

EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS
COUR EUROPÉENNE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

FIRST SECTION

DECISION

Application no. 29525/17
Vikica BALTIĆ and Others
against Croatia
(see appended table)

The European Court of Human Rights (First Section), sitting on 4 February 2021 as a Committee composed of:

Alena Poláčková, *President,*
Péter Paczolay,
Gilberto Felici, *judges,*

and Viktoriya Maradudina, *Acting Deputy Section Registrar,*

Having regard to the above application lodged on 10 April 2017,

Having regard to the declaration submitted by the respondent Government requesting the Court to strike the application out of the list of cases,

Having deliberated, decides as follows:

## FACTS AND PROCEDURE

The list of applicants is set out in the appended table.

The applicants were represented by Mr T. Špehar, a lawyer practising in Zagreb.

The applicants' complaints under Article 6 § 1 of the Convention concerning the excessive length of civil proceedings were communicated to the Croatian Government ("the Government").

## THE LAW

After unsuccessful friendly-settlement negotiations, the Government informed the Court that they proposed to make a unilateral declaration with a view to resolving the issues raised by these complaints. They further requested the Court to strike out the application in accordance with Article 37 of the Convention

The Government acknowledged that there had been a violation of the applicants' right under Article 6 § 1 of the Convention. They offered to pay the applicants jointly the amount detailed in the appended table and invited the Court to strike the application out of the list of cases in accordance with Article 37 § 1 (c) of the Convention. The amount would be converted into the currency of the respondent State at the rate applicable on the date of payment and would be payable within three months from the date of notification of the Court's decision. In the event of failure to pay that amount within the above-mentioned three-month period, the Government undertook to pay simple interest on them, from the expiry of that period until settlement, at a rate equal to the marginal lending rate of the European Central Bank during the default period plus three percentage points.

The payment will constitute the final resolution of the case.

The applicants were sent the terms of the Government's unilateral declaration several weeks before the date of this decision. The Court has not received a response from the applicants accepting the terms of the declaration.

The Court observes that Article 37 § 1 (c) enables it to strike a case out of its list if:

> "... for any other reason established by the Court, it is no longer justified to continue the examination of the application".

Thus, it may strike out applications under Article 37 § 1 (c) on the basis of a unilateral declaration by a respondent Government even if the applicants wish the examination of the case to be continued (see, in particular, the *Tahsin Acar v. Turkey* judgment (preliminary objections) [GC], no. 26307/95, §§ 75-77, ECHR 2003-VI).

The Court has established clear and extensive case-law concerning complaints relating to the excessive length of civil proceedings (see, for example, *Kirinčić and Others v. Croatia,* no. 31386/17, 30 July 2020 and *Mirjana Marić v. Croatia,* no. 9849/15, 30 July 2020).

Noting the admissions contained in the Government's declaration as well as the amount of compensation proposed – which is consistent with the amounts awarded in similar cases – the Court considers that it is no longer justified to continue the examination of the application (Article 37 § 1 (c)).

In the light of the above considerations, the Court is satisfied that respect for human rights as defined in the Convention and the Protocols thereto does not require it to continue the examination of the application (Article 37 § 1 *in fine*).

Finally, the Court emphasises that, should the Government fail to comply with the terms of their unilateral declaration, the application may be restored to the list in accordance with Article 37 § 2 of the Convention (see *Josipović v. Serbia* (dec.), no. 18369/07, 4 March 2008).

In view of the above, it is appropriate to strike the case out of the list.

For these reasons, the Court, unanimously,

*Takes note* of the terms of the respondent Government's declaration and of the arrangements for ensuring compliance with the undertakings referred to therein;

*Decides* to strike the application out of its list of cases in accordance with Article 37 § 1 (c) of the Convention.

Done in English and notified in writing on 25 February 2021.

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Viktoriya Maradudina
Acting Deputy Registrar

Alena Poláčková
President

# APPENDIX

## Application raising complaints under Article 6 § 1 of the Convention (excessive length of civil proceedings)

| Application no.<br>Date of introduction | Applicant's name<br>Year of birth | Representative's name and location | Date of receipt of Government's declaration | Date of receipt of applicant's comments, if any | Amount awarded for non-pecuniary damage and costs and expenses to all applicants jointly (in euros)[1] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 29525/17<br>10/04/2017<br>(4 applicants) | **Vikica BALTIĆ**<br>1961<br>**Rahela PAVLINIĆ**<br>1984<br>**Niki BALTIĆ**<br>1986<br>**Mihaela BALTIĆ**<br>1996 | Špehar Tomislav<br>Zagreb | 07/12/2020 | 13/01/2021 | 4,320 |

[1] Plus any tax that may be chargeable to the applicant