[DE] Press Code Extended

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The German Press Council, meeting in plenary session on 2 March 2005, voted to incorporate into the Press Code a ban on discrimination on grounds of disability. Thus Article 12 of the Press Code now reads: "There must be no discrimination against anyone on grounds of sex, disability, race, ethnic background, religion, social group or nationality.“ The Press Council decision came in response to pressure from associations representing people with disabilities and concerned individuals who had mounted a campaign entitled "Initiative 12" to have the Press Code amended.

The stipulation on equal treatment for people with disabilities - also explicitly required under Article 3 of the Basic Law [Constitution] - is intended to underscore the specific responsibility that the media bears in this regard. In particular it aims to ensure that journalists report on people with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses in a non-discriminatory manner.

Meeting on 1 and 3 March, the Press Council also issued four public reprimands for breaches of Article 7 of the Press Code, which requires that editorial matter and advertising be clearly separated. Several editorial items in the Munich Abendzeitung, for example, were found to contain surreptitious advertising and the Augsburger News had breached the principle of separation through an offer to publish editorial coverage as a quid pro quo for the purchase of advertising space. The Press Council announced that it is to hold a public hearing on the theme this autumn, inviting editors, academics and PR people to discuss the highly topical problem of mixing editorial and advertising.

The Press Council's bi-cameral Complaints Committee processed a total of 96 complaints, issuing 19 notices of censure and 16 comments as well as 12 public reprimands. It rejected 38 complaints as unfounded. The Editorial Data Protection Chamber of the Committee rejected one complaint as unfounded.

Pressemitteilung zur Ergänzung des Pressekodex

http://www.presserat.de/Pressemitteilung_anzei.pm+M57c1f6dc28c.0.html

Press release on extension of the Press Code

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Pressemitteilung zu den Rügen des Presserats

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Press release on Press Council reprimands

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