

Active communication of the courts in the field of presentation their decisions in relation to their media coverage

Abstract

The thesis deals with the impact of communication activities of courts on media coverage of their decisions. Its premise is the idea of openness of justice, which can be interpreted as an effort to build and develop active and effective communication of courts with the public. However, the Czech high courts have taken very different approaches to this area, ranging from the open and active communication of the Constitutional Court to the passive and closed attitude of the Supreme Court. The thesis examines, among others, the nature of these differences and their impact on the way the media report on the decisions of the courts.

The first chapter of the thesis attempts to analyse significant aspects of the active and open presentation of courts decisions and introduce its means and tools. It also examines the attitudes of domestic high courts on the issue, through the statements of their spokespersons in response to questions sent by the author.

The second chapter focuses on the relationship between the courts and the media. It discusses its importance in today's society and analyses the pitfalls and risks that arise from it. It also looks at the factors influencing whether the media report on a particular decision and the limits of a judge's speech in relation to the media.

The third and fourth chapter consist of the empirical research, that examines the impact of court's press releases on the form of media coverage of their decisions. It uses a method of analysing available data from years 2019-2022, charting the press releases issued on the decisions and the articles on online news sites that reported on the decisions. The research also includes interviews with journalists from the selected media, who report about judicial decisions.

The final chapter is devoted to a discussion about the results of the research. The thesis comes to conclusion that impact of press releases alone, as the primary source of information for journalists, on the media coverage of judicial decisions is very limited. However, press releases can play an important role in the relationship between the courts and the media, in form of additional source of information and as one of the factors that influence the probability of media coverage of a particular decision.

Keywords: open justice, presentation of court decisions, court and media relationship