

Crime and Punishment or Crime and Omission? Two public cases of a system corruption in Slovakia that were differently covered by media and treated by authorities.

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2 corruption cases in Slovakia

- 1) Bribery at the Police Academy in Bratislava (2012): its top representative took bribes for accepting applicants
- 2) Manipulation of hiring process at the Labour Office in Zvolen: documents of selected applicants were marked in advance

Severity
Social Impact

Medialization
Actors/ Media

Outcomes



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1. The Police Academy



THE STORY

- On June 27th 2012 there was a police raid in the office of the quaestor of the Police Academy in Bratislava. There was a suspicion about the economic criminal activity related to the EU funds. The police did not prove any economic criminal activity on which they originally searched the offices...

BUT:

- They found another interesting stuff – evidence about bribery of the rector and several other persons.



THE STORY

- On 29th June 2012 the police detained 3 functionaries including the rector Vaclav Krajník and one another employee.
- The police claimed: tests from the entrance examination by certain applicants were replaced by tests with correct answers written in, 29 out of 120 applicants in one (documented) year were accepted by fraud.
- Rector was also accused from awarding deceitful academic degrees (later freed from this accusation).



PUNISHMENT AND MEASURES

- It is a TEXTBOOK CASE OF CORRUPTION (taking bribes).
- The penalty for alleged crimes of the rector according to the criminal code ranges between 5 to 12 years in jail.
- The Senate of the Police Academy recalled the rector immediately.
- The 29 students accepted by fraud were expelled from the academy. Instead, 29 other students who followed under the line were accepted into study.



SEVERITY / IMPACT

- Corruption remains a serious problem in Slovakia. It was perceived as widespread by 90% of respondents (Eurobarometer survey), while 21% of the respondents experienced corruption themselves (the report of the European Commission).
- There are two areas where corruption, if it is present, is especially harmful for the whole society: education and public order.
- In the center of the story is the rector – that is remarkable, too. This was the first time in the history of the country that a rector was detained by the police.



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MEDIATISATION

- Ivan Mego from the daily Plus Jeden Deň (Plus One Day) was present during the police swoop on June 27th 2012 in the Police Academy and he wrote an article about it. Apparently, that was due to his good contacts to the police.
- Other media took information from his article and followed in covering the case, often citing one another. A very cited was the especially second article on the story published in daily Sme on June 29th.
- So, thank to the tip from the police to a daily, media provided continuous coverage of the case from the very first day, and they covered every important step.



MEDIATISATION /COVERAGE

Number of articles dealing with the case of corruption at the Police Academy:

Dailies:

	SME	Plus Jeden Deň	HN	Nový čas
No of articles	23	8	15	8
Av. length	262 words	404 words	233 words	312 words

Other media

	STV Main news at 7.p.m.	SRO Main news at 7.a.m.	Markíza Main news at 7.p.m.	Topky.sk	Trend
No of articles	3	1	5	5	1
Av. length	223 words	213 words	351 words	330 words	338 words



2. Regional Labour Office



THE STORY

- “At the labour office in Zvolen, chosen people used to win competitions”, on June 23th, 2013, Plus 7 dní (Plus 7 Days).
- According to the article, all the candidates whose CVs were marked were given the job.
- The markings had been allegedly made by the director of the labour office Milan Beľa.
- Eleonóra Ostrihoňová, an important witness
- The kingpin of the manipulation was identified as the Smer-SD´s MP Ján Senko.



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MEDIATISATION

- What media is Plus 7 dní: a soft-style general tabloid weekly magazine; one of the most in Slovakia. It was even the most popular weekly magazine in 2013 (circulation over 125,000).

HOWEVER:

- This particular scandal was ignored by all the other media (no mention in both offline and online databases + Google).
- Was Plus 7 dní a suitable carrier for the information? Would another media make a big case from it?



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PUNISHMENT AND MEASURES? NO, ACTUALLY

- There were no charges imposed against actors of the case. Similarly, no personal measures were put in place in this context.
- The MP Ján Senko had denied all the accusations.



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MEDIATISATION/COVERAGE

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Labour Office:

	Plus 7 Dní				
No of articles	1				
Av. length					



COMPARISONS



Police Academy (2012)	Labour Office (2013)
Misconduct: Bribes for accepting to the school	Misconduct: Manipulating the job selection process
Mediatisation: over 500 articles/PT broadcasts	Mediasitation: 1 article
Outcome: 1 rector fired and charged; 3 other people charged; change of the rules for electing the rector	Outcome: nothing happend



THANK YOU FOR THE ATTENTION



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