom of Expression - containing information on international standards but also on the SEE region's domestic legislative and institutional frameworks and practices (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, Montenegro,

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North Macedonia and Serbia). These courses will be provided/offered by national training institutions for legal professionals (Judicial Academies, Bar Associations) and Universities in 2021/2022 and used as a tool to supplement traditional educational materials used in legal education, also beyond the project's life time.

Aside from the tutored courses, the **self-learning courses** are now available at the **HELP platform** and in the following languages:

[Albanian](#)

[Bosnian](#)

[Macedonian](#)

[Montenegrin](#)

[Serbian](#)

We invite you to check our Course on Freedom of Expression.  
Enjoy learning!

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*\*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.*