



North Macedonia

During the period May-November 2023, on the platform <https://www.govornaomraza.mk/>, 822 cases were registered with elements of hate speech and harassment on various grounds.



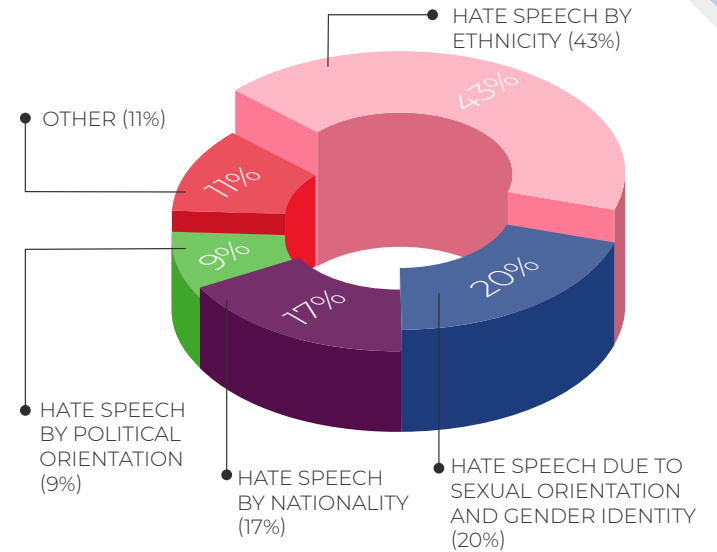
REGISTERED
822
CASES

472 CASES
ETHNICITY

192 CASES
NATIONALITY

218 CASES
GENDER IDENTITY AND
SEXUAL ORIENTATION

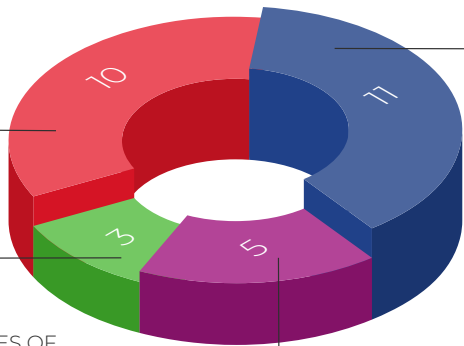
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Albania



10 CASES OF HATE SPEECH BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER OR GENDER IDENTITY



11 CASES OF HATE SPEECH BASED ON POLITICAL AFFILIATION

3 CASES OF HATE SPEECH BASED ON RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

5 CASES OF HATE SPEECH RELATED TO ETHNICITY



monitored by:



During the period May-November 2023, ALBANIAN HELSINKI COMMITTEE registered cases with elements of hate speech and harassment on various grounds.

A 5 CASES OF HATE SPEECH RELATED TO ETHNICITY

B 3 CASES OF HATE SPEECH BASED ON RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

C 10 CASES OF HATE SPEECH BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER OR GENDER IDENTITY

D 11 CASES OF HATE SPEECH BASED ON POLITICAL AFFILIATION

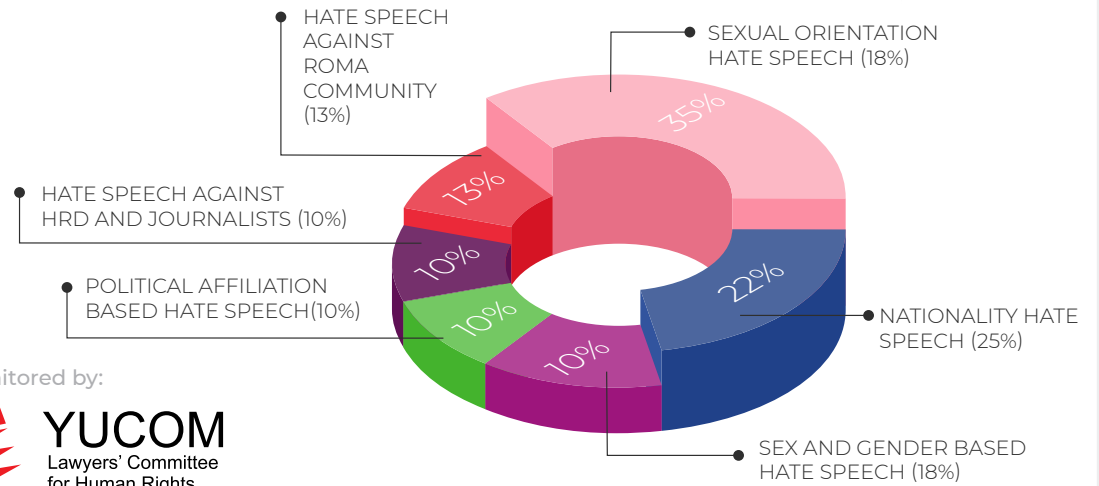
monitored by:





Serbia

In the observation period from May to November, the Human Rights organization YUCOM identified that infringements concerning the prohibition of discrimination predominantly manifested as hate speech via social networks. These offenses were most commonly on the following grounds:



monitored by:



Kosovo

HATE SPEECH AGAINST NON-MAJORITY COMMUNITIES IN KOSOVO 26 POSTS
2.805 COMMENTS
793 HATE SPEECH

The incidents in Banjska on September 24th intensified the pre-existing difficulties faced by non-majority communities in Northern Kosovo, notably the Serbian community. An in-depth examination of 26 Facebook posts, primarily disseminated by news outlets on their social media platforms, revealed a total of 2,805 comments. Among these comments, 793 exhibited characteristics of hate speech, potential incitement to violence, derogatory language, contributing to the amplification of nationalist sentiments.

HATE SPEECH TOWARDS WOMEN

Out of posts analyzed on various platforms, comments contained hate speech directed towards women, reflecting a concerning aspect of societal discourse surrounding these critical issues. One illustrative instance pertains to a transgender woman engaged in the reality television program "Big Brother VIP Kosovo," who has been target of constant hate speech online and offline.

HATE SPEECH TOWARDS LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITY

In Kosovo, the LGBTIQ+ community faces disproportionate levels of hate speech, particularly evident during the period May-November, where comments on Facebook served as a prominent platform for such expressions.

HATE SPEECH DURING DOKUFEST AND ANIBAR

Journalist Vullnet Krasniqi and cameraman Arber Latifi were attacked, an incident condemned by the Association of Journalists of Kosovo. The attack found both support and excuses on social media preceded by a lot of hate speech. During this time a graffiti with the inscription "kill the gays" was drawn on the campus of the University of Prishtina.

During the period May - November 2023, YOUTH INITIATIVE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS-KOSOVO-YIHR-KS registered cases with elements of hate speech and harassment on various grounds.



monitored by:





In the past six months of 2023, YUCOM, closely monitored hate speech in Serbia. We found that the majority of discriminatory incidents, particularly hate speech, were happening mainly on social media platforms. This report aims to give you an overview of these hate speech incidents, focusing on the period from May to November 2023.

We've analyzed and categorized hate speech based on who it targets: women, the LGBT community, Roma people, and ethnic groups like Albanians. Our data comes from various sources, including media reports, social media, and official complaints.

We observed that hate speech was most commonly directed at people based on their nationality (22%), based on political affiliation (10%), identity followed by sexual orientation (35%), gender (10%), and even journalists (5%). There were also incidents of hate speech aimed at human rights defenders (HRD), which made up 5% of the cases, while discrimination against the Roma community accounted for 13%.

GENERAL FINDINGS:

INCREASE IN HATE SPEECH INCIDENTS

The year 2023 witnessed a surge in hate speech incidents within Serbia, impacting a wide range of vulnerable groups.

1

ONLINE DOMINANCE

The majority of hate speech incidents occurred in digital spaces, with social media platforms serving as the primary breeding grounds for such content.

2

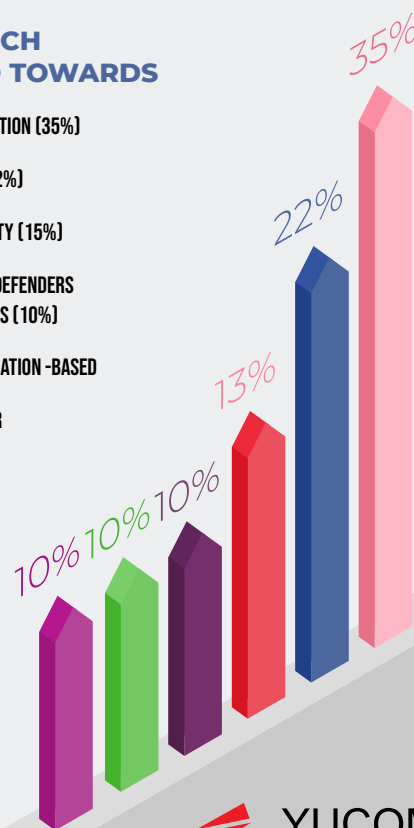
DISPROPORTIONATE TARGETING

Hate speech disproportionately affected specific vulnerable groups, including women, the LGBT community, Roma people, and Albanians. These groups were subject to a heightened level of hate speech compared to other demographics.

3

HATE SPEECH OBSERVED TOWARDS

- ◆ SEXUAL ORIENTATION (35%)
- ◆ NATIONALITY (22%)
- ◆ ROMA COMMUNITY (15%)
- ◆ HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND JOURNALISTS (10%)
- ◆ POLITICAL AFFILIATION -BASED
- ◆ SEX AND GENDER



MAY - NOVEMBER 2023

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SIGNIFICANT CASES OF HATE SPEECH THAT WERE OBSERVED DURING THE YEAR 2023 INCLUDE:

HATE SPEECH AGAINST WOMEN

Hate speech aimed at women during the latter half of 2023 manifested through a troubling array of sexist remarks, derogatory comments, and menacing threats. Particularly concerning was the deliberate targeting of women in influential public positions, such as politicians and activists, who faced a disproportionate share of hate speech. This unwelcome trend extended its reach across various media platforms and online spaces, underscoring the persistent challenge posed by gender-based hate speech in both traditional and digital realms. Addressing this issue remains a paramount concern in fostering a more inclusive and respectful societal discourse.

HATE SPEECH AGAINST THE LGBT COMMUNITY

In the latter half of 2023, Serbia witnessed a significant increase in hate speech against the LGBT community, coinciding with YUCOM's campaign for the adoption of the law on same-sex partnership. This campaign, aimed at achieving legal recognition for same-sex couples, initiated a surge of hate speech comments directed at LGBT individuals across social media platforms. This troubling trend encompassed derogatory slurs, homophobic and transphobic comments, and disturbing threats. It's crucial to note that this hate speech escalated, particularly during Pride events and discussions surrounding LGBT rights, underscoring the urgency of addressing this issue. Online platforms emerged as the primary battleground for these distressing hate speech incidents.

HATE SPEECH AGAINST ROMA PEOPLE

In the latter half of 2023, Roma people faced a troubling rise in hate speech. This hate speech often involved using unfair racial stereotypes, discrimination, and treating them as if they were less than human. It's important to note that this hate speech was frequently aimed at Roma communities living in informal settlements, making their situation even more challenging. These disturbing trends were visible in both online and offline media reports, highlighting a widespread issue that needs immediate attention.

HATE SPEECH AGAINST ALBANIANS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

In the latter half of 2023, Serbia witnessed a concerning uptick in hate speech targeting ethnic groups, with a particular focus on Albanians. This form of hate speech manifested in various ways, including the use of nationalistic rhetoric, and derogatory comments. Of notable concern was the enduring and contentious debate surrounding Kosovo, which remained a central point of contention. Discussions related to Kosovo often spiraled into inflammatory language, further exacerbating tensions between different ethnic communities. Incidents of hate speech related to Kosovo continued to be a source of concern, with historical narratives being weaponized to fuel divisive sentiments.



YUCOM
Lawyers' Committee
for Human Rights

MONITORING OF HATE SPEECH IN NORTH MACEDONIA

MAY - NOVEMBER 2023

within the project: Anti-Hate Speech in the Western Balkans



Within the project "Anti-Hate speech in the Western Balkans" funded by the CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights continued to actively work in the field of hate speech in 2023. The Committee continued the already established systematic monitoring of hate speech in Republic of North Macedonia, focusing on social media, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok. The main purpose of the monitoring on hate speech is to determine which protective categories are most affected and at which intensity and volume. The web platform <https://www.govornaomraza.mk/> acts as a hub where all citizens can report hate crimes on all grounds listed in the Law: ethnically, political affiliation, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic background etc. The platform provides information to the users on how to recognize hate speech through the examples, as well as overview of already submitted reports. The ultimate goal of this platform is to raise citizens' awareness of the phenomenon of hate speech in the public space, which will help them to oppose it, and thus prevent spreading of hate speech in society.

During the period May-November 2023, on the platform <https://www.govornaomraza.mk/>, 822 cases were registered with elements of hate speech and harassment on various grounds.

HATE SPEECH BY ETHNICITY

Hate speech by ethnicity was the most prevalent, with a total of 472 registered cases or 42% of the total number of registered cases. As well as the first report within the project hate speech on ethnicity continues to be one of the most common and widespread. When analyzing the cases based on ethnicity, mistrust between the different ethnic communities was observed, especially between the two largest ethnic communities in the country. Such an example was the announcement from the EVN about charging for electricity in the village of Slupčane, where mostly the Albanian community lives, as well as the footage of violence in the swimming pool in Shtip, which contribute to the escalation of insults based on ethnicity.

HATE SPEECH BY NATIONALITY

Hate speech by nationality was present in the public with 192 cases, or 17% of total number of registered cases. A number of socio-political events in the country in the past period have encouraged hate speech based on national affiliation. Placing the flag of Great Albania on the occasion of welcoming the Kosovo Prime Minister and the news of the opening of a street in Tetovo by the mayor of Tetovo, when the flag of Great Albania was waved.

HATE SPEECH DUE TO SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

Hate speech due to sexual orientation and gender identity was observed on social networks and registered on the platform, 218 cases of hate speech were registered or 20% of the total number of registered cases. Helsinki Committee for Human rights submitted petition against the political party Integra - Macedonian conservative party which published a disturbing speech based on sexual orientation and gender identity, for which the Commission for Protection against Discrimination issued an opinion that determined harassment and recommended that the party apologize and refrain from such announcements in the future.

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MONITORING OF HATE SPEECH IN KOSOVO

MAY - NOVEMBER 2023

within the project: Anti-Hate Speech in the Western Balkans



During the specified reporting period, a notable prevalence of hate language targeting various marginalized groups in Kosovo, including the LGBTIQ+ community, women, and individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds, was observed. This investigation systematically examined news articles disseminated through reputable media outlets, focusing on instances of hate speech within the Kosovo context. Additionally, an examination of pertinent social media posts was conducted to provide a comprehensive analysis of the issue. YIHR KS meticulously scrutinized numerous news articles during this investigative process. Among the countless articles analyzed, in majority of instances derogatory language and hate speech directed towards distinct communities were identified, shedding light on the urgent need for proactive measures to address and mitigate such linguistic manifestations targeting marginalized groups in Kosovo.

NON-MAJORITY COMMUNITIES IN KOSOVO

The context of non-majority communities in Kosovo reveals instances of discriminatory language, potentially escalating tensions and fomenting hatred and violence. Derogatory language was documented in multiple news articles across various media outlets, including Gazeta Express, Insajderi, Indeks online, Iajmi.net, and Kallxo.com, etc.

This research underscores the existence of such language within both public and media spheres, necessitating attention and efforts to address and rectify discriminatory expressions targeting non-majority communities in Kosovo.

The incidents in Banjska on September 24th intensified the pre-existing difficulties faced by non-majority communities in Northern Kosovo, notably the Serbian community. An in-depth examination of 26 Facebook posts, primarily disseminated by news outlets on their social media platforms, revealed a total of 2,805 comments. Among these comments, 793 exhibited characteristics of hate speech, potential incitement to violence, derogatory language, contributing to the amplification of nationalist sentiments.

HATE SPEECH TOWARDS WOMEN

In 2023, incidents of violence against women, including femicide, rape, and sexual harassment, have captured significant media attention. Notably, within the realm of social media, instances of victim-blaming by random citizens have been observed. Out of posts analyzed on various platforms, comments contained hate speech directed towards women, reflecting a concerning aspect of societal discourse surrounding these critical issues. One illustrative instance pertains to a transgender woman engaged in the reality television program "Big Brother VIP Kosovo," who has been target of constant hate speech online and offline.

HATE SPEECH TOWARDS LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITY

In Kosovo, the LGBTIQ+ community faces disproportionate levels of hate speech, particularly evident during the reporting period, where comments on Facebook served as a prominent platform for such expressions.

HATE SPEECH DURING DOKUFEST AND ANIBAR

Anibar and Dokufest have commendably focused on Queer and Transgender issues, showing strong support for the LGBTIQ+ community. This year's festival themes mark significant progress in promoting awareness of human rights, gender diversity, and the expression of Queer and Transgender identities in Kosovo. Regarding Dokufest, a rally, prompted by the local Islamic Community, protested the festival's hosting of a concert by the Canadian feminist electro-pop singer Peaches, an LGBTIQ+ cultural icon. Social media photos of Peaches' performance stirred outrage among social conservatives in Kosovo. Protesters urged authorities to scrutinize such events more carefully to maintain public order, especially when funded by taxpayers. Notably, before the protest, journalist Vullnet Krasniqi and cameraman Arber Latifi were attacked, an incident condemned by the Association of Journalists of Kosovo. The attack found both support and excuses on social media preceded by a lot of hate speech. During this time a graffiti with the inscription "kill the gays" was drawn on the campus of the University of Prishtina.





Media, as a method of mass communication in all the different forms of its manifestation in modern times, as well as human society itself, is characterized by a very dynamic nature. This phenomenon occurs to adapt to the ever-increasing need for information that is quickly accessed, through the most convenient and easy-to-use forms/methods, regardless of the specific place to which this information is related to. An informational network of this size, which facilitates the dissemination of information in any part of the world, that is indeed vital for the good functioning of our society, is often used as a tool to harm marginalized communities through the spread of hate speech.



AHC has completed a monitoring mission in the arena of national online media, with the aim of distinguishing cases where hate speech was used by personalities or representatives of various subjects, invited to television studios or other forms of media, during the timeframe of May 2023 to November 2023. For effect of this study, the categorization of the identified cases will be based on several constituent elements of the human identity that are mainly related to:

A HATE SPEECH BASED ON ETHNICITY

B HATE SPEECH BASED ON RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

C HATE SPEECH BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER OR GENDER IDENTITY

D HATE SPEECH BASED ON POLITICAL AFFILIATION/BELIEFS.

In the spotlight of this monitoring report are several newspapers, television shows, as well as well-known portals such as: "Gazeta Shqiptarja.com", "Gazeta Tema", tv show: "Let me speak..." channel: "Top Channel", "Noa.al" portal, etc.

CASES OF HATE SPEECH RELATED TO ETHNICITY

Regarding the first category of hate speech, that is based on the ethnic background of a concrete individual, an article entitled **"IMAM MAZLLAMI APPEARS DESECRATING THE NATIONAL FLAG/ 'THIS IS A RAG, WE DON'T WORSHIP EAGLES'"** has been published on the Noa.al portal.

This article described a video that had gone viral on social media, in which Mr. Mazllami, according to the article in question, was seen "desecrating the Albanian national flag", while describing it using derogatory terms such as patch, meringue and rag.

Another case of hate speech based on ethnicity being used in media, was found on the online website of the well-known Albanian newspaper **"TEMA"** in an article where illegal Albanian immigrants are described by the British authorities as **"CRIMINALS... WHO CAME IN DINGHIES AND TRUCKS"**. The use of such epithets, which have negative connotations and aim to create a stereotype, or further strengthen an existing stereotype that incriminates a certain group of people based on the feature of ethnic origin, is unacceptable. When in most of the world's national legal systems, criminal punishment is a rehabilitative measure, rather than a punitive one, there is no reason why these adjectives should be used, as opposed to those that are neutral in nature.

In the same category, i.e. the use of hate speech based on the ethnicity of an individual, was concluded to be the article dated 13.11.2023, on the media website **"NOA.AL"**, that is titled **"BERISHA FOR RAMA FROM KAVAJA: FIGHTS WITH HIS BROTHERS AND HERE BRING THE REFUGEES!"**. In it, a declaration of the former Prime Minister Mr. Sali Berisha is cited, where it is stated that: **"... This one openly opposes the political leadership of Kosovo. He does everything to stab Kosovo and its government in the name of Vucic."** Obviously, this statement uses a language that is not at all politically correct, which creates the impression of the existence of an aggressive attitude of the Albanian government towards that of Kosovo and consequently increases the risk of creating divisions between the Albanians of Albania and those of Kosovo.



CASES OF HATE SPEECH BASED ON POLITICAL AFFILIATION

As for the cases hate speech based on political beliefs, in Albania their trend is always increasing. On 10th of November, the well-known media website **"LAJME.AL"** portal published an article describing the case of a physical altercation between two well-recognized political figures, **Kreshnik Çollaku** and **Dashnor Sula**, a conflict which ended with the intervention of the Republic's Guard. The title of the published material begins with the words **"KISS A*S, IDIOT"**, terms which the deputies themselves have used during their fight.

Another case of hate speech based on political beliefs was found in an article of the newspaper **"GAZETA TEMA"**, where the journalist **Dasara Karaiskaj** called **Erion Braçe** **"A POPULIST"** after the latter's statement to describe menstruation as a disease and to give girls and women the right of paid leave during their menstrual cycle. The term used is not at all correct and insults the personality of the individual to whom it's targeted.

Yet another article, that spreads hate and prejudice, through usage of hate speech based on political beliefs was published in 20th November 2023 on the **"NOA.AL"** website, article that is titled **"WHERE IS THAT FRAUD? ..."**

BARDHI EXPLODES AT NIKOLA"

This post describes a clash between **Mr. Gazment Bardhi**, the head of Democratic Party's parliamentary group, and the Speaker of the Parliaments **Ms .Lindita Nikolla**. The term used is without a doubt offensive and directly harms the personality of the individual to whom it's addressed to.

CASES OF HATE SPEECH IN THE BASIS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

As for the element of hate speech based on gender identity, in November an article was published on **"SOT"** newspaper's website regarding a statement made by a competitor of the reality show **"BIG BROTHER VIP KOSOVO"**, **Edona James**. In this statement she compares her fame to that of the well-known historical figure of **Adem Jashari**. The article in question describes Edona, who has undergone gender reassignment procedures, including surgical interventions, with the term transgender, a term neutral at first sight, but with the 'hidden' context of aiming to minimize and reduce the person to that specific trait. The rest of the article cites a post made by journalist Milaim Zeka in his Facebook account, where he writes: **"Some 15 years ago I wrote: I was visiting the grave of Adem Jashari, who said to me: "O no, unlucky me, who the hell have I fought for", he said.** The statement of Mr. Zeka contains phrases that clearly spread hate, violate the personality and as a result cause harm to the transgender community.

Another case of hate speech based on gender identity was spotted in a post made by the online media **"JOQ"**, on 20th May. The publication in question was based on a citizen's complaint about the noise that had been bothering him for some time, which came from the apartment of his transgender neighbor who was also a sex worker. In his complaint, which the article cited, this anonymous citizen stated that: **"... not only that we are drowning in prostitutes, but we have to put up with these f*ggots too... or transvestites or what the hell they call themselves...."** terms that obviously aim to promote intolerance and have an offensive character towards the members of the transgender community.

Regarding hate speech based on gender stereotypes, last month, an article was published on **"NOA.AL"** titled: **"Transgender [participant] surprises BBVK : Men are putting on make-up just like women do!" We can't tell women and men apart...!"**. This eye-grabbing title is followed by a quote of the statement made by a competitor of the reality tv show BBVK where she implies that: **"Before men were men, now they're just like women. They are all dressing up and putting on makeup and we can't tell them apart from women. Sometimes they present themselves as men, sometimes as women,"** she said.





CASES OF HATE SPEECH IN THE BASIS OF THE RELIGIOUS FAITH

Referring to hate speech as a result of the religious faith exercised by a certain individual, according to an article published on "TEMA" newspaper, 20th October, it was concluded that " ... Even though about 1.25 million Albanians identify as Muslims, only 150 thousand go to mosques regularly ". And even though this article does not use heavy and offensive terms, its purpose is to create an imaginary division between people of a certain religion by weighing the authenticity of their faith, based on their attendance at religious ceremonies. This reasoning prejudices the manifestation of faith, which as a deeply individual and internal process, can appear in a very wide spectrum.

Another offensive article towards people of a certain religion was posted on "NOA.AL" website on August 8th, titled: 'COME ON, RUN AWAY. YOU HAVE A THOUSAND OTHER BEACHES. I HATE MUSLIMS!' It tells the story of a seaside business owner in Montenegro, who doesn't want to give their services to a Muslim family, because of the hijab their daughter was wearing.

In the online website of "TEMA" newspaper, we came across a publication of a statement made by the "BASHKE FITOJME" party's candidate for the Municipal Council, Keda Kaceli, in which was written that "[she]... cursed the voters". The article itself starts titled as " You who voted against Belindi are going to die ", a call which undoubtedly incites social divisions based on political beliefs. The candidate said that " ...Tirana has lost its civilization and they don't even know the smell of the civilized people anymore. We always have had God with us, and we will have God before everything. We are gentlemen, something you'll never be. You will never be like us!..... You who voted for us, you who believed, you may all be blessed!". Undoubtedly, in this case we are dealing with the use of hate speech based on different political beliefs.

Another ascertained case of this category belongs to the same website, where on May 17th a debate between ROLAND BEJKO and GRIDA DUMA was analyzed in an article published. Just as in many other cases covered, the website in question quotes the incorrect language used by the former deputy (starting from the article's headline, to attract the attention of the reader), where she describes party members as crazy. Even further in her statement, she says that "[the party has]... descended to the point of being equal to Arlind Qori, who had no party according to you". In the last local elections, a new party competed to win Tirana municipality named "LÉVIZJA BASHKË", led by Professor Arlind Qori.



Ms. Duma 's attitude is underestimating towards new parties and creates the impression that they have no weight in Albania's political arena, discouraging the competition of new electoral subjects, as well as discouraging potential voters and consequently 'pushing them' towards the old parties.

The same website, on the same date, published another article written by Mero Baze, in which the use of the same category of hate speech is again observed. The article is titled " GRIDA, IN THE ROLE OF A HYENA NEAR THE CORPSE OF BERISHA" and in its continuation the journalist in question uses offensive terms to describe the political strategy of Mrs. Grida Duma and other opponents of the government. Among the terms used that have been found to be a manifestation of hate speech are a series of mediocre hypocrites , hyenas and Berisha's yes-men army, terms which not only are offensive and attack the personality of these individuals, but also encourage hatred based on different political beliefs.

In the " DITA" newspaper , another article was observed where the same category of hate speech was used. The paper titled "'CLOWN', BARDHI CLASHES WITH FELAJ: FAMILY OF THIEVES..., SHUT UP..." in which the fierce debate between the Democratic Party deputy, Gazmend Bardhi and Ermonela Felaj, was narrated , debate that started after the latter addressed Mr. Bardhi in a hostile manner calling him a "clown" . Further in the article it is written that Mr. Bardhi used the phrase "thieves and family of thieves" to counter Ms. Felaj's insult. A part of his statement is quoted, which declares that " ... you conquered the prosecutor's office of Tirana, your husband took bribes valued 1.5 million euros from four businesses.... This who you are, you are a thief, a fine collector who has the courage to speak... Shut your mouth! Thief!..."

FROM THE MONITORING CARRIED OUT, IT HAS BEEN OBSERVED THAT THE USE OF HATE SPEECH BASED ON DIFFERENT POLITICAL BELIEFS IS VERY HIGH IN ALBANIAN MEDIA.

In one of the most read newspapers in our country, "TEMA" newspaper, a news story has been published that uses an offensive epithet based on the political affiliation of the person. This article is titled " The soldier of Sali Berisha, with the pseudonym Tomor Alizoti, tells the Albanians that America is no longer interested in us". The use of this derogatory term to describe someone's certain political point of view or belief is obviously intended to lower his image in the eyes of Albanians and harms the personality of the individual.

While a month ago, in another well-known newspaper in Albania, the newspaper "DITA", another article using this category of hate speech was posted. From its title " WHY WILL WE FIGHT WITH THE USA?" Rama: Who brings Sali the donkey into the City Hall, shall forget about support from the government " we find the use of adjectives that are not correct and incite hatred from the public.

Referring to the language of hatred used on the basis of race or ethnicity, an article published on the website of "TEMA" newspaper, describing a protest against war in Palestine was titled "SUPPORTERS OF PALESTINE ALSO PROTEST IN TIRANA: LET'S THROW THE ISRAELIS INTO THE SEA". This article also described an Instagram post made by the activist Marlind Laçi, where he posted pictures of the protest with the caption "FROM THE RIVER TO THE SEA".

This inscription is taken from a song and was first adopted by the Palestine Liberation Organization shortly after its founding in 1964 and is used today by both Hamas and Arab leaders in various protests around the world. The context of the expression means that only the state of Palestine should exist there from the river (Jordan) to the sea (Mediterranean) and is therefore considered anti-Semitic. It is quite clear that these expressions are against Israelis and are aimed at inciting hatred towards them.

In the same newspaper, as one of the most read in Albania an article was published under the title "RESEARCHER OF THE ISLAMIC RELIGION: AN HONEST GIRL, WHO IS COVERED, OR WELL DRESSED AND NOT PROVOCATIVE, IS NOT RAPED". The attitude of the researcher in question, Mrs. Iqbalë Huduti not only creates division among women based on the way they present themselves, but also incites hatred and prejudice against victims of sexual violence, trying to blame the latter for the damage they have suffered, and justifies the actions held by the perpetrator.

Another case of gender-based hate speech in media was found in an article of the "NOA.AL" website titled " DEA MISHEL HAS A PUBLIC APPEAL: THIS IS NOT THE PLACE FOR GRANDMOTHERS..." The article shows the opposing this influencer has against the use of social media by older women. She says that "... Guide them [mothers and grandmothers] to a slightly more normal path..., like for example my grandmother made crochet, pies, gave love at home." The critical language used and the examples presented by her reinforce even more some gender stereotypes that undermine equality between men and women.



MONITORING OF HATE SPEECH IN ALBANIA



MAY - NOVEMBER 2023

within the project: Anti-Hate Speech in the Western Balkans



On the same website, an article wrote of accusations the French Minister had against football player **KARIM BENZEMA**, considering him to be "**CONNECTED TO A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION**". The base of this accusations was his religious faith and the support he had publicly expressed for Palestine in its conflict with Israel. It is clear that the reason for targeting him with this serious accusation is his religious background, and this sort of hate speech aims to promote isolation of this group of people and consequently their division from society.

In "**GAZETA DITA**" website an article that described the interview made by **Adi Krasta** during an episode of the "**A Krasta Show**", where the actress **Eva Alikaj** was invited was published under the title "**VIDEO / THE ACTRESS IMITATES THE CHILDREN OF THE ROMA COMMUNITY: THEY TOLD ME YOU WERE VERY BAD AT BBV**" and is accompanied by a clip taken from the interview where the guest actress is seen imitating a conversation she had with some children of the Roma community. Of course, this action is not correct at all, for the very reason that it spreads hatred based on the ethnic background of individuals, insulting through imitation the way of being and expressing themselves.

Another case of hate speech based on gender, was found in a publication in "**DITA**" newspaper by the journalist **Mero Baze**, entitled "**Grida in the role of a hyena near the corpse of Berisha**". Following the article, it is written that "...she [Mrs. Duma] was treating Bejko as an upset woman who has caught her husband with his lover the same, a few days ago, while interviewing Edi Rama and Erion Veliaj, took erotic poses , as if she wanted to convince them to stay after the show ...". The comments made by the journalist in question further deepen some 'ancient' gender stereotypes that spread hatred and prejudice against women.

Another case of hate speech based on gender, was found in the same newspaper, where an article entitled "**MELONI'S HUSBAND OPENS A DEBATE WITH THE COMMENTS: IF THEY DON'T WANT TO BE RAPED, WOMEN SHOULDN'T GET DRUNK**" was published. His statement is further quoted in the article and it reads as follows. "women who want to avoid rape should not get drunk in bars". This is without a doubt excessively offensive to victims of sexual violence and not only encourages hatred towards them, but also blames the victims instead of the person responsible for the damage caused.

Even the well-known lawyer **VJOLLCA PUSTINA** held the same position in a statement she gave, a statement which was posted on October 25th on "**DITA**" newspaper under the title "**LAWYER [SPEAKS] FOR THE RAPE OF THE 26-YEAR-OLD IN VLORA: THE GIRLS SHOULD REFRAIN , MEN ARE MEN**". Ms. Pustina states that: "**Rape can happen every day, not only on Fridays and Saturdays, maybe even girls exceed it a bit with drinking ... I happened to be four times on Saturdays in the emergency room of the hospital, and disfigured young girls came. Accompanied by 3-4 boys. Yes, even girls should be a bit more controlled when entering bars, night discos. Men will be men...**".

We are once again dealing with the use of hate speech based on the gender of the individual. The attitude cited in this publication not only promotes hatred, isolation and prejudice towards victims of sexual violence, but also blames them for the event, while justifying the offensive actions of the abuser.

The same effect has the article posted on "**PANORAMA**" newspaper under the title "**WOMEN BARELY RESIST, THEY PRETEND THEY DON'T WANT TO - LAWYER SPARTAK NGJELA SHOCKS: EVEN WHEN SHE IS RAPED, SHE SURRENDERS FROM PLEASURE .**" The news in question shows a statement made by the lawyer **Spartak Ngjela** in one of the episodes of the show "**LET ME TALK**" on the **TOP CHANNEL** media channel where he said that: "... **there are cases when a woman cannot resist his gaze. We are talking about the psychic moment, it is weakness. The man doesn't have it, only the woman has it ... It's also the girl's scheme that she pretends she doesn't want it ... There comes a certain moment when the woman has started to tighten up for rape and gives in to the pleasure ... That's why there must be resistance...**"

Another case of the use of gender-based hate speech was found in an article published on "**TEMA**" newspaper, which is titled "**'GO AWAY B*TCH...., THE LAWYER STEALS MILLIONS FROM THE CLIENT AND SUES HER**". Following the title, the article shows the issue addressed by the show "**STOP**" on "**KLAN**" media channel, where the case of **Mrs. Shqiponja Mashi** was broadcasted. After her daughter was injured and spent 3 months on bed rest, she contacted lawyer **Ndue Gjela** and managed to win compensation for the accident in the amount of 54 million Lek, of which Shqiponja only got 8. While the executor **Rrok Deda** told her that the money was transferred to the lawyer, the latter did not give him an explanation for the remaining part, and he even sued Mrs. Mashi for defamation. It is evident that the epithets used by the lawyer to describe his former client are extremely offensive and directly violate her dignity.

A similar issue was found in an article published on "**TEMA**" newspaper entitled "**SCANDALOUS: TELEVISION BRUTALLY ATTACKS JOURNALIST FROM VLORA, DUE TO THE SERIOUS INCIDENT OF THE 26-YEAR-OLD**". In the description of the event, a news story published by a local media channel called "**6+1 VLORA TV**" is quoted, the title of which is "**[PROSTITUTE] ...' Afrovita Hysaj** deceives the citizens of Vlora . This publication, through unethical language and vocabulary, violates the ethics code of journalism in a serious manner and marks a rare precedent in the attack initiated by a media towards a local journalist.

In the same line appears to be the publication of november on "**TEMA NEWSPAPER**", that starts with the title "**GIRLS SHOULD NOT HARASS BOYS, THE ADVICE OF THE 101-YEAR-OLD FOR MEN AND WOMEN**". Further in the article, the statement of **Mrs. Prene Biba** is quoted, where she says that: "**There are men who are drunks, there are men who will not treat you right. Girls, I told you to take good care of your husband. Men will be men . They call the man at the door, not the woman. A man should not spoil women too much. A woman should respect her mother and father .**"

This time, too, we are dealing with the use of hate speech based on the individual's gender. The statement quoted in this publication by Mrs. Biba only incites hatred and intolerance towards women and their need for security as human beings, but justifies violence and promotes the tolerance of the latter by the abused.

Regarding the language of hate based on sexual orientation, in one of the episodes of the show "**ALBANIA LIVE**" aired on "**TOP CHANNEL**" media channel, where members of the **LGBTQIA+** community were invited, titled "**LESBIAN MOTHER WITH TWO CHILDREN SPEAKS. LGBT COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES SHOW CHALLENGES THE FACE**", the invited members talked about all the difficulties faced daily by this community in Albania. From the monitoring of the comments, it was observed the use of a very harsh language of hatred towards the members of the community, which aims to increase intolerance towards them and, as a result, social isolation.



AT THE END OF THIS MONITORING MISSION IN THE ARENA OF NATIONAL ONLINE MEDIA, WITH THE AIM OF DISTINGUISHING CASES WHERE HATE SPEECH IN MEDIA THE TIMEFRAME OF MAY 2023 TO NOVEMBER 2023 WE CAME ACROSS 29 ARTICLES THAT USED HATE SPEECH AGAINST A MARGINALISED COMMUNITY.