



Press Release HateAid gGmbH

HateAid sets a precedent in Germany: Twitter must pay 6,000 euros financial compensation for not removing sexist insults to a user

Over several months and despite reporting, Twitter left massive and sexist insults about a German journalist online. The district court Frankfurt am Main now enjoined the platform to refrain from further disseminating these comments and to pay 6,000 euros financial compensation to the journalist. This is the first time that a social media platform in Germany must pay a user compensation for not deleting illegal content. The verdict is ground-breaking for many other cases.

Berlin, 10 December 2021

With the support of HateAid – a German organisation against digital violence – a German journalist successfully took action against Twitter in court and set a precedent. The context was a massive digital attack she experienced on the platform in January 2019. She took legal action against the comments. With success: The district court Berlin decided in May 2020 that the tweets in question were illegal. Despite renewed demands by lawyers, Twitter still did not delete the comments. Therefore, the journalist saw herself forced to take civil action again. She demanded the deletion of the tweets in question as well as financial compensation because Twitter had further disseminated the illegal comments. Only now – after almost three years and two civil proceedings – can she enforce her rights. The verdict by the district court Frankfurt am Main is a sensation: The platform must remove the tweets in question permanently, refrain from dissemination in the future and must pay 6,000 euros financial compensation as well as legal fees and court costs. Twitter has removed the comments in the meantime.

Josephine Ballon, Head of Legal at HateAid:

“This case is an example of how difficult it is for those affected by digital violence to enforce their rights against large social media platforms. In our counselling, we see every day that platforms too seldom meet their responsibility. Even manifestly illegal content too often remains on the internet for all to see. The verdict of the district court Frankfurt am Main sends a clear and spectacular signal: The platform is not only obliged to delete the comments in question, but it must also pay a financial compensation. It was long overdue that such a case was brought to court to resolve this issue.”

The financial compensation goes to HateAid to fund further lawsuits. Twitter had previously attempted to avert the decision on the financial compensation by an offer of settlement.

The lawyers **Rodenhausen and Riemenschneider** from the [Media Kanzlei](#) assess the verdict as follows:

"The decision is a sensation. Presumably for the first time, a German court has now finally ordered a platform to pay financial compensation for not deleting hate comments. This increases the pressure on the platforms to finally confront hate effectively."

HateAid gGmbH

The non-profit organisation HateAid gGmbH was founded in 2018 and has its headquarters in Berlin. HateAid offers support for victims of digital violence: legal cost funding, emotionally stabilising initial, safety, and communication counselling. HateAid is part of the Landecker Digital Justice Movement that finances strategic litigation and landmark cases against online platforms in order to clarify the rights of users.

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