



# INSTITUTIONAL GAP IN ADDRESSING HATE SPEECH IN NORTH MACEDONIA



POLICY BRIEF

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## Institutional Gap in Addressing Hate Speech in North Macedonia

Helsinki Committee for Human Rights

Skopje,  
October, 2023

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*This publication was funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights Skopje and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*



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## POLICY BRIEF SUMMARY

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Despite the existing legislation, institutions in North Macedonia face significant weaknesses in the registration, monitoring, and sanctioning of hate speech. The lack of coordination, adequate state databases, data, and resources results in ineffective handling of such cases. This brief highlights the key institutional gaps and proposes concrete steps for improving the national system.

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#### KEY CHALLENGES:

- Absence of a unified state database for hate speech cases.
  - Lack of alignment and coordination among institutions in monitoring and reporting hate speech.
  - No standardized methodology or categorization of offenses.
  - Insufficient technical and human capacities, limited resources, and lack of training within the police and prosecution.
  - Inadequate integration of MARnet and other technical bodies in combating online hate speech.
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## Legal and Institutional Analysis

Although the Criminal Code contains provisions that indirectly cover hate speech, a codified and operational institutional approach is missing.

The Ministry of Interior and the Public Prosecutor's Offices lack clearly defined obligations and systems for record-keeping.

The Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (AVMU) and the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination (CPAD) have limited mandates and technical support.

There is an urgent need to introduce technical tools, centralized records, and interoperability between institutions.

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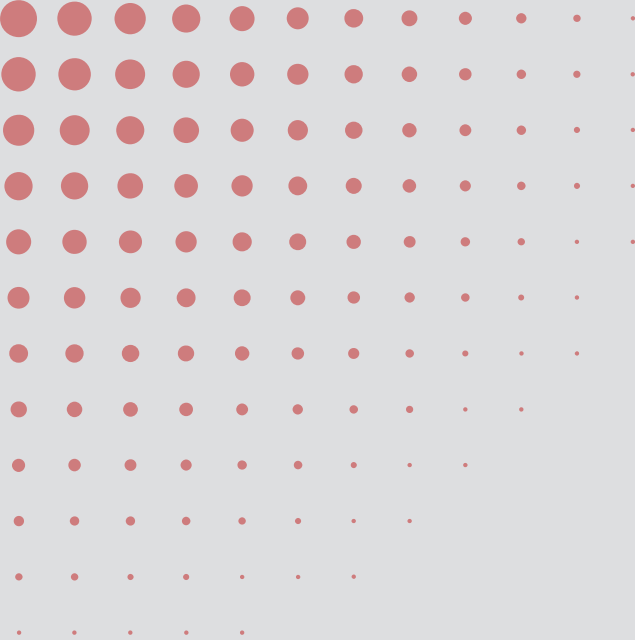
## RECOMMENDATIONS

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- Establish a centralized hate speech database with technical support and participation of all competent institutions.
- Assign monitoring and reporting obligations to MARnet regarding online hate speech content.
- Revise the ACMIS system to register these cases as a separate category.
- Train public prosecutors, judges, and inspectors to identify and prosecute hate speech and hate crimes, especially online.
- Encourage media outlets and the public broadcaster to take an active role in monitoring hate speech and raising awareness for prevention.
- Create accessible mechanisms for easy reporting and legal aid for victims through digital platforms.
- Integrate monitoring mechanisms of AVMU and CPAD with the Ministry of Interior and the Public Prosecutor's Office.
- Adopt a national strategy for combating online hate speech.







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