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# Freedom of Expression and Legal Protection of Religious Feelings in Europe — From Reconciliation to Complementarity

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**Ključne riječi**

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**Sažetak**

European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms provides for the legal protection of two important fundamental rights and freedoms — freedom of expression (Article 10) and freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 9). The exercise of both of these rights are restricted by the 'protection of the reputation or rights of others'. One of the issues that arises in this regard is whether religious feelings as one aspect of religious freedoms has also been protected under the Convention. The European Court of Human Rights firmly stands on a position that 'believers must tolerate and accept the denial of their religious beliefs and even the propagation by others of doctrines hostile to their faith'. However, 'in extreme cases the effect of particular methods of opposing or denying religious beliefs can be such as to inhibit those who hold such beliefs from exercising their freedom to hold and express them'. That is why restriction of free speech is justified when it serves the purpose of protecting religious feelings. Freedom of expression and freedom of religion are usually understood as conflicting rights. This paper is an attempt to change this paradigm and to emphasise their substantive complementarity. The author calls for reconsideration of the existing protective framework enshrined in the Convention and further inquiries on how to shield religious beliefs whilst respecting the freedom of expression and vice versa.

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