Complaint filed by P.P. against A.T. for discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and hate speech

The opinion was issued following the complaint filed by P.P. and I.M.Lj.P., against A.T. from N.P. for discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. The complaint alleges that his Facebook posts and published photographs of P.P. had caused a surge of comments containing death threats against P.P. Printed snap shots of A.T.’s Facebook page with the aforementioned comments were attached to the complaint. P.P. stated that these comments calling for violence and making death threats have caused him to feel concerned both for his own safety and the safety of those close to him. In his explanation A.T. stated that he had not discriminated P.P. in his posts and that he could not possibly be responsible for comments that were left by other people on his Facebook profile, expressing regret over those comments. During the complaints procedure it has been ascertained that A.T.’s Facebook posts had opened a discussion instigating discrimination, hatred and violence against P.P. and persons of different sexual orientation. The Commissioner found that A.T. was responsible for making such comments available to the public – comments which essentially constitute hate speech - although he was in the position to delete them. This is the reason the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality issued the opinion stating that A.T. had violated regulations prohibiting discrimination and a recommendation to A.T. instructing him to send a letter of apology to P.P and to refrain from violating antidiscrimination regulations in the future.